A TWELVE-WEEK COURSE IN BIBLICAL COUNSELING FOR THE ADULT MEMBERS OF EKRON BAPTIST CHURCH, EKRON, KENTUCKY

A Project

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the Faculty of

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Doctor of Ministry

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by

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APPROVAL SHEET

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PREFACE

First, I would like to thank my ancestral family for the heritage of Christianity afforded me through their lives. This expression of gratitude would especially include those with a direct influence: Albert and Alice Metzger, Ray and Florence Pinkley, and my parents, Ray and Bonnie Pinkley. The faith of these has been practical, influential, and transcendent above religious exercise.

Second, I would like to thank the churches who played a role in my discipleship, Central Baptist Church of Ocala, Florida; First Baptist Church of Daytona Beach, Daytona Beach, Florida; First Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Jacksonville, Florida; Springdale Baptist Church, Fort Worth, Texas; Fellowship Baptist Church, Plainville, Georgia; Park Avenue Baptist Church, Mt. Vernon, Illinois; Holiday Shores Baptist Church, Edwardsville, Illinois; and Ekron Baptist Church, Ekron, Kentucky. These congregations have nurtured a love for God and His Word within my soul. I would not have been afforded opportunities to grow without the patience, acceptance, and loyalty they have displayed.

Third, many individuals need recognition; however, a special appreciation goes to Bob and Nancy Mowery, who played an influential role in my attending church; Mike and Marci Blubaugh who challenged me to live theologically, Fritz Raquet and his fruitful doctrinal discussions over endless cups of coffee; David Yawn, who cared to listen and explain Christ to my dry soul; Ray and Wanda Ivey for mentoring me in life and ministry; Hank McLeod, a true friend; Rick Ackerman for inspiring my life beyond mediocrity; Paul Wigginton, who taught me grace above legalism; and Dewey Bland, who exemplifies a man of common sense and sacrifice.

Fourth, I would be remiss to fail to credit both Dr. David Tyler and Dr. Stuart Scott for the example, patience, and tutelage they have invested into my life and ministry.

Their wisdom has helped connect the pieces of the Bible into a practical liberating picture of grace, which led to an increased passion for our awesome God.

Fifth, I praise God for my family and the encouragement and sacrifice they have given, that I might gain this education to better serve others. I am ever affectionate toward my wife, Melissa, who would not allow me to quit the course, but encouraged me onward by her faith. Our children, Benjamin, Micah, Levi, and Abigail, have all given inspiration to honor God through education as well as personal discipleship.

Most of all, I praise God, the first cause, in all that is good, holy, and worthwhile. From creation, to the cross, and through eternity, to Him belongs *Soli Deo Gloria*.

Wes Pinkley

Ekron, Kentucky

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to create a twelve-week course in biblical counseling for the adult members of Ekron Baptist Church of Ekron, Kentucky.

Goals

The first goal of this project was to enroll between eight to ten members of Ekron Baptist church to partake in the introductory course in biblical counseling. This goal is measured by having the participants sign a commitment card. This goal was successfully met when eight persons had enrolled in the class.

The second goal of this project was to evaluate the initial proficiency level of the participants regarding perceived biblical counseling abilities through a pre-course survey. This goal was measured by a pre-course survey that included questions regarding the participants' Bible knowledge, understanding of methods and resources often used in relation to counseling, and their own comfort levels in regard to involvement in various counseling scenes. This test was comprised of forty-four questions, each being multiple choice or short answer. This goal was successfully met when the persons who enrolled in the class completed the pre-course test.

The third goal was to create a twelve-week introductory course in biblical counseling that aligned itself with the merits of the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors (ACBC) and communicated ten of the most crucial factors for beginning counselors, such as data gathering, building hope, and confronting problems with Scripture. This goal was measured by a rubric utilized by three authorities within the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors and two local pastors familiar with

counseling and the context of Ekron Baptist Church. The rubric measured the scope and content for each of the lessons taught during the course. This goal was regarded as successful when 90 percent of the rubric evaluation indicators were marked at sufficient or above.

The fourth goal was to increase the participants' knowledge of biblical counseling by teaching the twelve-week course. The goal was measured by a post-course survey, which remained the same as the initial survey given prior to beginning the course. This goal was considered successful when the *t*-test for dependent samples indicated a positive statistical increase between the pre- and post-course surveys. These goals were accomplished at Ekron Baptist Church in Ekron, Kentucky.

Ministry Context

The body of believers at Ekron Baptist contains a strong contingent of active people whom had expressed a desire to be trained in biblical counseling. Approximately fifteen people communicated a willingness to enroll in the training course as to be better equipped to minister to others. These members regularly attend in Sunday school as well as the Sunday morning worship times. They are well versed in the Scriptures and have a strong desire to help others. Throughout the week, these members call, email, or request meetings with me to ask how to help someone else. These people believe in the transforming power of Scriptures as stated in 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work." One example was that of a mother who scheduled a pastoral consultation to help her daughter deal biblically with a schoolmate's struggle with homosexuality. The mother stated, "I know the Bible has guidance for how I can help. I just need to see where it is." Additionally, many members requested pastoral guidance from the Scriptures in regard to dealing with children who are in jail.

Education in biblical counseling had been lacking, as members of Ekron

Baptist Church contained a mixture of opinions in relation to understanding the qualities of biblical counseling. A survey, prior to the implementation of the concept of a biblical counseling course within the membership revealed a strong inclination that many in the congregation believe secular psychology has merit for healing in areas that biblical counseling does not (see appendix 6). Most of those surveyed indicated a strong belief in the Bible for giving advice in conditions directly related to sin. However, a large segment of those polled lacked a demonstration of understanding as to how the Bible can help specific conditions such as eating disorders, dealing with bipolar issues, various addictions, and others issues for which society regularly prescribes psychiatric help.

Three important mindsets of the congregation were revealed in this survey. The first is a lack of understanding of how many psychological labels, such as ADHD, codependency, various addictions, and others are related to sins of pride, lack of self-control, and blame shifting, are addressed by the Scriptures. The second mindset revealed was that many believed areas of behavior exist that would be better handled by psychologists. The third mindset exposed in the survey was that when a behavior is understood to be sin, the church membership possesses a strong confidence that a trained biblical counselor or pastor is the best person from whom to seek help.

Stated differently, the congregation revealed a strong belief that a pastor or counselor is equipped to deal with sin-related issues, and that a professional, such as a psychiatrist, is best equipped for those behaviors labeled by society as sickness. Therefore, many in the congregation place a strong amount of trust in secular psychiatry, and possibly medications, to solve issues that are considered mental illnesses or diseases by society yet are addressed in the Bible. This has presented a problem. Those who treat sin as a sickness are bound to repeat those sins, as the only resolution for sinful behaviors is the redeeming work of Christ.

Ekron also has a contingent of non-Christians who seek help with a variety of spiritual needs. Since the offering of biblical counseling began as a ministry in August

2013, several persons have sought the discipleship that biblical counseling entails. Two persons have come to know Christ as their savior through such meetings with me.

Currently, I perform all biblical counseling and education. I have been certified by the standards of the International Association of Biblical Counselors (IABC) and the American Academy of Biblical Counselors (AABC). In addition to being certified with IABC and AABC, the counseling ministry is being shaped by courses taught at Southern Seminary and in compliance with the standards of the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors (ACBC). These standards and doctrines provide the parameters of counseling that is taught to the congregation of Ekron Baptist.

Why has there been a lack of counseling discipleship at Ekron Baptist except for that done within my office? First, people were uncomfortable or unlearned in the context of one-on-one discipleship. The members had not been taught to draw liberating truth and grace from Scripture to disciple others. Second, people were unaware of the tools used by counselors to address spiritual thinking and habits; the use of Scripture, homework, and probing questions available for them to utilize. Third, people were uneducated in what the Bible teaches regarding anxiety, depression, anger, and other issues that are often referred for treatment to secular professionals.[1] It is sad commentary that people in the church were turning to the world for solutions that Christ's work upon the cross had already provided. Forth, people who did not work through the sanctification process in their own life were more likely to be reluctant in providing counsel to others.[2] Lastly, people within the church did not counsel biblically as they had not been provided an education in how the sanctification process works through a biblical counseling example.

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[1]Jay Adams, *The Christian Counselor's Manual* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973), 8-11.

[2]Ibid., 12-13, 20.

Rationale

The biblical command for discipleship is inherent throughout the New Testament. Those who would follow Jesus were distinctively called disciples. The Great Commission implies discipleship as part and parcel within the active assignment of the church, and the teaching of the Scriptures finds its goal in sanctification. Each member of the church body is charged with participating in the discipleship process of renewing the mind and putting off of the old nature in order to put on the new.

A prime example of the discipleship model is that of the Lord Jesus Christ. His personal interest in the lives of the Twelve is the basis for training others in sanctification and an intimate relationship with God. Another clearly evident model is that of Paul teaching Timothy. This one-on-one dynamic can be the most effective means of counseling others in the ways of God. Yet often the church finds itself lacking in the model of mature believers counseling the younger or less knowledgeable.

Many factors play a part in the diminishing discipleship dynamic of counseling. Busy schedules, divided interests, and a lack of personal discipleship have led to a great need within the congregation of the church itself.[3] Ekron Baptist Church is no different.

Therefore, as discipleship is a mandate for the Christian and an activity of the church, the purpose of this project is to develop and implement an introductory discipleship course in biblical counseling in order to be obedient to the Lord and to fulfill the need of providing a practical discipleship ministry.

The need of this project can be supported within three broader categories: a doctrinal need, a training need, and an application need.

Doctrinally, the congregation at Ekron Baptist Church, though filled with

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[3]Thom S. Rainer, "The Number One Reason for the Decline in Church Attendance and Five Ways to Address It," *The Christian Post*, August 23, 2013, accessed May 21, 2014, http://www.christianpost.com/news/the-number-one-reason-for-the-decline-in-church-attendance-and-five-ways-to-address-it-102882.

many mature believers, lacks an understanding of the biblical doctrine of sin in regard to what many psychologists label as sickness. There exists a need to also demonstrate scripturally the facets of grace that go beyond justification toward a daily practice of sanctification. Connecting these two doctrines has benefitted the church in the counseling of people who deal with sinful habits as well as chronic behaviors that compound problems and thus allowing them to walk anew in the freedom for which Christ was raised from the dead.

In training, the people of Ekron Baptist benefitted by learning how to help others through one-on-one counseling. Untrained members were often reluctant to get involved in the counseling of another person, preferring to leave that ministry to the pastor or other staff. Many members in leadership had expressed being uncomfortable with dispensing wisdom from the Bible to help others: they lacked an understanding of the tools and methods that are available to render assistance. An expressed desire had existed among many of the more active members to become equipped in biblical counseling as a means of growing in maturity and to personally enhance the church body as a whole.

In application, many people need biblical counseling at Ekron Baptist Church. Given the size of the congregation and the task of reaching the unsaved of Meade County, I simply cannot physically provide the attention that is required. By establishing a base of trained counselors within Ekron Baptist Church, the church has benefitted by sharing the workload and adhering to a more biblical model of discipleship. As many members have already established relationships with people in need, training has served to benefit the overall spiritual health of the congregation. Lastly, as many outside the church have sought Christ in times of crisis, the body of disciples have been further equipped to demonstrate solid biblical truths, fulfilling the Great Commission by preaching Christ and making disciples.

Definitions, Limitations, and Delimitations

The following definitions of key terms are used throughout the project:

Biblical counseling. This form of counseling, sometimes referred to as Nouthetic counseling, is the concept of using the Scriptures alone as the authoritative means, by the working of the Holy Spirit, for a Christian to experience heart change through the sanctification process. Other books and helps may be incorporated, but the authority for direction and change is based within the Bible. Such counseling incorporates discernment of wrong doing, verbal confrontation of the problem, and doing so in a manner that benefits the counselee.[4] The term Nouthetic refers to the act of admonishing and correcting. This form of counseling seeks to incorporate a biblical standard and authority to confront and correct thoughts, behaviors, and attitudes of the counselee.

Christian counseling. Such counseling is the integration of psychology and biblical texts to provide a person with a means to changing behavior.[5] This form of counsel demonstrates a belief that the Bible is not sufficient to fully provide counsel and thus incorporates aspects of psychology into its gathering of information, diagnosis, and application.

One limitation of the project was the availability of the class members to attend for a period of no more than twelve weeks. The class size was delimited to eight adult members of Ekron Baptist Church. Additionally, the class was delimited to covering the most basic issues of biblical counseling.

Research Methodology

This project was designed to train church members to use biblical methods of discipleship for the benefit of others. The success of this project was measured by the achievement of the four aforementioned goals: enrollment of eight to ten participants,

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[4]Adams, *The Christian Counselor's Manual*, 14, 16, 17.

[5]Ibid., 6-7.

evaluation of the participants' Bible knowledge and counseling proficiency, the creation of the twelve-week course, and teaching the course resulting in a t-test for dependent samples indicating a positive statistical increase between pre-course and post-course survey scores. Each measurable stage has been evaluated using the following tools and methods.

Recruitment for the class, weeks 1 through 3, had been completed primarily through my subjective invitation. This goal was measured by having the participants sign a commitment card (see appendix 1). The card was an acknowledgment of his or her willingness to attend the twelve classes at the designated times and served as a way of keeping roll. This goal was met when eight persons enrolled in the class.

In weeks 4 and 5, members of ACBC and local pastors familiar with the ministry context of Ekron Baptist Church evaluated the developed materials through a rubric (see appendix 2). The rubric measures the qualities of the individual lessons. The measuring scale of the rubric was scored as insufficient, requires attention, sufficient, or exemplary. The rubric allowed for comments regarding each criterion heading. This goal was regarded as successful when 90 percent of the rubric evaluation markers were marked at sufficient or above. Those evaluating the lessons looked specifically for each lesson to be relevant, that the lesson was faithful to the Bible's teaching, for clarity of the lesson, that the lessons had a clear thesis with supporting material, as well as sufficiently presenting and covering the subject for the week.

During the first week of classroom teaching, which was the sixth week of project development, students were given a survey regarding the Bible knowledge they posess respect to counseling, counseling methodologies, and their own subjective comfort levels in regard to involvement with various counseling scenarios (see appendix 3). This test provided a base line score for the final test in regard to measuring for a t-test change of dependent samples.

The survey included an agreement to participate, thus outlining for the student

the use of the survey and acknowledging permission for its scores to be used in the research of this project. The first section of the survey records basic demographic data questions regarding the participants' salvation, marital status, and ages of children, if any. The remainder of the survey consists of thirty-eight questions scored by a Likert scale. The scale range includes strongly disagree, disagree, disagree somewhat, agree somewhat, agree, and strongly agree. The questions cover a wide range of issues in regard to biblical counseling; comfort levels of using the Bible, the incorporation of psychological means, the role of scripture and the Holy Spirit in counseling, the goals of counseling, tools of counseling, as well as the participants' comfort level confronting various counseling scenarios. This goal was successfully met when the persons who enrolled in the class completed the pre-course survey.

At the conclusion of teaching twelve weeks of course material, week 19 of the project development, participants were given the same questionnaire as in the first week. The evaluation of the two survey scores was used to measure any change within the class members as to Bible knowledge they have in respect to counseling, counseling methodologies, and their own subjective comfort levels in regard to involvement with various counseling scenarios (see appendix 3). A t-test for dependent samples is used to provide statistical data in evaluation of whether the project has resulted in an improvement of the class toward the goal of being equipped to effectively present biblically-based truths in a counseling discipleship model of ministry.

Week 20 encompassed tabulation and an evaluation of the t-test scores.

CHAPTER 2

THE BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL JUSTIFICATION FOR EQUIPPING MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH FOR BIBLICAL COUNSELING

A church which uses the Bible to address the issues of life is a healthy church. It demonstrates spiritual fruit bearing as well as the distinction of sanctification, being transformed from the old life unto renewed children of God. By examining select Scriptures, it is repeatedly demonstrated that believers are to actively seek spiritual growth through biblical means and to teach one another

Discipleship in Matthew 28

An exegesis of Matthew 28:18-20 supports the thesis by illustrating the use of counseling within the command of ongoing instruction to make disciples, which involves training and participation. A counselor is a disciple who trains disciples under the authority of Christ, using His Word as the canon of compliance. Understanding this teaching brings the counselor to comprehend his responsibility in perpetuating the faith.

The presumably single most quoted passage regarding evangelism in the Bible would be the account of The Great Commission:

> And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (Matt 28:18-20)[1]

Though succinct regarding evangelism, the passage is also ripe with the unquestionable directive of obedience regarding the disciple making process. It involves

[1]All Scripture references are from the New American Standard Version, unless otherwise noted.

the practice of disciple making as you go about your life, giving opportunities to all nations to know the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit giving observance to all the commands of Christ. Therefore, a fruitful obedience to this command involves successfully discipling others to make disciples who hold to this same paradigm. In order to make disciples properly, one must understand the teachings of Christ and then teach them, all the while incorporating these truths as the character of one's life. This pattern of disciple making is the same configuration for biblical counseling. As mentioned, biblical counseling is the concept of using the Scriptures alone as the authoritative means, by the working of the Holy Spirit, in order for a Christian to experience heart change through the sanctification process

Because man is born a sinner, he needs discipleship following conversion in order to illicit lasting and effective change. According to the original language of the text, discipleship is just as important as the command to go and share the gospel.[2]. Therefore, it is prudent for churches to understand and incorporate a biblical view and methodology of gospel-centered discipleship, which is more involved that mere evangelism.

Verse 19 finds authority from the previous verse which issues forth the authority of the resurrected Christ to send His disciples out as disciple makers.

> Because he now has authority, therefore his disciples are to go and make disciples- i.e., the dawning of a new age of messianic authority changes the circumstances and impels his disciples forward to a universal ministry he himself never engaged in during the days of his flesh, "except in reluctant anticipation."[3]

This new era saw the members of the church given the authority to teach the scriptures rather than relegating this duty to the rabbis. Therefore, it is important to note that the

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[2]Joseph H. Thayer, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2000), 386.

[3]D. A. Carson, *Matthew*, in vol. 9 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Tremper Longman and David Garland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 665.

church body has an inherited duty to be students and teachers of the Word of God as part of ministry.

The word "go," as used in this passage, is the Greek word *poreúomai*. It is used here as a participle. However, the context of the passage stipulates that the term "go" remain as a motivator toward imperative action. The use of the term "go" can carry an inference much like the Shema of Deuteronomy 6, that as one goes about life he is to be in the process of discipling his own family and others as well. As the teachings of Jesus are to bring every realm of a man's life under the rule of his Lord, proper discipleship would then incorporate a necessary example of how the expectations of Christianity play out in the rudimentary aspects of living within a culture. It is worth noting that the going of the church in making disciples of all nations is a fulfillment of prophesy to Abraham that through him all nations of the earth will be blessed.[4]

Of all the words used in the great commission, only "make disciples" is imperative.[5] *Mathēteúō* carries with it the connotation of pupils becoming teachers; however, it had a much deeper meaning. The depth of discipleship involves an attachment of the student for the teacher in practice and doctrine.[6] Therefore, discipleship goes far beyond mere instruction; it incorporates a relationship between the student and teacher: "To disciple a person to Christ is to bring him into the relation of pupil to teacher, 'taking

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[4]W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *Commentary on Matthew XIX-XXVIII*, The International Critical Commentary, vol. 3 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1997), 683.

[5]Carson, *Matthew and Mark*, 666.

[6]William F. Arndt and Wilbur F. Gingrich, eds., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature: A Translation and Adaptation of the Fourth Revised and Augmented Edition of Walter Bauer's Griechisch-Deutsches Worterbuch zo der ubrigen urchristlichen Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), 486. *Mathēteúō* means not only to learn, but to become attached to one's teacher and to become his follower in doctrine and conduct of life. It is really not sufficient to translate this verb as 'learn' but as 'making a disciple,' in the NT sense of mathētés." Walter Bauer and Frederick William Danker, eds., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 609.

his yoke' of authorative instruction (11:29), accepting what he says as true because he says it, and submitting to his requirements as right because he makes them."[7]

Baptism plays an important role in the life of the disciple. However, "Given the variety of expressions, especially in Acts and the Didache, we cannot confidently speak of baptismal formulas."[8] Yet baptism into a relationship under the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is imperative for conformity as a disciple and demonstrates a willingness to follow all other teachings of Christ.

With this in mind, baptism's role is a singular action whereas teaching is an ongoing discipline of the disciple. In order for a teacher to teach he must have students of his own. The intention of the reproductive process of the church involves proper discipleship. The teaching of fellow believers must occur with this goal in mind.

Christians are not to merely make converts to a way of thinking, or organizing a group mentality for the sake of social interaction. Believers make disciples of the redeemed by teaching the observance of "all that I commanded you." Counseling for discipleship necessitates a thorough understanding of the entire catalogue of Jesus teachings, which has deep roots not only in the Gospels and commentaries through the New Testament, but also an incorporation of the Old Testament.

The idea of discipleship incorporates the teaching of what Jesus taught:

> The emphasis in the commission thus falls not on the initial proclamation of the gospel but more on the arduous task of nurturing into the experience of discipleship, an emphasis that is strengthened and explained by the instruction "teaching them to keep all that I have commanded" in verse 20a.[9]

Teaching here is the word *didáskō*, which reflects teaching by word of mouth. Therefore, implying a discipleship where the teacher is in communicatory contact with the student.

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[7]John A. Broadus, *An American Commentary on Matthew* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1907), 593.

[8]Davies and Allison, *Commentary on Matthew XIX-XXVIII*, 685.

[9]Donald J. Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 33B (Dallas: Word, 1995), 887.

The student disciple gains from the tutelage of the teacher an interactive rapport of question and answer as well as feedback, encouragement, and correction.

Therefore, it can be said that Matthew 28:18-20 sets forth a clear context for the church to intentionally give personal training to its members by its members for conformity to the teaching of Jesus Christ.

Much of the New Testament was written to give direction and authority to the church to counsel, correct, and encourage the body of believers. Though many philosophies existed in the secular realm, the Christian could find confidence to turn to God through the Bible as the source to find sufficient counsel for every spiritual need.

The Sufficiency of God's Word for Transformation

In order to work through the process of sanctification the counselor needs a textbook that addresses the issues of the counselee; the Bible alone is sufficient to address the areas of life that God requires conformity. Biblical counselors use many books written by men and women, but they rooted in the Scriptures and exegeted with the goal of discipleship in mind, all the while maintaining biblical authority. These texts may be particularly written to address topics such as depression, marriage issues, and perseverance, and refer to Scripture as the authority for application. A text without a biblical foundation is a pretext, and thus by definition outside the authority of biblical counseling.

An exegesis of 2 Timothy 3:14-17 supports the thesis that a church which uses the Bible to address the issues of life is a healthy church; by demonstrating the use of the Word of God as the authority for transformation and lasting change. A counselor assured of the sufficiency of God's Word is equipped to competently confront sin and instill hope in counselees.

> You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. (2 Tim 3:14-17)

The framework of 2 Timothy 3 contrasts the world's standard of living and its opposition to the Christian model. Within this context Paul prepares Timothy for the ensuing struggle that comes upon any man who opposes worldly living. Paul implies that the old nature of a man needs to be overcome by the new life wrought in Christ. The suitability for such discipleship is quite relevant to the context of biblical counseling. The struggle to live in a God-honoring manner within a worldly context is the challenge every generation of believers has faced.

In verses 14 and 15, Paul admonishes Timothy to remember the authoritative discipleship pattern demonstrated within two sources: the sacred writings and the example of those people who modeled discipleship during his youth. He was both counseled from the Word and by those who glorified the power of God by living godly lives.

In this second instructional letter to Timothy, Paul writes in a manner implying the Old Testament and the gospel message are to be treated as cohesive in unity and purpose for counsel. This passage has come under great scrutiny from many scholars as to the precise meaning of the "God breathed" adjective. Some scholars support the idea that it is the gospel message of salvation that is to be considered inspired for the counsel that Timothy is to provide, and that not all scriptures are as useful or authoritative. Johnson writes, "Should we understand 'every God-inspired Scripture is . . .' Or every Scripture is God inspired and . . . ?"[10] The more conservative view holds that Scripture in its entirety is God-breathed (*theópneustos*), authoritative, and to be used in counseling others in Christian growth. The entire debate of the inerrancy of Scripture could be solved with a precise understanding of this phrase, for it has been the very center of the firestorm.

Regardless of the debate, a contextual understanding of the verses at hand finds the reader at the conclusion that the Word of God, that is, the sacred writings, are useful for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness.

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[10]Luke Timothy Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 35A (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 420.

Throughout this epistle, though awkward at times, "Paul uses different terms to describe the Old Testament and the gospel, they all refer to the message of God and need to be interpreted together. Timothy's ministry centers on Scripture: The OT and the gospel message."[11] Paul's admonition to Timothy is to continue in teaching the faithfulness of the Scriptures. The basis of all counseling is the Word of God. Therein lays the expression of who God is and concurrently His desires, standards, and promises for hope to the counselee. The biblical counselee finds in the scriptures a revelation of guidance. The same gospel message that saves a person is the message that works in sanctification; the prime directive of biblical counseling. It is the only textbook that adheres to the desires of God.

The usefulness of the scriptures is the crux of this passage. The Scriptures are the textbook for counseling others. Paul writes that the scriptures are useful; thus referring to their practicality rather than a mental ascent or philosophical debate. It should be noted, that as Paul writes to Timothy about the use of Scriptures he is in the very act of counseling Timothy. Timothy is often portrayed as timid and in need of asserting his pastoral office.[12] This admonition is quite similar to a counselor equipping a counselee to live according to biblical authority by faith.

The biblical model of discipleship, such as with Paul training Timothy, is congruent with the model of biblical counseling. Verse 10 finds Paul admonishing Timothy to emulate his own life as "a good friend and mentor encouraging his son in the faith by reflecting over their common experiences . . . it parallels Paul's statements elsewhere that people should imitate him."[13] Paul's consistent admonition for believers to imitate him

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[11]William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 46 (Dallas: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 555.

[12]Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2006), 781.

[13]Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 556.

can be considered a form of discipleship and counsel (1 Cor 4:16, 11:1; Eph 5:1; Phil 3:17; 2 Thess 3:7, 9; Heb 13:7). Paul certainly was an example to Timothy and others in perseverance, changing habits, and finding strength in the grace of God.

The biblical counselor finds that training others involves the use of the Bible as well as setting an example for the believer. In Timothy one finds a stalwart example of following a one-on-one relationship as well as the reproductive nature of discipleship. Paul uses the phrase "you learned" in describing to Timothy the process by which he came to know Christ and then grew in the faith through discipleship. He had been a new believer and now was entrusted with the shepherding of a church. One does not grow to a position of leadership or maturity without proper discipleship. At times of need, counseling from the scriptures becomes an imperative in the journey of sanctification.

The writings themselves are able to make one wise, however, the understanding of the writings is often through a counselor aided by the Holy Spirit. It has long been God's plan to have successive generations learn from a teacher and teach others in the roll call of faith (Matt 10:25; Luke 6:40).

One goal of discipleship in the faith is the accumulation of wisdom, in order to train additional disciples within the church. Verse 14 utilizes the word continue, *ménō*, to emphasize the established pattern of one person discipling another for the following generations to continue. The idea of which is to make a person trustworthy.[14]

Thus, Timothy is to take the Word of God and follow the model of living out the truth of scriptures in order to train others to do likewise. Timothy is being instructed to counsel the Ephesus church with the four goals of teaching, reproving, correcting and training, which may be considered doctrinally (education) and behaviorally (application); leading to the results of being adequately equipped for every good work. Mounce writes, "They are also chiastic in structure: (a) Scripture instructs positively in doctrine and (b)

[14]Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 787.

convicts heresy; likewise scripture (b) corrects improper behavior and (a) educates positively in righteous behavior."[15] Discipleship and counseling are synonymous in the goal of dealing with both heart and behavior.

Teaching, *didaskalía*, is concerned with precepts and doctrines. Reproof, *élegxis*, carries with it the idea of bringing the disciple under conviction. This conviction is a matter of heart belief. Correction, *epanórthōsis*, is occupied with the process of sanctification, setting what is wrong to be replaced with what is right. Elsewhere *epanórthōsis* may be compared to the put off and put on instruction that Paul uses when counseling the Ephesians, Timothy's home church. Training, *paideía*, deals with the instruction that a parent would give a child, or a counselor would provide a counselee. In this context it refers to training through discipline and deed rather than corrective penal punishment. Hence, training carries a context of grace upon the trainee by correction and opportunity for nurturing.

The components of the pastoral ministry in discipling the congregation are identical to the constructs of biblical counseling and are relevant today as they were in the time of the early church. Being based upon the authority of God and as a paradigm for the work of the church, the closed canon of Scripture precludes the integration of secular methodologies from the sanctification of the believer. Scripture is sufficient in itself for the counsel of the church.

Having established the authority of Scripture as a textbook in the life of a believer, the next section finds practical direction and application from the Bible for the next step in discipleship; the process of sanctification. The epistles were written to admonish and encourage while demonstrating doctrine as well as application.

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[15]Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 570.

Biblical Counseling Addresses the Sanctification Process

An exegesis of Colossians 3: 1-17 supports the thesis that a church which uses the Bible to address the issues of life is a healthy church. By biblically basing the directive to the church to put off old behaviors and to put on new behaviors as a mandate of counseling discipleship; the need to adhere to the call for sanctification, and specifically the change of habits, is addressed. The context of Paul's writing in this passage implies that instruction is needed for all believers. The counselor therefore sees the purpose of utilizing biblical methodologies to address change in a practical manner.

The essence of Colossians 3:1-17 is an exhortation for believers to set their mind on the things that are above, putting off the habits of what they once were, in order to put on the nature that is found in Christ. Dunn writes, "That is to say, it is a life lived from day to day within the world of every day, but lived out of a hidden resource, a still center with Christ in God, lived for God and His Christ, a life lived by faith in the Son of God."[16] In biblical counseling, the counselor disciples believers through the sanctification process in accordance with this scripture. The counselee is to be trained in the doctrine of the believer's new life.

In verse 1, the implication of seeking the things of Christ is met with the word *zētéō*, which implies a setting of the will. In the verse 2, a repetition of this encouragement is the phrase "set your mind," derived from the Greek word *phronéō*, which refers to the intellect. Pao writes, "This involves the transformation of one's mind in the obedient submission to God's will as manifested in both thoughts and actions."[17] Rather, it is merely a way of saying that the Christian must determine to change his thought process

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[16]James D. G. Dunn, *The Epistles to Colossians and to Philemon*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1996), 207.

[17]David W. Pao, *Colossians and Philemon*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, ed. Clinton Arnold (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 212.

toward the things of God.

Therefore, the first three verses establish hope for change by the renewing of the mind.[18] Dunn writes, "What the Pauline gospel offered and emphasized by means of its passive formulations was the promise that the change was not self-contrived but rather enabled and brought about by divine grace, the same divine grace which had raised Jesus from the dead."[19] The Christian's identity with Christ is previously emphasized in chapter 2:11, 13.

With the ethical considerations in place for change, Paul addresses the old life in verses 5 through 11. He begins with the graphic language of putting to death. Here the word *nekróō* is used to speak of slaying or "to be as good as dead."[20] The ESV renders this phrase "put to death" whereas the NAS is written, "Consider the members of your earthly body as dead." Again, therein the doctrine that is being addressed is the urgency of conformity to Christ by holiness and identity with Him in sin being killed. Throughout Scripture it is implicit that the more a person abides in Christ, walking in the spirit, the greater their hope of change.

In this passage a common sin list is recorded: immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. Verses 6 and 7 imply that these sins were part of the former way of life for the Colossians and a motivation for the wrath of God. This way of life is described by the Greek word, *záō*, which means "the blessed life which the follower of Jesus enjoys here and now in the body is simply continued in the believer's life of the future as well as referring to the death of Christ which separates Christians from sin."[21] These Colossians were no longer identified by their former way of

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[18]Renewing the mind is also emphasized by Paul elsewhere in Rom 12:1-2 and Eph 4:17-24.

[19]Dunn, *The Epistles to Colossians and to Philemon*, 203.

[20]Arndt and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 537.

[21]Ibid., 336.

life. They died to sin and were committed to life in Christ. Much hope can be given for the Christian in this doctrine. In repentance they have sought forgiveness for these blatant actions and now identity with Christ.

A secondary sin list is also included: "Anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices." Verse 8 distinguishes these sins, as recognized as an ongoing battle for the believers. Pao writes,

> With this second list of vices, Paul shows how believers should act in building up their community in unity and Love. Put . . . away can refer to the general action of "to get rid of," but in this context it may be related to the specific metaphor of putting away one's clothing.[22]

Verse 9 recognizes that the old self has been put off with its practices and have put on the new self which is in the process of being renewed.

Paul uses the concept of putting off, *apekdúomai*, the old self, and putting on, *endúō*, the new self to emphasize change (Rom 6:6, 13:14; Gal 3:27; Eph 4:22; Col 3:9, 10, 12, 14).[23] The two verbs, "to take off" and "to put on," are framed by imperatives and are constructed participially."[24] Therefore, the implication is an imperative force. The actions of putting off and putting on may be pictured as a person disrobing for baptism, "buried" with Christ in immersion, and rising to put on new clothes as a repentant disciple, thus identified with Christ. Barth and Blanke write,

> Paul considers the life of Christians not as an exchange of some vices for certain virtues, but rather as a change of dominion over the entire human being or self, then the idea even within and ethical context is close to the familiar image of taking off and putting on of vices or virtues and could be varied from the designation of objects to a more encompassing concept, namely that of "human beings."[25]

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[22]Pao, *Colossians and Philemon*, 223.

[23]Arndt and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 263.

[24]Markus Barth, *Ephesians 4-6*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 34A (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1984), 409.

[25]Ibid., 411.

In Romans 13:14, believers are told to "put on the Lord Jesus Christ." For Paul this is the new self. It refers to an "Adam-Christ" typology whereas Adam represents the sinful old nature and Christ the redemption of humanity and defeat of sin:

> The description of the "new humanity" replaces ethnic, cultural, and social criteria with the one that centers on Christ and points to a new identity for those who accept God's climatic act in history: "there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all in all."[26]

Therefore, the passage commands that believers put away the old sinful way of life and put on the life of Christ in such a way that there is an observable outward change of purpose.

Sanctification therefore is an ongoing process. The process of being renewed is illustrated in the Greek word, *anakainóō,* which refers to the redemptive work of God within the believer.[27] Redemption is carried out in, *epígnōsis*, translated as knowledge.[28] This form of knowledge requires participation of the disciple and leads to change by renewal which affects the very character of the person. This is the sanctification process.

Verses 12 through 17 relate in a positive manner what this outward change is to look like. A list of replacement virtues are contained in verses 12 through 14: "A heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you." Thus a pattern of transpositional character is to be the result of putting on Christ. Because believers are new creations in Christ, old patterns, motivations, and character are replaced by a new character that is Christ like (2 Cor 5:17). The phrase, "beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity,"

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[26]Pao, *Colossians and Philemon*, 218

[27]Arndt and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 55

[28]Ibid., 291.

emphasizes that love is not an additional virtue, but like Christ, the virtue that motivates all the others.

A distinctive character of the Christian is peace, utilizing the word *eirḗnē*.[29] The peace that is implied is the peace of the kingdom of God. This continues the direction of the first three verses, to seek and to set your mind on the things above. The instructions to the believer call for continual action in the fight against sin and progress toward becoming like Jesus. Dunn writes, "Paul is saying that the peace that characterizes the 'new self' should be a ruling principal or virtue in our innermost being and that is should affect all our relationships- and in this context, our relationships with one another."[30] In the community of the church making disciples, this unity is found in glorifying Christ together.

The call to operate toward a manifestation of a Christ-like life is supported further through the use of the word, *brabeúō*, in verse 15, often translated as rule. This word calls the believer to make decisions as an umpire or judge taking responsibility for his decisions. Followed by, *kardía*, representing the heart and seat of affections, impulses, and motivations, one can gain an understanding combining these two words that the believer is to forgo a glib *laissez-faire* attitude and to actively discern every influence as to whether it glorifies God.[31] In other words, the Christian should not discern choices by the question "What is wrong with it?" but rather evaluate choices with the question, "Does it glorify God?"

Verse 15 notes, "Indeed you were called in one body," nodding toward the unity of the saints. Growth in Christ is an individual as well as a corporate calling. The idea of thankfulness has expressive connotations in a corporate setting: From a

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[29]Arndt and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 226.

[30]Dunn, *The Epistles to Colossians and to Philemon*, 283.

[31]Arndt and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 404.

counseling perspective, this is quite helpful as the relationship of an individual's need for the local church is established. A primary function of the church is to disciple believers, often through direct counseling.

Verse 16 further employs the duty of the local church: "Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God." An emphasis is given to the Word of God, binding individuals together for worship. Earlier verse 11 distinguished that the differences of Christians, whether "Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman," meant nothing within the unity of Jesus Christ. The church demonstrates transformation as she works to put off the worldly distinctions that at one time divided her members, and now works to put on unity through obedience to the Word of God.

The Word of God here is the *lógos*; the word of truth, the gospel message.[32] The Word of God is to dwell within the believer much like the admonishment of James 1:21. It is to richly indwell them, not in a budgeted manner, but freely bringing a prosperity to their lives. This in turn requires teaching and admonishing. The value of an item is not understood without education. Hence, as in 2 Timothy 3:16-17, the church is to be on mission to teach its members the richness of the gospel, resulting in worship. This worship is found in the expression of "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God." Dunn writes,

> The combination "word" (logos) and "deed" (ergon) is a common way of referring to the totality of one's interaction with the world everything, including the what we say and what we do, should be governed by the consideration of what it means to live in the real of the risen Christ.[33]

As the reality of the manifestation of Christ in the believer's life sets in, and as the chains of sin are removed, the response culminates in giving glory to God.

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[32]Arndt and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 478.

[33]Dunn, *The Epistles to Colossians and to Philemon*, 291.

Life is not always a matter of corporate worship, and Paul practically encourages the Colossians to take the mundane tasks of life and realize that in Christ all things can be done as an act of glorification. This process involves taking every thought captive and centering the mind on Christ, working at tasks as if unto the Lord. This is a methodology of biblical counseling.

As the Word of God is applied, the members of the church grow in Christ. Such growth facilitates the health of the church through an active participation of the members' discipling each other. This creates an atmosphere of the joy and glory of God through obedience and personal holiness. This practice gives encouragement and reminders of the process of God's grace and love.

The Church Body Has a Responsibility to Actively Counsel its Members

An exegesis of Ephesians 4:11-14 supports the thesis that a church which uses the Bible to address the issues of life is a healthy church, by demonstrating that God has a standard for discipleship. This passage validates that the teaching of counsel by His Word to the church is utmost in importance. These standards relate the responsibility that the church members have in counseling one another. All instruction is to be mindful of the priority the Word of God has for all aspects of life. A church that takes this instruction to heart is a church that demonstrates a love for God as well as the members of the body.

The entirety of Ephesians 4 ought to be considered in the purpose and mission of the church. However, for the topic of this demonstration in brevity, an effort is made to focus on the crux of the church's charge. Ephesians 4:11-14 states,

> And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

These verses charge the church body with continually providing discipleship, each one playing his part, for growth. Though a parenthetical comment, the text strengthens itself upon an Ephesian theme of building up the body while growing in love and unity.[34] The earlier notation of verse 7, "each one of us," notes the participation of all believers in the work of the whole. The individuals of the church have specific roles, yet these parts are synergistic in the life and ministry of the church for the proclamation and discipleship of the gospel.

Much has been written on the temporal office of apostle and prophet; however, there is a great continuation evident for evangelists, shepherds, and teachers:

> The temporal clause of v. 13 further defines this last aspect in the church's members attaining a goal, which again three prepositional phrases explain from three different angles—unity of faith and knowledge, maturity, and a maturity which is measured by the fullness of Christ.[35]

The ongoing goal of the church is to win souls to Christ and to shape them as disciples. The authority to do so is from Christ Himself; "and he gave" is a direct correlation to saving grace. The believer has been saved from sin and self-centered living. His salvation results in being saved unto a new life of righteousness, and living so others would be built up in Christ. Paul calls this "building up the body of Christ." Lincoln writes, "In the post-apostolic period it is the evangelists who continue to carry out many of the activities of the apostles and it is the pastors who now exercise the leadership role, alongside the teachers, previously held by the prophets.[36]

The recipients of this letter, as well as those who follow in succession, are to see their role in the ongoing drama of God's revelation of His glory by the propagation of the gospel. Three goals are evident for the church in this chapter: first, to attain to the

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[34]Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 42 (Dallas: Word, 1990), 224.

[35]Ibid., 226.

[36]Ibid., 250.

unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God; second, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; and third, in verse 16, making the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. Thus the church is to grow in knowledge of Christ, to apply that knowledge, and to do so in love. Verse 12 speaks of equipping the saints using the Greek word, *katartismós*. This word carries the idea of reconciliation, setting bones, and restoration of things in proper condition.[37]

The knowledge of Christ is central to what the church does. The hope that is offered by the church depends on the person of Jesus Christ. Thus the church is to be Christ-centered in all of its functions. In proper church doctrine, Christ becomes the center of all that is proclaimed. He is the benchmark for righteousness and unity.

These goals are to have an earthly purpose in maintaining the doctrinal purity of the church. Ongoing problems of training believers unto maturity will always exist in a church that obeys the Great Commission. When new believers are added to the body they lack a foundation for direction, the doctrines of the church are that which keep the church under the dominion of Christ rather than personal opinion, popular ideology, or majority rule. To deviate from teaching the doctrinal truth of the Bible, is to proclaim another gospel. Thus, members of the church are to be kept in the teaching brought forth from Scripture as such theological application will draw them perpetually closer to God. Without this, the goal of unity and maturity for the church would be easily cast aside. Thus, the workings of doctrinal support were set for ongoing teaching within the church that believers would be united in Christ, despite differences, and actively growing through the sanctification process.

Not all are called to be teachers, yet each member of the body is to be growing as a disciple, and fulfilling his role in unity: “One thing is clearly stated: Christ Himself

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[37]Markus Barth, *Ephesians 4-6*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 34A (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1984), 439.

appoints the special officers. He who despises their ministry would condemn God and reject His gift."[38] There is no room for anyone to opt out of service in the body toward the goal of being built up. The reason that Christ gave the church ministers of various definitions was to build up the body, aim for a goal of completion, and to enact service, which necessitates an active demonstration of discipleship. Lincoln writes, "An active role for all believers is safeguarded by vv7, 16, but the primary context here in v12 is the function and role of Christ's specific gifts, the ministers, not that of all the saints."[39] Not every believer will specifically be gifted to participate in the role of counselor. Yet, each member, when abiding in Christ and interacting with other members, counsels at some level. One's words, worship, and actions relate to one another the ways of God and what it means to be a Christian.

The church is given a protective charge that elicits the participation of every member in the congregation "so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes" (Eph 4:14). Watchfulness amongst the church is to be taken seriously. The teachings of the church are in stark contrast to the world. Each member was to practice discernment. All too often immature believers, that is children, are carried away by the theological fad of the day. The more mature saints were to teach and safeguard these younger believers with Scripture and discipleship: this is the essence of biblical counseling.

Unremitting immaturity is not to be tolerated amongst the body. When a member fails to grow in Christ it ought to be treated as a crisis. The member is either not regenerate, or as often is the case, is in need of personal discipleship. The church in either regard is to actively pursue the growth of each person into the fullness of Christ.

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[38]Barth, *Ephesians 4-6*, 435.

[39]Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 252.

Another crisis for immature believers indicated in this passage is the openness that exists for them to fall prey to false doctrines. Many believers are led astray by falling prey to false teaching. Because of heretical teachers throughout history, church doctrine based upon scripture and application is necessary for every believer.

New believers were to be taught discernment by the leaders of the church, and the other members have the privilege of supporting such teaching. Not only would false doctrine be a problem, but human deception, often brought about through the sinful nature of man in a self-serving manner, as well as deceitful schemes, which could be compared to someone creating his own teaching based upon personal assumptions. Over and again, the church is to be like the Berean brethren of Acts 17:11, testing every doctrine against Scripture all for the purpose of growing in Christ.

This passage also brings with it an implied ethos of grace, of which the church should note. To disciple another in unity and love, for the building up of one another in faith unto maturity, requires the church to avoid hypocrisy. The church needs to offer graceful discipleship to one another despite differences in order to be united. The necessary correction and edification of one another ought to be done by speaking the truth in love as each person is open to the same standards. The church is also required to adhere to the same doctrine, that of Jesus Christ. When it does so, the church demonstrates the life changing power of Jesus Christ.

Such a church sees God honoring results. Applied to life, the counsel of the Lord creates within the body an ability to rise above the storms of life and demonstrate to the world the genuineness of God's written Word, which creates a testimony of the glory of God that contradicts the ways of man.

Biblical Counsel Is Unlike the Counsel of the World

An exegesis of Psalm 1 supports the thesis that a church which uses the Bible to address the issues of life is a healthy church, through illustration of how the counsel of the Lord is unlike any other counsel. The passage encourages perseverance and discipline

in being rooted in the Scriptures as well as participating in behaviors that promote long-term growth. The counselor may use this passage to inspire hope in adverse circumstances, encourage the proper choice of the counselee's use of time, and to point out his standing before God in judgment. A counselee increases his adherence to the instruction given when hope is gained through the Scriptures and the person of God.

> Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; for the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish. (Ps 1)

This passage, which poetically begins a book of great counsel, demonstrates that there are two forms of counsel; God-centered and all else. The text is a recipe for blessedness; finding joy through glorifying God. Blessed is the man who does not participate in the counsel of those who are in opposition to God. This blessedness finds itself in delight, a delight perpetuated by the law, the Word of God. This blessedness is further affirmed by Christ in the Sermon on the Mount. This blessedness is a contrast of growth with fruit bearing to stagnation and decay: "While man's 'happiness' is a free gift of God, it must be promoted by two kinds of activities: dissociation from the wicked and association with God."[40]

On the side of man centered wisdom, the man could choose to walk in the counsel of the wicked, stand in the way of sinners, and ultimately sit, as akin to a judge, in the seat of scoffers. Notice the actions of walking, stopping to stand and consort, and being a seated judge among those who find wisdom in their own devices. This is not a

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[40]Willem A. VanGemeren, *Psalms*, in vol. 5 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991), 54.

progression; “Instead the parallelism is synonymous and profoundly portrays the totality of evil.”[41]

Walking in the counsel of the wicked is akin to going about one’s life in the advice of the corrupt. Standing in the way of sinners is harmonious with abiding in the course of the guilty. Completing the trinity of failure, one is found sitting in the seat of scoffers, encamped amongst mockers; those who enthrone themselves as judges of others. This man who fails to meditate and act upon the words of God is a law unto himself. It is easy to see from this Psalm that the negative side, walking, standing, and sitting in opposition to God, leads to a life based upon the precipice of destruction.

However, the side of hope demonstrates that the blessed man delights himself continually in the Law of God. The word for delight, *ḥēp̄eṣ*, finds root in being inclined and desirous toward something. Actual delight is found in the mediation of what God has said. This form of meditation finds itself not only thinking deeply about the truths and implications of what has been written, but it may even connote a verbal uttering of what is pondered. It finds its fulfillment in application of action. The meditation of the man involves the renewing of his mind to think about the nature of God, to gain a perspective that is acted upon in faith. The law is the Torah; the words of God. The law is God’s direction for man, instructions for his good and preservation: “In wisdom literature the way of the Torah signifies the adherence to, as well as the enjoyment and application of, God’s will to everyday life.”[42] The man who acts thusly is synonymous with being a disciple.

The man who delights in God’s law is compared to a tree. The tree metaphor lends itself to being stable, weathering storms and generations, and growing. This particular man finds himself constantly nourished, even when others are in times of

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[41]VanGemeren, *Psalms*, 54.

[42]Ibid., 55.

drought. He is thus able to produce fruit in its season. This person is disciplined, rooted, and fixed upon the Word of God. The counselor can inspire great hope in persevering for the counselee through this truth from God's Word.

He also is prosperous in all that he does. This prosperity is akin to Romans 8:28 where God causes all things to work together for good, for those who love Christ Jesus. This again is a call to perseverance. A person may never know what God is working in his life, yet a hope can be assured.

Returning to a poetical contrast, the wicked man is addressed. The wicked man, *rāšā'*, is in opposition to the one who delights in God. The definition of the word includes being guilty or in the wrong, an opposite of righteous, *ṣaddiyq*. Rather than being depicted as some comparable living vegetation, the wicked is merely reduced to chaff, a waste product driven by the wind, trampled as animal bedding, and burned with fire. The short-lived life of the chaff man is contrasted to the mighty tree that is one who follows God. Where the righteous man responds to God in delight, the wicked man continues to be his own source of wisdom and enchantment.

Throughout this psalm the idea of judgment exists. The man akin to the tree is lasting and growing. The man of his own making, the chaff, is blown away at the slightest breeze. Again the idea of standing is introduced, in judgment, the wicked will not stand. This is a certainty of the future. Sinners will not be found in the congregation of the righteous, which is encamped and abiding.

The trials of life are forms of judgment and testing in regard to a man's relationship with God; so too the biblical counselor can impart wisdom for living from the law of God for success. Encouragement to persevere, abide, flee evil, and make use of God's Word with meditation and application all find rooted examples in this passage. This primer of wisdom encourages discipline for perseverance and growth.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL SUPPORT FOR PRESENTING BIBLICALLY BASED COUNSEL

Based upon the explanation and summary of Scripture in the previous chapter, it is evident there exists a great practicality and responsibility for the church to counsel its members. Equipping the members of the church to use biblically-based counseling strengthens the Christ-centeredness and effectiveness of the church. Putting the truth of Scripture into practice fosters spiritual growth in the members of the church: "The Bible is the basis for a Christian's counseling because it deals with the same issues that all counseling does."[1] Biblical counseling demonstrates to the church the practicality of the Scriptures, which strengthens the ability of members to depend upon the doctrines of the Bible for personal growth.[2] As biblical counseling deals with the heart of man, the Bible itself is the source of unmitigated authority. John MacArthur writes, "Scripture is the only reliable manual for true soul-study. It is so comprehensive in the diagnosis and treatment of every spiritual matter that, energized by the Holy Spirit in the believer, it leads to making one like Jesus Christ."[3]

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[1]Jay Adams, *A Theology of Christian Counseling: More than Redemption* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979), xiii.

[2]Biblical counseling is the concept of using the Scriptures alone as the authoritative means, by the working of the Holy Spirit, for a Christian to experience heart change through the sanctification process

[3]John MacArthur, ed., *Counseling: How to Counsel Biblically* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005), 8.

Biblical Counseling Seeks Lasting Change

Much has been written by Jay Adams on this subject of Scripture: "A ministry of the Word is not such when it is based on substitutes."[4] The Scriptures are God's gift to man for guidance in the sanctification process. Paul wrote, "See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ" (Col 2:8). Counselors must use the truth of Scripture to reveal the behavioral management of the world as being inferior to the freedom wrought through the cross.

The biblical counselor desires to honor God by helping people with the problems they face. Counseling can equip the church in at least three distinct ways. First, the church uses counseling to evangelize the lost, thus seeing men empowered for change. Without Christ there is no hope for transformation of the heart.

Second, counseling can be a means of intense discipleship to work through ongoing problems. Many Christians struggle not only with sin, but the problems of life. The Bible is not just a book of rules, it is a wellspring of God's promises that one might live abundantly (John 10:10). The counselor helps a Christian to persevere and have hope.

Third, members of the church, and more specifically, biblical counselors, should help others to become walking testimonies of a life changed by God. Martyn Lloyd-Jones speaks to this under the context of depression: "The first is that it is very sad that anybody should remain in such a condition. But a second reason is still more serious and important, that is that such people are very poor representatives of the Christian faith."[5]

Counseling seeks to make every man complete in Christ (Col 1:28). By

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[4]Adams, *A Theology of Christian Counseling*, xiii.

[5]D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Spiritual Depression: Its causes and Cures* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1965), 23.

design, man needs to follow through with practical implementation of wisdom and discernment, which is the aim of biblical counseling. Wisdom comes with truth; for the opposite of truth is lies and falsehood. When a counselee deals with lies and falsehood he is basing choices and values upon false information, deception, swiftly changing benchmarks of hope and standards. The counselee's time and efforts are often met with disappointment. This is why the teaching of the Bible is full of hope and grace.

When a man fills his life with scriptural truth, he learns quickly to distinguish between truths and lies. Dealing with truth leads to wisdom, knowledge, and success. By abiding in Christ, the Christian naturally grows out of the old life habits of confusion, bondage to sin, and fleshly foolishness, to a new life of greater stability, freedom, and utter joy. Counseling through God's Word changes the heart of man and therefore everything that flows out of it.

Counseling is a means of uniting a man with the Word of God to meet the need for change. "That is the first crucial factor to grasp at the outset: man was created in such a way that for his own good, and God's glory, it was necessary to depend upon divine counsel and be changed by it."[6] Change is dependent upon God and doctrine is an important framework. To grasp a proper knowledge of God, one must have correct understanding. Therefore doctrine is crucial to counseling; it produces in the disciple a greater knowledge of God and dependence upon Him, not just for behavioral aspects, but also for the revelation of the person of God. Counseling goes beyond a management of behavior, it leads a person to behold the glory of God.

As Psalm 119 suggests, God's Word is a counsel which requires action in order to be effective for the hearer. Just as Jesus had to explain the scriptures to His audience, so the counselor explains the scriptures to counselee (Matt 12:3. 5, 19:4, 22:31; Mark 12:10, 12:26; Luke 6:3). Adams writes, "At least a certain amount of biblical exposition

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[6]Adams, *A Theology of Christian Counseling*, 3.

ought to accompany any authoritative directive ("Joe, you must stop…") if it is not already absolutely clear to the counselee that the Bible really gives such direction…"[7]

In other cases that the scriptures are clear, however, the counselee may not be taking to heart the directives of the application that the scriptures are making. A counselee knows that he needs to obey, but subjectively make excuses to remove himself from the authority of the Bible. In such situations the counselor must exert the authority of the Word to the counselee that he will be held accountable for obeying the Word of God: "Scripture challenges us to face the hard reality that we are active worshippers who continually reveal the identity of our functional god(s) by the way we think, speak, and behave."[8]

As the counselor depends upon the Holy Spirit, he is reminding the counselee that Christ is his Lord. The counselor is not the authority in counseling, the Word of God is: "Only an external, divinely delivered revelation provides the way out of subjectivism."[9] Rather than reasoning with the counselee the benefits of behavioral change, the counselor depends solely upon Scripture for the change that is to be wrought within the heart of man by referring to scriptural truth. "Wisdom" and "living faith" necessarily embody creative adaptations, applications, and personalization."[10]

Scripture gives practical advice that is clear: put off the old man and put on the new (Rom 13:14; Eph 4:22, 28; Col 3:9, 12). Scripture address the heart of man. God never commands a behavior for man without also providing the grace and power of the

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[7]Adams, *A Theology of Christian Counseling*, 19.

[8]James MacDonald, Bob Kellemen, and Steve Viars, eds., *Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling: Changing Lives with God's Changeless Truth* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2013), 96.

[9]Adams, *A Theology of Christian Counseling,* 21.

[10]David Powlison, *Seeing with New Eyes: Counseling and the Human Condition Through the Lens of Scripture* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2003), 30.

Spirit to change, and the appropriate substitute habit to develop in place of the sinful nature. Therefore, Scripture, when studied, reveals the helps that are not only head knowledge, but a practical reality of liberation from sin. MacArthur writes,

> If evangelicals do not rediscover biblical counseling and reinstate God's Word to its rightful place as the supreme discerner and mender of thoughts and intents of the heart (see Heb. 4:12), we will lose our testimony to the world, and the church itself will die.[11]

The practicality of Scripture stands in sharp contrast against the empty philosophy of the world. Worldly psychology and behavioral management often seeks to treat symptoms, leaving the counselee chained to methodologies, labels of dysfunction, and medications, which is simply trading one encumbrance for another: "Human substitutes, the counsel of the ungodly, do not have the power to enable a human being to live harmoniously with God, with his neighbors, or with his world."[12]

The counselor who uses the Scriptures faithfully can produce for the counselee a great amount of hope in the face of discouragement: "Because his counsel is dependent upon biblical principles, a Christian counselor (like a Christian preacher) must understand all that the Scriptures say on a given topic in order to give fully biblical direction to their counselees."[13] The counselee is given much hope and a sure course of action when he is shown in the Scriptures the sufficiency of Christ for meeting of his questions and problems. Wielded authoritatively, the Bible becomes not just a sword, but a surgeon's scalpel cutting away the tumors of false doctrine: "Authoritative proclamation of the Word in preaching and in counseling (not authoritarian) grows only from a sound knowledge of theology."[14]

The use of Scripture provides great practicality in giving hope to the counselee.

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[11]MacArthur, *Counseling*, 17.

[12]Adams, *A Theology of Christian Counseling,* 35.

[13]Ibid., 12.

[14]Ibid., 13.

Because issues of the heart are often related to sin, and the Bible is the sole authority on God's redemption of man, there exists an endless bounty of hope streaming from the Scriptures. Scripture, given before the philosophies of Freud, Maslow, and Rodgers, provided a sufficiency for man to deal with his problems: "For example, Scripture contains no hint that man struggles with a "poor view of self" or "low self-esteem."[15] Scripture confronts the selfishness of a man and his relationship to God and men. By this revelation the counselee can address the true problem at hand. Even when the problems of man are organic in nature, the Bible can still be counted upon to provide strength to persevere in a manner that pleases and glorifies God (Jas 1:2-6, 5:14). Stuart Scott writes,

> In sum, a Christian worldview (embracing the purpose of creation and the gospel) along with God's Spirit, His Word personally and specifically applied, and Christ's church are sufficient to deal with *a counselee's* personal issues, the impact of his circumstances, his sufferings and sins.[16]

The counselor therefore provides great hope: "Jesus in His high priestly prayer, made a profound request for those who would place their faith and trust in Him. 'Sanctify them in truth; Your word is truth' (John 17:17 NASB)."[17] The success of counseling is dependent upon the work of the Holy Spirit, based upon the Word of God. It is the counselor's privilege and joy to share the liberating truth of the gospel for the salvation and sanctification of those who seek to abide in Christ.

Biblical Counseling Differs from Psychology

During the Greco-Roman world of Christ and the early church, many philosophies abounded for dealing with life's problems. The Greeks, Romans, and various other groups developed ways of interpreting the motives and means of man. A

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[15]MacArthur, *Counseling*, 40.

[16]Stuart Scott, "A Biblical Counseling Approach," in *Counseling and Christianity: Five Approaches,* ed. Stephen P. Greggo, Timothy A. Sisemore, and Eric L. Johnson (Downers Grove, IL: IVP. 2012), 161.

[17]MacDonald, Kellemen, and Viars, *Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling*, 97.

survey of the Bible finds that Jesus calls people to know His truth, which will set them free (John 8:32). He never admonished the church to adapt, utilize, or even study these worldly philosophies.

Today, the prominent mode of dealing with trauma, mental illness, addictions, and behavior would be through secular psychology. Biblical counseling provides a God honoring alternative to the methods of psychology. "Instead of 'psychopathology' and 'syndromes,' one see 'sins' against this person, and sufferings that are 'trials' revealing a need for a true Deliverer and refuge."[18] What Christ taught 2,000 years ago is still true today. The studies made by psychologists have not improved upon the redemptive work of Christ and are not to be incorporated into the methodology of biblical counseling.[19]

By holding to a biblically based ethic, the church takes responsibility for the duty of turning to God alone for solutions to the heart problems of life. Paul Tripp writes, "If my heart is the source of my sin problem, then lasting change must always travel through the pathway of my heart."[20] In contrast, psychology at its core is a means of living and solving the problems of life without God. The grand tipping point for this philosophy came from Sigmund Freud, who was adamant in his antithesis of man's dependence upon His creator.[21] A historical understanding of other leading psychologists and courses at the college level will leave the reader with a void of acknowledgement that God is necessary to life.[22] The Christian can have hope, long before these men brought

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[18]Powlison, *Seeing with New Eyes,* 4.

[19]It should be noted that secular psychology may provide insights that the biblical counselor can use; it is not a tool for advice, treatment, nor authority.

[20]Paul David Tripp, *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands: People in Need of Change Helping People in Need of Change*. (Phillipsburgh, NJ: P & R, 2002), 62.

[21]Kendra Cherry, "Freud & Religion," accessed June 30, 2014, http://psychology.about.com/od/sigmundfreud/p/freud_religion.htm.

[22]MacArthur, *Counseling*, 37.

forth viewpoints of man redeeming himself; God gave man counsel through His Word.

Adams writes, "Contrary to Carl Roger's views which have been accepted as the preferred counseling stance of so many ministers, man did not come from God's hand with all the resources that he would ever need prepackaged within."[23] Even though Adam and Eve were created very good, and knew the world in its origin without sin, they still had a daily communion with God that was to their benefit. As Christ said, man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God (Matt 4:4). Man was created dependent upon God, and in his sinful condition even more so. One outright act pertinent to the fall of man was the fact that in eating the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve were making an attempt to be sufficient apart from God. The temptation began with a question of the very words of God.

Scripture is rife with examples of man's failures of attempted living independent of God. With great grace it is also filled with cases of great glory when man abides with God. The contrasts are simple to see, but due to sin are hard to follow. Therefore, the counselor has a great joy in being able to lead people in the truth of Scripture; demonstrating the gospel message of the sufficiency of Christ.

Adam and Eve fell into sin because they chose a philosophy that was contrary to the truth of God: "It is clear, then, that from Adam's time on there have been two counsels in this world; divine counsel and devilish counsel; the two are in competition."[24] Jay Adams points out three problems inherent with ungodly counsel: (1) It competes with and tries to overthrow God's counsel, (2) because it is inspired by Satan, (3) because it is given by those who rebelliously side with the devil. In essence, any counsel that is not God's counsel is an attempt to move away from a dependence upon God in order to glorify man at some level. God's glory is not to be shared (Isa 48:11).

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[23]Adams, *A Theology of Christian Counseling*, 1.

[24]Ibid., 4.

Therefore, the outright use of psychology, as well as attempts to Christianize psychology with an integration of Scripture run afoul of the nature of God. Much like the effort of synthesis by Aaron in Exodus 32:8, to teach that the golden calf is he who led the Hebrews from Egypt, so is any middle ground viewpoint. There is no third means, either Scripture stands on its own, or the counsel given is not God's counsel: "It is important to note that neither Genesis 3 nor Psalm 1 leaves any room for a third, neutral counsel."[25]

Psychology is quite varied in theory, method, and application. In its purer form, psychology seeks to help man help himself, all without the need for God. Some psychologists go so far as to say that man's desire for religion is a creation of his own mind.[26] A wide range of teachings abound whereas one proponent may be en vogue today, tomorrow may be seen as outdated, such as Freud. Therefore, it is difficult to find an operation of psychological discipline that is carried across the board, but some ideas do carry more popularity than others.

One aspect of psychology that differs from biblical counseling is the control of the mind: "Change the way people think and, whether we call such persuasion 'education' or 'propaganda,' the impact is considerable."[27] Hence, psychology deals with the thought patterns of a man, and by thought management the behavior can be manipulated. However, if the management devices, whether they be therapy groups, medications, or other practices are not continued, the client reverts back to his old ways.

This is not so in biblical counseling. The Bible does speak to the renewing of the mind in Romans 12, as well as other texts that point to the thought patterns of life (Rom 1:21; 1 Cor 14:20; Phil 4:8; 1 Pet 4:1). Agreeably the mind is quite important, but the mind is directly connected to the heart, that is the nature, of the man. Biblical

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[25]Adams, *A Theology of Christian Counseling*, 8.

[26]Eric Johnson, ed., *Psychology and Christianity: Five Views* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2010), 16-19.

[27]Ibid., 60.

counseling deals with the heart of the man in order to renew his life in the sanctification process. Rather than being a recovering alcoholic, the heart is changed and the Christian is a new creation (2 Cor 5:17).

Another divergence in the divide between psychology and Christianity is the issue of self-esteem. Psychologist David Meyers notes self-esteem that is thinking highly of ourselves, is an echo of "a very old religious idea—that self-righteous pride is the fundamental sin, the deadliest of the seven deadly sins."[28] But he continues to validate this form of self-exaltation:

> Yet self-esteem pays dividends. Self-affirmation is often adaptive. It helps maintain our confidence and minimize depression. To doubt our efficacy and to blame ourselves for our failures is a recipe for failure, loneliness, and dejection. People made to feel secure and valued exhibit less prejudice and contempt for others.[29]

Powlison writes that "by definition, a psychotherapist's 'unconditional positive regard' views people as intrinsically acceptable and able to learn how to feel good about themselves."[30]

One problem with the self-esteem psychology is that there are no limits between self-esteem and pride. They are one in the same. Pride, encouraged by psychology, focuses confidence in oneself rather than on the grace and authority of Christ. Powlison calls this the Achilles' heel of research psychology.[31] Pride, being a sin, is often behind all other sins, except per say utter godlessness. Scott writes,

> If we deal with our own identity in Christ, or that our counselee is a way that causes a focus on self, a reveling or finding of comfort and rest *in* our own self, claiming or

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[28]David Meyers, "A Levels-of-Explanation View," in *Psychology and Christianity*, 59.

[29]Ibid.

[30]David Powlison, "A Biblical Counseling Response to Levels of Explanation," in *Psychology and Christianity*, 99.

[31]Ibid.

> intrinsic worth/value, or a feeding or our own fleshly desires, we are stealing glory that belongs to God.[32]

Again, even those who try to integrate psychology with Christianity fall short. Powlison writes, "I believe Meyer's approach fails to understand people in the end, because he does not go deep enough-not because he is a social psychologist but because he does not think Christianly enough about people."[33]

In contrast with psychology, biblical counselors must understand the nature of the human heart, the strength of sin, and the work of redemption: "The revelation of Jesus Christ offers a distinctive interpretation of the 'thoughts and intentions of the heart,' those schemata and motivations that structure and animate human behavior."[34] Not only must the counselee rely upon the Holy Spirit and Scripture, the counselor also must do so. The counselor is merely a conduit in the hands of God in the drama of redemption. Therefore it should be noted that God can use any member of the body of Christ to disciple a person with biblical counseling.

It should also be noted that there is some value to psychology, yet one must be cautious of the misinterpretations of the human heart in psychology's diagnosis.

> A persistent misunderstanding of the biblical counseling view asserts, "You don't believe Christians can learn anything from secular psychology." On the contrary, we can learn, should learn, and do learn from anyone and everyone. But we do seek to be aware of the blinking and distorting effects of faulty assumptions and explanations (including our own failures to apprehend the Christian gaze and to express wise love).[35]

Psychology can produce findings of predictability, and great insights. These should always be taken into consideration that the root cause is never found short of the

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[32]Stuart Scott, "Our Identity . . . Should it be a Focus in Counseling?" Biblical Counseling Coalition, February 26, 2014, accessed February 26, 2014, http://biblicalcounselingcoalition.org/blogs/2014/02/26/our-identityshould-it-be-a-focus-in-counseling/

[33]Powlison, "A Biblical Counseling Response," 97.

[34]Ibid., 243.

[35]David Powlison, "A Biblical Counseling View," in *Psychology and Christianity*, 255.

revelation of God. It should also be understood that psychology is a soft-science; it can predict outcomes but fails to produce any conclusive test for cause and effect. Almost all of psychology is a subjective interpretation when it comes to interpreting and establishing data.

Many more nuances of psychology provide man with further alternatives to living without God. Biblical counseling stands in contrast to these means. Man is dependent upon God and called to be part of the local church for the purpose of sanctification. Rather than behavioral management, he is to seek a heart transformation for the goal of abiding in Christ. The biblically-based man is centered upon God, not separated from Him.

Most unfortunately, many a pastor has abandoned the duty of his call to provide proper soul care. "Weltanschauung, the imperialistic intrusion of the psychotherapeutic into Christianity has attempted to undermine and redefine the supremacy of the Word of God among Christians."[36] Often, referrals to professional counselors who utilize worldly methods are the norm. These counselors cannot be expected to turn the hearts of counselees back to the Word of God in a manner fitting for a Christian. Integrated counsel cannot be expected to deal with sin as God would have it through repentance. It is the duty of the church to administer the Word of God to its members (1 Kgs 8:35; 2 Chr 7:14; Rom 3:20, 6:10-23, 8:2; Gal 3:22, 6:1; 1 Tim 5:20; Jas 4:17).

Jesus thrice commanded Peter to tend His sheep; a call to pastoral ministry (John 21:15-17). "The cure and care of souls is the original pastoral work, done by pastoral workers in service to the great Shepherd."[37] Real and lasting change can occur in a man's life when he is redeemed by His savior, convicted that the Word of God is true, and under conviction that his sins are dealt with by Jesus Christ. The command to

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[36]MacArthur, *Counseling*, 32.

[37]Powlison, "A Biblical Counseling Response," 258.

restore a man is to be coupled with gentleness (Gal 6:1). The work of the church is not about billing insurance companies, touting an intellectual ethos, or behavioral management. The church helps a man live unto Christ the best he can through a redemptive handling of the past as it implements the work of soul care, a work of applied grace. Only through the church can a man receive the confrontation and compassion to walk in a newness of life (Rom 6:4). God holds His church responsible to disciple His sheep.

Each Church Member Has a Role in Counseling Discipleship

Throughout the Bible, and especially the New Testament, evidence is given of God's desire for all believers to mature in fellowship with Him and to be disciples who reproduce disciples. Maturity in Christ is thus a goal for believers to achieve in themselves as well as accomplish in the entire church body. Healthy churches are those that fulfill the directives of Scripture as this facilitates church growth as well as establishes a place that fosters living in accordance with the glory of God. The making of disciples, that is counseling one another in the Word of God, helps to keep Christ central in all the functions of the church. "If you were to evaluate everything in your church through the grid of whether it was assisting in making disciples, then it is possible you would determine there are some things your church should stop doing and other things you should start doing."[38] As discussed in chapter 2, Matthew 28:18-20 clearly sets forth the Great Commission as the ongoing duty of the church. Within the imperative of making disciples, it is understood that the entire congregation plays a role in ministering to one another.

Paul takes time in 1 Corinthians 12 to illustrate how each member of the body has a role in the church. Though not all are called or equipped to a prominent role of discipling one another, all are expected to have a part in edification, teaching, and the various other ministries of the church as Paul describes. Essentially, every member is a

[38]Macdonald, Kellemen, and Viars, *Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling*, 227.

minister. Ministry is the disciple-making activity of God's people. In every occurrence of fellowship, some form of counseling or lack thereof is going on. "God expects the leaders to equip and He expects the people to want equipping."[39]

God works through people. Each member is equipped in some form or fashion by the Holy Spirit for the equipping of the saints. "Notice the warning in Ephesians 4:14- this equipping is to help prevent believers from being vulnerable to "every wind of doctrine . . . human cunning . . . deceitful schemes."[40] The further implication of this passage is that every member contributes to the needs of the church; this can also be seen in the birth of the church in Acts 2 and 3.

There is urgency for the church to be about the disciple making business. Many of the strains in the life of the apostle Paul were related to his desire and efforts to see every man complete in Christ (Col 1:28-29). The pastor cannot do this job alone, which is why God through the Holy Spirit equips every church member to counsel one another at some level. Disobedience to this task, however, keeps many from finding the fulfillment of their relationship with God, and produces weak churches. For when one member suffers, all suffer (1 Cor 12:26).

A church benefits when the members, alongside the pastor, help to counsel. Adams writes,

> "The assistant counselor" day by day, in addition to holding the other party to his commitments, can help maintain an atmosphere conducive to carrying out homework assignments. As A.A., Weight Watchers, and a number of other groups have shown, it is easier to stick to new programs when one does it together with others.[41]

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[39]Macdonald, Kellemen, and Viars, *Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling*, 228.

[40]Ibid., 229.

[41]Jay Adams, *Competent to Counsel: Introduction to Nouthetic Counseling* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1970), 241.

In *Competent to Counsel*, a Jay Adams states in a summary chapter, "All that has been said thus far concerning Christian counseling is applicable to *every* form of relationship in which Christians come together."[42] Relationships are mandated by Scripture to be supportive at every level within the church.

The church needs to return to this mandate of counseling its members. "The notion that counseling is the exclusive domain of those who have been initiated into the esoteric secrets of modern psychological theory is utterly at odds with the scriptural concept of life in the body."[43] Even psychologists have noted the abhorrent trend of pastors to pass along the responsibility of soul care to professional advisors. "Psychologist O Hobart Mower, although not an evangelical, noted the trend as asked pointedly. 'Has Evangelical religion sold its birthright for a mess of psychological pottage?'"[44] John MacArthur writes that in the scriptures, Paul puts upon the leaders of the church the responsibility of shepherding the church with a threefold function: shepherds are to pick them up, hold them up, and build them up, all of which are functions that only the body of Christ can perform.[45] When the church fails to put into practice the counseling of one another in relationship it becomes anemic. The neglect of spiritual gifts forces people to seek the meeting of spiritual needs elsewhere, and often worldly solutions are substituted. MacArthur writes, "I am convinced that a healthy emphasis on the ministry of spiritual gifts would alleviate much of the need for formal counseling."[46] When spiritual gifts are exercised, and especially the speaking of truth to one another, many crisis of life could certainly be avoided.

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[42]Adams, *Competent to Counsel*, 252.

[43]MacArthur, *Counseling*, 213.

[44]Ibid., 212.

[45]Ibid., 214.

[46]Ibid., 221.

The Scriptures imply that more than the senior pastor or staff are called to counsel; thus within the laity persons are equipped with what one particular gift admonishes, prophesy.[47] The gift of prophesy in one context is simply imparting the truth of Scripture.[48] Yet counseling goes beyond prophesy, it incorporates teaching, discernment, edifications, leading, helping, giving, mercy, and faith. A counselor is one who takes the message of the gospel to those who need it. Speaking on the gospel message commissioned to the original disciples, Paul Tripp writes, "As we face our own struggles with sin and minister to people who seem trapped by things they cannot overcome, this must be our message too."[49]

These conclusions beg the question, "What qualifications are there when it comes to counseling?" "Just as all Christians may give witness to their faith, which involves an informal proclamation of the Word (cf. Acts 8:1-4; the *whole* church "announced the message of good news"), so all Christians may (indeed, *must*) do counseling."[50] Being a Christian not only qualifies a person for the task, it obligates him or her. Other qualifications include knowledge of the Scriptures, a penchant for wisdom based upon Scripture, and a heart for grace and redemption. A qualified counselor is one who relies upon the Holy Spirit and recognizes his own need for the same grace he is attempting to impart. Ordination as a requirement for counseling is not found within the Bible. At best, a counselor is one who has character traits that model the spiritual fruit of sanctification as evidence of the authority of God rather than extensive seminary training.

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[47]I use the term prophesy as the representation of ability for a person to understand and explain the Bible in proper contextual and applicable forms. It is not the foretelling of future events.

[48]Verlyn D. Verbrugge, *1 Corinthians*, in vol. 11 of *The Expositors Bible Commentary*, ed. Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991), 377

[49]Tripp, *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands*, 7.

[50]Adams, *Competent to Counsel*, 12

A counselor is an individual who is always learning and seeking to continue in his own commitment to Christ. Growth in the Lord is an asset to counseling others. Above all, the counselor needs to have a conviction as to the hope, usefulness, and authority of the Bible, and use it solely as the textbook for edification of believers.

The counselor counsels out of the message of the Bible. "If there is anything that must be maintained at all costs, it is the integrity of the Scriptures as the authoritative standard for Christian counseling."[51] The counselor's methods then grow out of this standard rather than psychological training. As the counselor matures in Christ he will find his abilities blossoming. Thus, Christ equips counselors within the local church for the work of soul care through the study of Scripture, the process of sanctification, and the Holy Spirit.

Biblical counseling is not optional. All ministry functions within the church incorporate some aspect of speaking God's truth to one another in the pursuit of the upward call of Christ. Each member is to be responsible in that duty, though some are better equipped than others for the task. Paul admonished believers to be agents of restoration within the church. The Sunday sermon is often not enough to challenge the heart of believers; a counselor brings truths of the gospel message in a personal way to the heart and mind of the counselee. First Corinthians is about a church counseling one another with Scripture for redemption and restoration rather than abandonment or manipulation of behavior. Scripture addresses the heart. Elsewhere, Romans 15:14 and 1 Thessalonians 5:14 demonstrate this obligation. "Believers will never become like Christ if they are not winning the battle against sin in their lives and investing themselves in the lives of others."[52]

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[51]Adams, *Competent to Counsel*, 18.

[52]William W. Goode, John MacArthur, and Wayne Mack, eds., *Introduction to Biblical Counseling: A Guide to the Basic Principles and Practice of Biblical Counseling* (Dallas: Word, 1994), 301-2.

The church is to equip the saints for redemptive work. Counseling within the church keeps the members grounded in the reality of each persons need for Christ; it fosters prayer, compassion, and a bounty of spiritual fruit. Goode, MacArthur, and Mack write,

> Counselees need the help of all church ministries: they need the pulpit ministry to teach and motivate growth and change, the love of the collective membership to assist and encourage, the fellowship of the church body for interaction and relationship, the authority of the body for church discipline, and the example of leaders who are growing and changing.[53]

A church that counsels its members loves its members.

Biblical Counseling Addresses the Heart Rather than Treating the Symptoms

Biblical counseling differs from all other forms of counsel as it addresses the heart, or sinful nature of the counselee, rather than the symptoms related to behavior. In biblical counseling, God is central in all that is done. The heart of the counselee must be addressed, for its root issue is standing against the will of God: sin. It should be taken into consideration that many people seek counseling that is not related to sin but have issues that weigh heavy upon the heart. The faithful biblical counselor is to be adept at helping counselees work through times of suffering, various trials, and circumstances of decision making, Jesus epitomized this when He said, "Come to Me all who are heavy laden and I will give you rest" (Matt 11:28).

The good news is that if the problem is sin, then God provides the only true solution, the cross of Christ. Therefore, the relevancy of the church in effecting change is demonstrated through the process of sanctification above behavior modification.

John MacArthur lists seven fundamentals of biblical counseling that are central to addressing the heart of the counselee:

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[53]Goode, MacArthur, and Mack, *Introduction to Biblical Counseling*, 306.

> God is at the center of counseling; commitment to God has epistemological consequences, sin in all its dimensions is the primary problem counselors must deal with, the gospel of Jesus Christ is the answer, the biblical change process which counseling must aim at is progressive sanctification, the situational difficulties people face are not the random cause of problems in living, and counseling is fundamentally a pastoral activity and must be church based.[54]

Working together, these principles work to turn the heart back to God.

Sin is powerful, seductive, and more rampant then Pandora's Box. It is never satisfied. Attempting to use man-centered methodologies for behavioral modification serves to trade one insufficient method for another. King Solomon tried every stimulus known to man, and concluded that "all is vanity" (Eccl 1:14). The only way out of the entrapment of sin is through justification followed by sanctification. Counseling for the Christian is that sanctification process. Each day the counselee is led in paths of righteousness for the sake of the name of God. The Holy Spirit plays His role in conviction and strengthening the believer and therefore is the assurance of hope.

As previously mentioned, one aspect of biblical counseling in addressing the heart is the approach taken to the self-esteem movement. Self-esteem psychology believes that the self needs to be fulfilled in order for the person to become a giving and loving member of society. "People with high self-esteem, we are told, are less likely to commit crimes, act immorally, fail academically, or have problems in their relationships with others."[55] It is a faith in oneself. In all its many applications, it essentially is a motivation to exert one's pride in a manner that pleases oneself. Unfortunately, because the heart is desperately sinful, it is a pit that can never be filled full.

There exists little proof that self-esteem changes the outcome of the heart of man in a long-term positive manner. In a society where self-esteem has been sold to millions of corporate managers, school systems, universities, parents, and unfortunately the church, it has provided no resolution for the sin nature of humanity. The reason for

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[54]MacArthur, *Counseling*, 27-29.

[55]Ibid., 64.

this failure is that self-esteem gives the heart more of what it does not need rather than the truth of God that sets a man free. "In fact, nothing is more illustrative of human wickedness that the desire for self-esteem. And the first step to a proper self-image is recognition that these things are true."[56]

Another heart-related difference where biblical counseling differs in its treatment of the counselee is that psychology calls sin a sickness. Psychology has found its niche in centering the problems of man with a renunciation of responsibility by calling sinful manifestations of the heart as sicknesses. To secular psychologists, a man is an alcoholic not a drunk, a person is sexually addicted not morally depraved, a person is a kleptomaniac and not a thief. This diagnosis presents a problem; as long as a counselee is given an excuse for his behavior he will likely never turn to God to receive freedom. Psychology labels persons with sinful conditions as recovering alcoholics, bi-polar, ADD, ADHD, and ODD. Treatment for such persons includes medications, support groups, behavioral management classes, and a lifetime of therapy.

Because of sin, man is in a state of total depravity. No one seeks out God (on their own), all human righteousness is but filthy rags, and there is no fear of God (Rom 3:11; Isa 64:6; Rom 3:18). This depravity takes root in every aspect of a man's life: his thoughts, motivations, values, emotions, and actions. Such a nature puts a man in a hopeless situation; every moment of his existence compounds the problem against the wrath of God. However, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for the ungodly (Rom 5:8). Hope does abound, to the man who would give Christ his heart.

Christ works in the heart of man to utterly save him, removing the dominance of the depraved nature and imputing righteousness. Lloyd-Jones writes, "The righteousness of which Paul speaks means rightness with God. There is no happiness

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[56]MacArthur, *Counseling*, 68.

finally, there is no peace, there is no joy except we be right with God."[57] Biblical counseling is a means to the sanctification of repentant sinners whose hearts long to abide in Christ. In Romans 6 Paul speaks of dealing with the "old self." "The "old self" is an expression that is equivalent to a "darkened heart," "hardened heart," "heart of stone, " etc., and all these expressions point to the values, standards, and desires of people seeking to live independently of God."[58] Addressing the heart of man is the only way to effect change to walk as a "new man."

Biblical counseling addresses the heart of man, by the conviction of the Holy Spirit, by eliciting Nouthetic confrontation. "Nouthetic confrontation requires the deepest involvement; deep enough to take people seriously when they mention their sin, even when they fail to identify it as sin."[59] Nouthetic counseling draws attention to, rebukes, and encourages the Christian in need to abide in Christ in a God honoring lifestyle. Thus, biblical counseling deals with sin by confronting sin in the heart of man. It holds a man responsible and yet offers grace for forgiveness and change.

The church is God's agent for dealing with sin in the heart of man. In Scripture, the church, practices a redemptive discipleship by addressing the need for change on a daily basis. Such discipleship utilizes confrontation of sin, instruction of righteousness, as well as encouragement, comfort, and a compassionate grace. Its goal is a restored relationship for the believer to Christ. MacDonald explains, "If simply to believe and to accept salvation is everything, then these New Testament Epistles would never have been needed, indeed, in a sense, you would not need the church at all."[60] As sin is more powerful than man, and yet pales in comparison with Christ, the church is the

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[57]Lloyd-Jones, *Spiritual Depression*, 27.

[58]MacDonald, Kellemen, and Viars, *Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling*, 128.

[59]Adams, *Competent to Counsel*, 67

[60]Lloyd-Jones, *Spiritual Depression*, 65.

vehicle for helping repentant sinners on the course of life with God. The church must be God-centered and biblically-based in all its functions. Counseling in the church is a constant reminder of the sufficiency of Christ to overcome the old self in order to put on the new.

Biblical Counseling Provides Hope

Because biblical counseling is Christ-centered, the Christian counselee can abide in the greatest source of hope available to man. Whether the person deals with ongoing sin, ongoing trials and temptations, emotional responses to circumstances, or ongoing complications in life, hope is built upon the eternal person of Jesus Christ. The promises of the Bible are rife with application from the stories of God's faithfulness, despite the failures of man. The counselee can be assured of God's faithfulness. The New Testament was explicitly written for hope and for strength to persevere amongst the problems of life whether they be internal or external in origin. Therefore, God's methodologies are meant for a sanctification that bolsters spiritual growth in the disciple.

Biblical counsel addresses the spiritual needs of the person in dealing with suffering related to sin, suffering in general, trials, temptations, and the building of faith. The methods of biblical counseling also address compounding problems, thus teaching disciples to recognize problem patterns and solutions to a wide variety of situations. Such equipping of a believer promotes a faster resolution of problems that often go unaddressed for long periods of time.

People deal with problems in many ways. Often the way in which a person deals with his problems creates more problems. When a person comes for counseling he is most likely worn out from his own methods of trial and error. Hopelessness occurs by way of repeated failures through self-empowered means. With great promise, biblical counseling utilizes God's direct method of dealing with problems, thus offering a ready solution by addressing the heart of the matter as God intended. The biblical counselor has the joy of leading a person to understanding and applying the all-sufficient grace of

Jesus Christ. The goal of the counselor is to help the person look to who Christ is, what He has done, and how that is applied to his own life. The application of truth to the heart of man is one facet of counseling a person to set them free.

It should be noted that not all problems are related to the sinful condition of man. This project is majoring on non-organic problems. It is acknowledged that some problems exist which are enhanced or capitulated by ongoing medical conditions that need a physician's care. At times a biblical counselor will need to work alongside a trained medical professional to resolve problems which are compounded or created by a physical condition.

It should also be noted that the Bible does confront all matters of the heart. Long before modern therapists developed means of behavioral management, the Bible directly confronted heart issues of anger, anxiety, depression, brooding, envy, self-pity, as well as loneliness, lack of faith, and fear (Gen 4:6-7, 15:1; Prov 14:30; Matt 6:30, 17:20; John 16:20; Rom 8:35; 2 Cor 6:10; Eph 4:31; Col 3:5).

To address the issues of the heart for a counselee, the counselor deals with matters biblically. In cases dealing with sin, the sin must be seen in light of scriptural truth. One's own sinful depravity lends to itself a penchant for making excuses, shifting blame, and outright ignoring facts that are presented. Man is well exercised in the gymnastics of eluding self-incrimination. Mack writes, "Scripture teaches that the minds of unredeemed men have been adversely affected by sin and, as a result, even if they observe something accurately, they are likely to interpret it wrongly."[61] The counselee will need help being held to a biblical perspective. Adultery is not an affair. Lying is not bending the truth or miscommunicating. Lust is not a simple function of biology. These issues and many others must be seen in their context of an offense to a holy God. Counselees will need to be shown how the wrath of God comes against sinful behaviors

[61]Wayne Mack, "The Sufficiency of Scripture in Counseling," *The Master's Seminary Journal* 9, no. 1 (1998): 75.

and attitudes of the heart. He will need to understand that often the problems in life are in direct proportion to his failure to obey and honor God.

However painful the confrontation may be, the counselor can quickly offer grace to a repentant sinner. The counselor must demonstrate scripturally that God offers forgiveness and redemption through Jesus Christ. It is pertinent that the counselor have an arsenal of scriptures prepared to assist the counselee in understanding God's progression of repentance, confession, and restoration in dealing with sin (Ps 32:5; Jas 5:16; 1 John 1:19). The counselor is to help the repentant Christian change problematic habits and attitudes of the heart, all while incorporating the aid of the Holy Spirit. Adams writes, "Notice that the change contemplated is directed toward a way of life, not merely toward some of the activities involved in such living."[62] Many a counselee have never understood or experienced methods of renewing the mind, abiding in Christ, or putting off sin and putting on righteousness (John 3:1-8; Rom 6:1-11, 12:1-3; 2 Cor 5:17; Col 3:10, 1 Pet 1:23, 2 Pet 1:4). Hope can be instilled unto faith when the counselee is enlightened with God's desire to have the Christian be a partaker in divine nature (2 Pet 1:4-8).

People often seek a counselor when despairing of the ongoing trials of life. They most likely do not see how they may be neglecting the help afforded by the Holy Spirit through the way in which they happen to respond within the downward spiral of "losing heart."

A wife may seek such help in the midst of her desperation in dealing with a husband who is lazy, unaffectionate, or mean. Here the counselor can offer hope by teaching her about the sovereignty of God and the perseverance of the saints. He can teach her how to focus on Christ to find hope and respond differently than before. The counselor may also take her to the Scriptures, in the case of a believing husband, and teach her the means by which one is to preserve unity and confront one another with

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[62]Jay Adams, *The Christian Counselor's Manual* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1973), 177.

sinful behavior (Matt 18:15-18; Gal 6:1-2). There may exist a circumstance where a brother in Christ should confront the husband in a spirit of gentleness and love. The biblical counselor can bring forth the truth of Scripture, citing the Psalms, Paul's sufferings, and the wonders of the church community supporting one another in Acts and the epistles. Biblical counseling has the privilege of helping people grasp the reality of Scripture for their own lives in a personal way.

Ultimately, the counselor utilizes biblical methods of dealing with sin and dealing with trials so that the counselee may grow in faith. Using non-biblical methods only serves to diminish the glory of God in the process. The progression of faith building involves the work of the Holy Spirit opening the eyes of the believer to the ongoing drama of abiding in Christ. Here God is glorified and worshipped. When a counselee learns to see his world through the lens of Jesus Christ, his life will achieve not only hope but overflowing joy, even in the midst of trials (Jas 1:1-12).

The biblical counselor provides a counselee with a definition of the problem and a biblical solution. He does not seek to be merely therapeutic, but solution-oriented by dealing with matters of the heart, whether sin is an issue or not. He also presents the love of God when counseling, incorporated with the message of the gospel. Concerning suffering, Tripp writes; "We do not want to communicate truths in ways that are cheap and platitudinous. We want to anchor the person in what is true as he deals with his suffering, but in a way that shows him that we understand the intensity of his trial."[63] Therefore, the counselor also supplies motivation for change, support in the process, goals to honor God by, and procedures to swap habits of the flesh for those that honor God and renew the mind.

Because suffering and trials have an effect of weakening a person spiritually, the counselor and the community of the church have the duty to provide encouragement.

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[63]Tripp, *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands*, 150.

This encouragement should always revolve around and be encased within the sufficiency of Christ (2 Pet 1:3-8). The incorporation of praying for one another, admonishing one another with psalm, hymns, and spiritual songs, as well as denouncing sin, is to be under the hope believers have in Jesus (Eph 5:19; Col 3:16). Reminding one another of God's promises as well as joining for corporate worship has an effect of correcting the thoughts and uplifting the heart with truth. Biblical counseling disciples the believer to hold fast, knowing that others too are enrolled in trials and that the roll call of faith is worthy for those who persevere. Thus Christ builds the church through counseling in faith unto faith.

CHAPTER 4

DEVELOPMENT AND TEACHING THE COURSE

The development and teaching of this course was predicated upon the scriptural mandate to make disciples, the pattern of shepherding church members in the sanctification process, and the earnest desire I have as pastor to see all people brought to completion in Christ. After reviewing the biblical basis of discipleship as outlined in chapter 2, and the propositions made for such implementation in chapter 3, a basis was set for a curriculum to be developed to meet these needs and desires.

Intention of the Project

The main desire of the project outcome was to create a team of adult members at Ekron Baptist Church with training that would enable them to biblically counsel. This team would then be called upon to assist in equipping persons to follow Jesus Christ as disciples. Such a team would aid the church in the purposeful discipleship of believers as well as evangelism for non-believers in an organized and efficient manner. The evaluation of the project goals are discussed in detail within chapter 5.

Course Development

Stage 1: Discerning the Needs

The discipline of biblical counseling covers a vast amount of material, leading to many pathways of specialization. The main lesson to be taught is that biblical counseling uses the Scripture alone as the authority and means, by the working of the Holy Spirit, for a Christian to experience heart change through the sanctification process. Early on it became apparent that the material to be covered in the class setting would have to be limited. In addition to surveying the main points of teaching in many

textbooks of biblical counseling, an effort was made to identify the specific needs of Ekron Baptist Church. These needs were reviewed in chapter 1 and concluded through an unscientific survey, casual conversations, and identifying a pattern of recurring topics being consulted upon with me as the pastor of Ekron Baptist Church.

These needs and patterns concerned both the past history of the church and its discipleship programs as well as the expressed struggles people have dealt with in life. Such issues influenced my selection of the class curriculum, as I aimed to cover these recurring topics. Educating the students in how to handle these matters should promote a culture within the church of addressing such concerns biblically before seeking the pastor for guidance.

Other aspects taken into consideration while selecting the material were the ways in which people learn. Therefore, teaching methods included class lecture, reading, group discussions, and visual aids, such as handouts and videos.

Stage 2: Reviewing Materials

Various resources for development of the lessons were deliberated for content in planning the course curriculum. These considered resources were the same as those used in the D.Min. program of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, texts, lectures, and articles as used by the Gateway Biblical Counseling and Training Center of Fairview Heights, Illinois, as well as a variety of articles published by Association of Certified Biblical Counselors and Christian Counseling and Education Foundation. I chose to survey these institutions' resources as they have been a longstanding source of success and credibility.

With such a large amount of material to consider, an overview of the topics covered by Jay Adams' books *Competent to Counsel* and *The Christian Counselor's Manuel* was made as a starting point.[1] Additionally books studied for this purpose

[1]Jay Adams, *Competent to Counsel: Introduction to Nouthetic Counseling*

included *Counseling: How to Counsel Biblically*, *Introduction to Biblical Counseling*, and *Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling*.[2] From these tomes, I created a rough summation of the most important topics taught in regard to an introductory course. These topics were paired down to twelve lessons. Through the advice I sought and was given by a pair of ACBC counselors, the class textbook chosen was chosen as John MacArthur's, *Counseling: How to Counsel Biblically*.

The outline for teaching faced an informal review through ACBC certified individuals. The second and more critical review occurred with five specific individuals utilizing a rubric and providing suggestions for improvement. Once this evaluation was returned, minor changes were made to the lesson plans and the ensuing course material was put into a final form. The course syllabus was then created for teaching the class.

Stage 3: Preparation and Affirmation

During the process of preparing to teach the course in biblical counseling, I made the church aware of the benefits of biblical counseling through sermon examples. To educate the congregation, the authority, demonstration, and practicality of counseling within the Bible was highlighted doctrinally on a recurring basis. By tying doctrine with practical examples of application and contrasting with the methods of the world, it was demonstrated how biblical counsel is often overlooked. Additionally, the practicality of Scripture to address not only sin but also suffering, perseverance, and the doctrine of sanctification was presented.

In support of my desire to establish a counseling ministry at Ekron Baptist

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(Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1970); idem, *The Christian Counselor's Manual* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1973).

[2]John MacArthur, ed., *Counseling: How to Counsel Biblically* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005); John MacArthur and Wayne Mack, eds., *Introduction to Biblical Counseling: A Guide to the Basic Principles and Practice of Biblical Counseling* (Dallas: Word, 1994); James Macdonald, Bob Kellemen, and Steve Viars, eds., *Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling: Changing Lives with God's Changeless Truth* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2013).

Church, funds were made available in the 2014 budget to financially empower this ministry.

Stage 4: Teaching the Curriculum

Each week I taught the material as a discipleship training course on Sunday evenings. The class enrollment was comprised of individuals whom I had invited to participate. The invitation was based upon prayer as well as a demonstration of the student's biblical knowledge, spiritual maturity, and active involvement in the church. Upon enrollment in the class, students were given a copy of the class text, John MacArthur's *Counseling: How to Counsel Biblically*.

During each class session I led with a short devotion from the Bible that related to the evening's lesson. A review of the previous week was made, followed by a short summery of the day's agenda. Handouts were available as needed (see appendix 7). Though students were encouraged to ask questions as they came to mind, there was a time at the end of each session for question and answer.

Often, material from the lessons overlapped and was repeatedly drawn into discussion in order to make applicable connections and emphasis. Therefore, some lesson plans reflect recurring application of previously taught material.

Lesson 1: An Overview of Biblical Counseling

Lesson 1 provided a brief overview of the history of biblical counseling in an effort to accentuate the urgency to teach the Bible as applicable to life. The lesson scripture was Matthew 28:18-20. This text emphasizes the urgency of the Great Commission in making disciples. The reading for this week's lesson was "Biblical Counseling in Recent Times."[3]

[3]David Powlison, "Biblical Counseling in Recent Times," in *Counseling*, 18-30.

Objectives of the lesson included the administration of the class pre-test survey (see appendix 3), as well as an overview of counseling as seen in the New Testament, and a history of the modern biblical counseling movement from Jay Adams to the establishment of the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors.

Other items of the agenda included teaching that New Testament counseling is part and parcel of the work of the church, which can be observed in the pastoral epistles as well as the various times that Jesus spoke directly to the disciples (Matt 11:1, 13:36, 15:32, 16:13, 16:24, 19:23, 21:6, 24:3.)

Class discussion time defined the meaning of disciple, justification, gospel, and sanctification as used in biblical counseling.

The class lesson was summed up through a practical example of when I counseled a person who had been hospitalized with anxiety and how her life changed when the Holy Spirit brought her to the truth of Scripture.

Lesson 2: Building a Counseling Relationship

Lesson 2 sought to teach the importance and procedures of building a helpful relationship with the counselee. An introduction to the emphasis of building hope as a means of connecting with the counselee was imparted.

The evening devotion and lesson scripture was from Matthew 7:1-8.[4] This text admonishes believers to judge not lest they be judged as well as taking the care to remove the log from one's own eye before helping someone else with the speck they personally deal with. This lesson promoted humility and grace as well as speaking to others without rushing to conclusions. The lesson taught means of listening without hasty analysis and

[4]Matt 7:1-8 was chosen for the lesson as the discussion led to advise counselors to refrain from hasty judgments on situations at first glance as well as to promote humility on the counselor's part. Other advisable scriptures would have included John 13:34, Col 2:2, 1 Thess 5:14.

how to gather data using various tools such as a Personal Data Inventory and Health History Questionnaire, which were provided as handouts (see appendix 7). Lesson reading for this week's lesson was "Developing a Helping Relationship with Counselees."[5]

The main portion of time in the class was given to an overview on the necessity of data gathering, how to ask leading questions, and of the urgent need to build hope. A counseling session video was viewed as to what not to do in counseling.[6] The video illustrated failure to show compassion, sound advice, or humility, all of which are necessary in the discipleship of people and their needs.

Lesson 3: The Bible Offers Hope in the Gospel

The key thrust of lesson 3 was the importance of building hope and the need to share to gospel. Though the subject of hope had been touched upon in the previous lesson, its value warranted a great emphasis and depth of discussion not afforded earlier.

The lesson Scripture included both 2 Timothy 3:14-17 and Ephesians 1:9-14. In these passages the authority of Christ to transform lives through the Scriptures is emphasized. A clear connection to discipleship is seen in Paul's admonitions to Timothy and the church. Hope in the gospel is a guarantee to those who love Christ. The reading for this week's lesson was "Instilling Hope in the Counselee" from *Counseling: How to Counsel Biblically*.[7]

The lesson objectives concerned equipping students with several relevant scriptures for hope, including Psalms 42:5, 1 Corinthians 10:13, Romans 5:2-5, 8:24-25, 28-39, Hebrews 14:6, and 1 Peter 1:13. An additional topic involved biblical counseling

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[5]Wayne A. Mack, "Developing a Helping Relationship with Counselees," in *Counseling*, 101-13.

[6]This example came from a comedy sketch by Bob Newhart, "Bob Newhart Stop It," accessed September 1, 2014, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qmrGUVbaaRs.

[7]Wayne A. Mack, "Instilling Hope in the Counselee," in *Counseling*, 114-30.

offering hope unlike secular counsel. In order to properly address hope, it was necessary to address sin and the problems that man faces because of a separation from God. This topic led to a discussion on the world's responses to life's problems versus the hope found in Scripture.

To demonstrate how hope is built in a counseling session, the students were taught to listen to the counselee before discerning how to provide hope in Jesus. Second, they were instructed in the role of using scripture to combat thoughts, behaviors, and habits. Third, practical sanctifying solutions were illustrated for the application of scripture to various problems which a counselee needs hope in order to combat.

A practical example of this lesson was given through a discussion of a counseling session where a despondent woman was given hope despite the loss of her boyfriend.

Lesson 4: How to Gather Data for Understanding the Heart of the Problem

Methods of data gathering and the steps of the counseling process were taught as a means of giving a broad picture of how biblical counseling works. The lesson Scripture covered Colossians 3:1-17, which deals with the putting off of the old self and putting on the new in order to glorify Christ with one's life. The reading for this week's lesson was from "Taking Counselee Inventory: Collecting Data, Interpreting Counselee Data," and "Providing Instruction through Biblical Counseling."[8]

The lesson objectives were to first help the student understand the role of the Holy Spirit in counseling (Ps 51:11; Luke 12:12; John 14:17, 26, 15:26, 16:13; Rom 8:2-16, 26). The second objective was to provide an overview of listening skills, keeping the counselee on track, and note taking. The third objective was to establish an understanding

[8]Wayne A. Mack, "Taking Counselee Inventory: Collecting Data, Interpreting Counselee Data," in *Counseling*, 131-46; idem, "Providing Instruction through Biblical Counseling," in *Counseling*, 162-75.

of record keeping and data gathering and discussing the need for privacy as well as when to involve other persons. Fourth, this lesson further familiarized the student with the Personal Data Inventory form, the Health History Questionnaire, and other resources. Fifth in the objectives list was to demonstrate how a counselor probes for information using questions, homework, halo data, and listening skills. Sixth, a discussion was held on the importance of homework in the life of a counselee for change. Lastly, we began an ongoing discussion for the need to focus attention on heart issues.

Handouts given included the weekly counseling record as well as various home works dealing with put offs and put ons. The practical example came by means of a walkthrough of the steps a counselee takes beginning with the initial request for counseling, the first general meeting, and the first session.

Lesson 5: Habits and Hope

The importance of understanding habituation was taught in lesson 5. This crucial connection to behavior offers the help and hope of the Bible to address issues that can often be overwhelming for the counselee. The lesson scripture came from Ephesians 4:11-24. In this passage, Paul admonishes believers to take personal responsibility to grow in Christ not only as a personal requirement but as part of the local church. The reading for this week's lesson was "Biblical Counseling and Inducement."[9]

The lesson objectives included a discussion of man's heart and how discipleship addresses such issues as the core of counseling and hope. Secondly, a discussion of habituation and tendencies that lead to compounding problems, which often create despair was given. In response, the grace of the gospel and hope was demonstrated to intertwine in problem solving. This lesson goal was supplemented by highlighting the hope filled passages of scripture regarding the renewing of the mind, putting off and

[9]Wayne A. Mack, "Biblical Counseling and Inducement," in *Counseling*, 176-89.

putting on (Rom 12:1-2; Eph 4:24; Col 3:4-13). Third, an in depth dialog of the doctrine of sanctification was given, finding its power in the purposes of Jesus Christ.

A practical application example was given in discussion of how various people incorporated scripture reminders into daily life for the purpose of personal application. One example was that of stop sign scripture memory, which involves placing scripture to be memorized in various locations of interaction throughout the day's travels.

Lesson 6: A Theology of Biblical Counseling

Lesson 6 taught the value of the Scriptures for counseling. The lesson scripture came from Psalm 1 where the value of abiding in the Word as well as avoiding evil is accentuated in perseverance. The reading for this week's lesson was covered in "The Godward Focus of Biblical Counseling."[10]

The first lesson objective was to help the students understand the necessity of salvation for change. The class lecture covered the doctrines of sin and repentance (Rom 1:21, 3:18, 5:8, 7:1). Second, a discussion was held regarding the how and why of evangelizing non-believers, as well as how to counsel someone who is ill-equipped to discern spiritual things. Examples came from Peter and the sermon at Pentecost (Acts 2) for talking to those with some Bible knowledge, and for those without Bible knowledge Paul's tactics on Mars Hill were demonstrated (Acts 17:16-34)), Third, the lesson incorporated the sanctification process as is integral to the life of a believer. The fourth objective was to help students understand grace, repentance, and restoration (Luke 17:4; Gal 6:1; Eph 2:8-9.

The practical example for the time came from two actual cases. The first being the counseling of Lawrence, a distraught unbeliever verses counseling Paul a believer with the same captivating anxiety of the future.

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[10]Douglas Bookman, "The Godward Focus of Biblical Counseling," in *Counseling*, 51-63

Lesson 7: Psychology versus Biblical Counseling and the Absence of a Good Compromise

Lesson 7 focused upon the differences between psychology and biblical counseling as well as integrationism. These aspects were defined and compared to each other. The lesson scripture covered 2 Corinthians 11:3, Colossians 2:8, and 2 Peter 2:1, which demonstrate how worldly philosophy diverts believers away from the truths of the gospel. The reading for this week's lesson incorporated "Rediscovering Biblical Counseling" and "Why Biblical Counseling and Not Psychology."[11]

The lesson objectives were first to give students an overview of the history of psychology. This overview focused upon the era of modern psychology, from Freud onward rather than incorporating earlier philosophies through the course human history. Second, students were presented with the basic premises and methods of psychology. Third, students were educated in the basics of biblical counseling as it differs from psychology. Fourth, students were shown the positive aspects of psychology; such as discovering predictable patterns. Fifth, students were made aware of the *DSM-V* and how it was created and functions in clinical psychology.[12] Sixth, students were introduced to *The Christian's Guide to Psychological Terms* by Marshall and Mary Asher.[13] Seventh, the class was taught the difference between a psychological diagnosis and a sinful one. Last, students were taught how physiological problems, such as brain injury, affect the thinking of a person, where medicine is advisable, and the importance of a counselee's need for physical examination by a doctor.

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[11]John MacArthur, "Rediscovering Biblical Counseling," in *Counseling*, 3-17; John Street, "Why Biblical Counseling and Not Psychology," in *Counseling*, 31-47.

[12]American Psychiatric Association, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Health Disorders: DSM-5*, 5th ed. (Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Publishing, 2013).

[13]Marshall Asher and Mary Asher, *The Christian's Guide to Psychological Terms* (Bemidji, MN: Focus, 2004).

The practical example of the class was to a story of Wilma and her visits between a psychologist and a biblical counselor. Additionally, highlights from the book *Counseling the Hard Cases* by Stuart Scott and Heath Lambert were utilized.[14]

Lesson 8: Humility is Required by All

Lesson 8 sought to teach pertinent spiritual disciplines of the biblical counselor. The need for humility was emphasized as it relates to making a personal connection with the counselee, relying upon God, and the counselors own personal growth. The lesson Scriptures encompassed Proverbs 18:21, Philippians 2:3, James 1:21, and 1 Peter 5:5, which deal with humbling oneself in order to help others through the use of Scripture. The reading for this week's lesson was "The Work of the Spirit and Biblical Counseling" and "Spiritual Discipline and the Biblical Counselor."[15]

Objectives of the lesson included first recognizing one's own faults and failures and how to apply repentance. Second, students learned how to seek the Holy Spirit to lead in the direction and application of counseling. Third, the vast applications of grace were communicated. Fourth, a topical discussion of "What does humility look like?" was carried out.

The practical example incorporated listening to the audio of Stuart Scott on humility as homework.[16]

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[14]Stuart Scott and Heath Lambert, eds., *Counseling the Hard Cases: True Stories Illustrating the Sufficiency of God's Resources in Scripture* (Nashville: B & H, 2013).

[15]John MacArthur, "The Work of the Spirit and Biblical Counseling," in *Counseling*, 79-87; Robert Smith, "Spiritual Discipline and the Biblical Counselor," in *Counseling*, 88-97.

[16]Stuart Scott, "Pride and Humility," accessed September 1, 2014, http://store.biblicalcounseling.com/products/pride-and-humility-stuart-scott.

Lesson 9: Confrontation of Sin for the Purpose of Grace

The confrontation of sin and the sanctification process were taught in lesson 9. This lesson stressed the urgency of the counselee accepting the presentation of how he has sinned and that God's grace is available. The need for active and repentant change was also discussed. The lesson scriptures included Matthew 7:1-5, 18:15-20, Galatians 6:1, which relate the methods, means, and attitudes prescribed in the Bible to being our brother's keeper. The reading for this week's lesson was "Sinfulness of Humanity."[17]

Lesson objectives included first learning to use scripture to demonstrate sinful behaviors and thinking. Second was understanding how self-esteem and pride are related. Romans 5:8 and 1 Timothy 3:2, 4:3 used to accentuate this training. Third, students were given tools to motivate people to strive for the glory of God, using1 Corinthians 10:31 and Colossians 1:9-10 as support. Fourth, the class learned how to attempt to gain a commitment from the counselee to change. Fifth, the lesson taught confrontation and how to speak the truth in love, as well as speaking to someone who does not want to take responsibility for their behavior.

The practical example portion of the lesson came from a personal example of being confronted by two brothers in love. This story related the pain and difficulty accompanied with such a situation, and how it taught a personal lesson both in giving and receiving a confrontation.

Lesson 10: Giving the Counselee the Tools for Change

Lesson 10 underscored the need to help the counselee take responsibility for his life and to incorporate measures for change into his living for the glory of God. The lesson scriptures were Proverbs 7 and 1 Timothy 6:11, which teach the value in fleeing

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[17]John MacArthur, "Counseling and the Sinfulness of Humanity," in *Counseling*, 64-78.

evil and temptation. The reading for this week's lesson was from "Implementing Biblical Instruction."[18]

The lesson objectives sought to establish a doctrinal understanding of actions related to counseling. First taught was the need to understand the idea of "radical amputation" as taught in Matthew 5:30 and Romans 13:14. Radical amputation teaches the necessity of cutting off influences to sinful habits. Second, the importance of taking practical steps to help the counselee change habit patterns was taught, including changing thinking patterns, fellowshipping with believers, removing oneself from people who promote temptation, and situations, accountability, the need for devotional time, diet, rest, and exercise, actively serving others, and preparing an action plan for overcoming temptation. Third, communication regarding the importance of renewing the mind was presented using Romans 12:2 and Philippians 4:8. Fourth, the lesson sought to convey the urgency of putting off the old man in order to put on the new man using Hebrews 5:14. Fifth on the agenda was to teach the importance of prayer, Bible reading, and the local church for the believer to succeed. Romans 12 and Ephesians 4 provided a biblical basis for the lesson.

The practical example came from a counselee's change, Sarah and her change of heart. Through counseling she went from depression to joy by implementing practical steps of renewing the mind.

Lesson 11: The Counselor as Student

An overview of resources, legal issues, certification benefits, and continuing education was taught in lesson 9. This lesson included a handout of resources and opportunities for personal advancement. The lesson scripture came from Ezra 7:10 and 2 Timothy 2:15, which emphasize the counselor's need to continue to learn and develop

[18]Wayne A. Mack, "Implementing Biblical Instruction," in *Counseling*, 190-200.

knowledge, wisdom, and ability to instruct others in the glory of the Bible for life. The reading for this week's lesson was from "Resources for Biblical Counseling."[19]

The lesson objectives sought to equip the counselor with many forms of knowledge. First, a review of the counseling process was discussed as well as when a counselee is to be released from ongoing counseling. The second objective was to equip the students with practical resources for ongoing education by providing a list of helpful websites. Third, the lesson sought to provide the student tools for homework, record keeping, and assisting clients beyond the office. Students were provided with handouts for record keeping and various other data gathering homework assignments. Fourth, instruction was given to promote inspiration toward certification in biblical counseling. Time was spent discussing the benefits of certification with the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors. Fifth, the class meeting sought to inform the students of situations wherein legal or police reporting is necessary. Last, additional information was covered that dealt with decision making, suffering, and building faith.

The practical example came from a personal explanation of how I had benefitted from training to help others.

Lesson 12: Review

As a wrap up to the course, a review of the course material and the post course survey were administered. In addition to the original course plan, a survey was included that utilized short essays to provided information beyond the scope of the pre and post-tests. The lesson Scripture came from Matthew 25:14-30, which was used to demonstrate obedience to God using the talents He has given, all of which demonstrate living to His

[19]Dennis M. Swanson and Wayne A. Mack, "Resources for Biblical Counseling," in *Counseling*, 231-43.

glory. The reading for this week's lesson was "Frequently Asked Questions about Biblical Counseling."[20]

The lesson objectives were first to review the highpoints of the course in biblical counseling. Second, was the goal to accentuate the practicality and soundness of biblical counseling. The last objective was to administer the post-course survey.

Conclusion

The class was held on a weekly basis for twelve weeks. One class was rescheduled because of weather. Students who missed a class session were given opportunities to attend a make-up meeting. Throughout the teaching the course, many improvements were perceived that would enhance future semesters, which will be discussed in the following chapter.

At the completion of the course, students retook the pre-test as a post-test and were asked to complete a short essay survey to provide opinions that the test did not incorporate. All graduates received a certificate for the completion of this introductory course.

[20]John MacArthur and Wayne A. Mack, "Frequently Asked Questions about Biblical Counseling," in *Counseling*, 244-64.

CHAPTER 5

EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

This project sought to establish a core group of individuals who would minister to others by means of counseling at Ekron Baptist Church. These counselors would help to undergird the current counseling needs of the church in the discipleship of believers and also facilitate a ministry branch of the church that intends to offer biblical counseling for the community of Meade County.[1] This chapter seeks to assess the proficiency of the project as presented, ascertain where future students would profit by revising the curriculum, and other relevant outcomes experienced through the project.

Evaluation of the Project Purpose

The purpose of this project was to create a twelve-week course in biblical counseling for the adult members of Ekron Baptist Church of Ekron, Kentucky. Though much time went into the preparation of this course, the project event began with the first class on January 4, 2015, and concluded March 22, 2015.

Eight students embraced the curriculum and the potential created by the course for establishing an ongoing biblical counseling ministry. Of the 8 students who participated, 4 have agreed to become biblical counselors for Ekron Baptist Church. Though not all expressed a desire to participate in a formal counseling ministry, all shared a desire to counsel others at some level.

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[1]Biblical counseling is the concept of using the Scriptures alone as the authoritative means, by the working of the Holy Spirit, for a Christian to experience heart change through the sanctification process.

In comparing total scores of pre- and post-course surveys using a one tailed, paired *t*-test, there was a statistically significant change ($t(7)=2.26$, $p=.0293$) in participants' self-assessments.

Evaluation of Project Goals

The first goal of this project was to enroll 8 to 10 members of Ekron Baptist Church to partake in the introductory course in biblical counseling. This goal was measured by having the participants sign a commitment card (see appendix 1). This goal was successfully met on December 28, 2014, when 8 persons enrolled. At one point early on, a student requested to drop the class and an alternate from the waiting list took his place.

The second goal of this project was to evaluate the initial proficiency level of the participants regarding perceived biblical counseling abilities through a pre-course survey (see appendix 3). This goal was measured by a Likert scale survey that included questions regarding the participants' Bible knowledge, understanding of methods and resources often used in relation to counseling, and their own comfort levels in regard to involvement in various counseling scenes.

This test was comprised of forty-four questions, each being multiple choice or short answer. Each question was scored by assigning a value of "1" to "6" for each of the questions; scoring "strongly disagree" as a "1" and "strongly agree" as a "6." Questions 13, 16, 22-24 were asked in the negative, and thus were scored in opposite order.

This goal was successfully met when those who enrolled in the class completed the pre-course test.

The third goal was to create a twelve-week introductory course in biblical counseling that aligned itself with the merits of the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors (ACBC) and communicated ten of the most crucial factors for beginning counselors, such as data gathering, building hope, and confronting problems with Scripture. This goal was measured by a rubric utilized by 3 members of the Association

of Certified Biblical Counselors and 2 local pastors familiar with counseling and the context of Ekron Baptist Church (see appendix 2). The rubric measured the scope and content for each of the lessons taught during the course. This goal was regarded as successful when 90 percent of the rubric evaluation indicators were marked at sufficient or above. The initial rubric measured the acceptability rate at 92.5 percent, which was in the acceptable range. However, the suggestions made by those who performed this assessment were incorporated into the lesson plans before presentation in the classroom. These plans were incorporated into the class syllabus (see appendix 5).

The fourth goal was to increase the participants' knowledge of biblical counseling by teaching the twelve-week course. The goal was measured at the conclusion of the semester by a comparison of the identical pre and post-course survey (see appendix 3). This goal was considered successful in many ways.

It should be noted that I observed after the first class meeting a number of students rated themselves high in their ability to counsel biblically as indicated by the pre-test. This scoring left little room for improvement and gave concern that final scores may not reflect aspects of the course which would best be surmised outside of a Likert scale. After discovering this situation, I consulted my project supervisor. He agreed that adding an additional essay styled survey during the post-test would allow for the students to more effectively evaluate the course (see appendix 4). These essay answers have been incorporated into the following reviews of the project.

Reviewing the Process

Statistically, by looking at the mean, this goal is be considered successful due to the positive statistical difference between the pre and post-course surveys. The measured growth mean difference was 31.5 (see appendix 6, table A2). The increase in the mean was from 148.875 to 180.375, demonstrating a strong growth in the students' subjective evaluation of their knowledge, confidence, and preparedness to counsel biblically. The results of the pre and post test scores are shown in table 1.

Table 1. Pre and post-course survey scores

Student	Pre-Test Score	Post-Test Score
1	179	158
2	158	165
3	167	181
4	171	202
5	179	185
6	147	179
7	89	190
8	103	181

Strengths of the Project

The selection of students for this class proved to be a great strength. Each student was invited to participate based upon the prayers I made and an observable demonstration of the student being biblically-sound as well as active in the living out of their faith. Additionally, the students invited to participate demonstrated vigor for higher education. Though not indicated on the pre-test survey section, 6 of the 8 participants had college degrees, one of which was pursuing a Ph.D. in psychology at the University of Louisville. All students were active in the education programs of the church.

This culture of education amongst the students diminished the need to spend lengthy amounts of time providing instruction on central doctrines. Such strength also afforded a willingness of the students to grasp the practical truths of Scripture and marry them to the applications of biblical counseling.

The class text, John MacArthur's *Counseling, How to Counsel Biblically*, was an additional strength. Students who completed the reading participated more in class and had an easier time grasping counseling concepts. The book covered a variety of topics with a depth that could not have been achieved in the time frame of the class period.

Other strengths included the scheduled time of 6:00 p.m. on Sunday nights. This time gave many participants a near perfect attendance record. Ekron Baptist has an active evening program that includes child care and opportunities for spouses who were

not enrolled in the class. Additionally, the materials used and unity among the believers greatly aided the students in understanding the scope of biblical counseling.

Weaknesses of the Project

The large amount of material to be covered proved to be a weakness. The time allotment could not give a proper discourse to each subject, nor could it accommodate all the questions students asked. With much of the information being new to the students, it would have benefited the class to go deeper in the material while covering fewer topics. One student summed it well when she described one lesson as "drinking from a fire hose."

To improve upon this weakness, future classes teaching an introduction to biblical counseling would be broken into two eight-week courses. These sixteen weeks would afford the students opportunity to slow the pace of the course and take a more in-depth view of each topic. Taking a break between courses would afford the students time for rest and reflection as well as reducing the stress of having to prepare weekly for an extended period.

A second weakness of the project was the pre and post-test (see appendix 3). This test contained several subjective questions, which led to quite a few students rating themselves as "SA," "strongly agree[ing]," in many areas, and left little room for improvement. Additionally, many of the test questions, such as questions 25 through 40, dealt with various conditions of a person and the counselor's perceived comfort level in providing help. These questions were often scored in a manner that seemed students consistently chose redundant responses through the "strongly agree" column.

The test would be much improved if it were to cover four areas of evenly numbered question, including the students understanding of doctrine, confidence in perceived abilities to help, tools and methods useful to the counselor, and methodologies of counseling. Using the Likert scale was advantageous; however, to avoid rushed or straight column responses, the questions ought to be interwoven within the test rather than blocked in sections by topic.

Another weakness was the classroom itself. The available room did not supply desks or tables, which would have aided in note taking. Ekron Baptist suffers the problem of not being equipped with enough education space in the facility.

Student Feedback

The students expressed many relevant strengths and weaknesses in the post-course essay. The students communicated a positive appreciation of the course through statements such as

> I have decided to seek ACBC certification through the One-Eighty Counseling and Education ministry.
>
> I now feel, with further training, I could be an effective biblical counselor.
>
> I now see that I need to use more scripture and be more biblically based with my advice instead of mainly my opinion.
>
> As I complete this class, I was greatly humbled as I realized that I am not adequately trained to take this role.
>
> Before this course my studies in the Bible itself were hit or miss. Now I am trying to read straight out of the Bible and study it every day instead of when I can of when I am free to.

Students mentioned the most positive lessons of the course were "The Bible Offers Hope in the Gospel," 5 people; "Habit and Hope," 3 people; "A Theology of Biblical Counseling," 3 people; "Psychology vs. Biblical Counseling and the Absence of a Good Compromise," 3 people; "Humility Is Required by All," 4 people. In addition to these lesson titles, one student marked that a class discussion that answered a student's question on anger was helpful.

These lessons led to the students noting positive outcomes of applications. Categorically, the students expressed increased skills in the ability see the difference between psychology and biblical counseling with 5 notations. Other improved skills noted by the students included increased confidence, the discovery of good resources, having goals for the counselee that deal with the heart, increased ability to give hope, a better understanding of counseling in general, an increased humility, increased Bible use at a personal level, an improved prayer life, an ability to better gather data, applying

different ways to approach topics, understanding the importance of the counselee's salvation, and an understanding of the issue of over prescribing medications for the treatment of heart issues.

Student comments related to the improvement of the course included

> Adding more personal examples
>
> Use a book that is easier for a lay person to read
>
> I feel using multiple examples of problems would be beneficial, addictions, marriage, anxieties, anger, etc.
>
> Increasing the class time.
>
> Spending more time on certain subjects, not speeding through so quickly with others.
>
> Classroom setting with desks.
>
> More visual aids like overhead, video, or PowerPoint.
>
> I would suggest having a mock counseling session. I think this would help the students to see what really happens.

What I Would Do Differently

It has been advantageous to evaluate this project. During the construction and implementation phases several pastors of the Salem Baptist Association, Kentucky, expressed a desire to receive this training in biblical counseling for their own prospective ministries. Therefore, in retrospect of the students comments and my own discoveries for improvement would include the following specific course corrections.

As discussed, the weaknesses would be addressed by dividing the twelve-week course into two eight-week semesters. This would allow for greater depth of lecture time and discussion on the issues that the classes took a greater interest in understanding, including the topics of "How is biblical counseling different form behavior modification," "What role should medicines play in helping a person with problems," and "How do I address various addictions?" to name a few. Additionally, more time would be spent on the subject of building hope.

It would serve the course well to also spend a class session or two addressing the difficulties a counselor often encounters, including conducting marriage counseling where only one partner is willing to participate, dealing with rebellious teens who object to counsel, how to arrive at advice for areas that the counselor is unfamiliar with, and working with persons struggling with deep seeded abuse of drugs or alcohol.

By constructing a semester-style method for Ekron Baptist Church, the biblical counseling ministry could afford several improvements. This method would allow for more students to participate as eight-week courses are easier to commit to than twelve-week time blocks. Time could be scheduled between semesters for holidays, vacations, and special events. By creating eight-week semesters, specific issues could be addressed in future courses of continuing education, such as dealing with homosexuality, post-traumatic stress, issues with children, and others subjects as they present a need for relevant knowledge.

As also indicated, the composition of the pre and post-test leaves little room for the measurement of areas that would be better served with an essay response. Future pre and post-tests should incorporate a short essay section that would allow students to clarify points of view.

However, included with this is my evaluation that the test should integrate a wider range and a more specific set of questions with Likert response answers to gauge the student's worldview on counseling and the Bible. Improvements would include a series of Scripture-related applications matching a verse to context, questions that would communicate to common doctrinal stances which agree with the tenants of ACBC, and fewer redundant questions regarding the treatment of various heart related problems. Additional questions would score the students familiarity of counseling methods and tools. Future courses would not necessitate the statistical need for pre and post-testing as utilized by this project. However, they would prove useful for ongoing refinement of future classes.

A third change to implement would be to provide the students with an improved set of handout resources. Fill in the blank handouts per class lecture would help to keep the discussion time on track. Supplementary handouts should include a set of homework assignments for counselees. These handouts would be categorized by counseling needs and provide the counselor student with tools as they begin to counsel on their own. Additional handouts would include diagrams that would assist students and counselees visualize verbal illustrations often used in explaining scriptures and principles for transformation.

A fourth change would be to provide each student an opportunity to attend an actual counseling session. Putting the theoretical of the classroom into practice one-on-one would undoubtedly prove to advance learning comprehension. By attending a counseling session the student can experience firsthand how a counselor moves through the different stages of a meeting.

Based upon these considerations, I find it wise to consider both short and long-term uses for the project itself. In the short-term I am reconfiguring the lesson plans to be taught in two styles. The first short-term style would be a two-semester eight-week course for lay people of the church, as discussed. Relative to that, the second short term style would incorporate a syllabus created specifically for pastors who seek continuing education. This format would possibly incorporate longer class sessions but fewer weeks as a pastor's schedule cannot always accommodate sixteen weeks of commitment.

The long-term use of the project would be to provide a continuing counselor education program within Ekron Baptist Church. Such a program would possibly include additional eight-week semesters that encapsulate more depth in specific topics, such as dealing with marriage and family issues, methodology and tools of the counselor, the handling of grief, loss, and a painful past, and crisis counseling to name a few. The long-term counseling ministry of Ekron Baptist Church would seek to offer free counseling to the community as a proficient ministry. It would also seek to have a continual program

for educating future generations of biblical counselors who could receive training, certification, and opportunities to exercise their ministry all within the campus of Ekron Baptist Church.

Theological Reflections

The duty of the church is to proclaim the gospel for the winning of souls to Christ and then to care for these souls through discipleship. Many shepherds in this day and age do not counsel as they express a lack of available time, desire, or training, and consequently the sheep suffer. This course benefitted Ekron Baptist by being faithful to scriptures to train its members to engage in soul care. The results include a trustworthy group of servants who have begun the training to biblically care for those who are hurting. The very nature of the class brought to the attention of its members the needs of hurting persons that are often overlooked, as well as a faith in Christ to reach out and become involved in the sanctification process. Whereas previous to the class a student may have witnessed the problems of others through their own personal agenda, they now have a greater appreciation for the agenda of Christ, the agenda of being good Samaritans. May the glory be unto God.

Personal Reflections

As I instructed each class I was motivated by the passion of the students to learn the material. These saints often expressed real life situations in which they wholeheartedly wanted to help others with the problems of life. The sincere empathy of the students led me to take a more vested interest in providing the saints at Ekron with practical means to minister to the heart of people both within the church and in the community.

Preparing to teach the material proved to sharpen my skills as I reflected upon the big picture of biblical counseling. The very nature of constructing the course found me in the cycle of a disciple making disciples so that they too could make disciples.

Often a great satisfaction of joy and spur to humility was present as I reflected that I was once where these students happen to be in their journey, and that Christ has blessed me with His patience, grace, and opportunities to serve Him.

This project increased my appreciation for the Scriptures. The questions asked by the students consistently challenged me to present the truth of Scripture as the authority and hope for life. Repeatedly I found a need to make sure that I could articulate doctrine in a way that connected with the students. Therefore, my reliance upon the Holy Spirit to work in my life has come to a fresh firsthand reality.

Reflection upon the course has taught me that I still have a great need for personal sanctification. It is one thing to teach a lesson, another to live it. As theoretical must give way to practical living, this ongoing process challenges the core of who we are.

The course also affirmed within me the calling I have as a pastor. Shepherding God's flock is the antithesis of my pre-Christian life. My personal skill set is not equipped to deal with people as I do, but by the grace of God it is my great joy. This course has fanned the flame of my heart to help people to glorify God through discipleship; embracing the truth of the Bible and making it the rhythm of the heart.

I believe my love for Christ has grown through this experience. Oftentimes the challenge of the project itself and the coursework involved humbled me as I realized how much I have still to learn; often I have shepherded the church in my own strength, and I have missed many opportunities to glorify God. Through these revelations, I have been driven often to prayer. On several occasions I wanted to quit, however, God reminded me that this learning experience was not about a degree, but about being an obedient servant. The coursework was for the benefit of others and the glory of His name.

Conclusion

This project served myself and Ekron Baptist well. The culture of the church is further embracing the practicality of the Scripture than they had previously. This shift in attitude has seen an increased activism to be a brother's keeper within the church body

while emphasizing the faithfulness of Scripture to address all the heart issues of life.

The students whom I taught have gone from being spectators on the sidelines to active players on the field. They have a greater understanding of the biblical basis for speaking the truth of God's Word in love to help one another, and an active desire to fulfill this tenant of the faith. Having taught the course at Ekron Baptist Church, the ministry being done by God though the people is at a greater depth and scope than before. The church now has a greater propensity to do the work of the Christian life together, all to the glory of God.

APPENDIX 1

INTRODUCTION TO BIBLICAL COUNSELING THROUGH
EKRON BAPTIST CHURCH COMMITMENT CARD

Name

Email

Phone Number

Address

Pastor,

By signing this commitment card I am hereby enrolling in the discipleship course, Introduction to Biblical Counseling. I plan on attending the twelve sessions from Sunday December 7 through Sunday March 1, meeting from 5:00pm till 6:15

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to equip the student in the methods of using the Bible to counsel a person. This research is being conducted by Wes Pinkley for purposes of completing a professional doctoral project. In this research, you will take a pre-course assessment test, attend twelve class sessions, and complete a post-course assessment test. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.

By your completion of this enrollment card, and checking the appropriate box below, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.
[ ] I agree to participate
[ ] I do not agree to participate

_____ _____

Name Date

APPENDIX 2

CURRICULUM EVALUATION RUBRIC

Biblical Counseling Curriculum Evaluation Tool					
1= insufficient 2=requires attention 3= sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criterion	1	2	3	4	Comments
The lesson is clearly relevant to the issue of biblical counseling.					
The material is faithful to the Bible's doctrinal teaching for biblical counseling					
The material is theologically sound.					
The thesis of the lesson is clearly stated.					
The points of the lesson clearly support the goals of the lesson.					
The lesson contains points of practical application.					
The lesson is sufficiently thorough in its coverage of the material.					
Overall, the lesson is clearly presented.					

APPENDIX 3

BIBLICAL COUNSELING SURVEY

Agreement to Participate
The research in which you are about to participate is designed to identify the current understanding and practices of biblical counseling of the participant. This research is being conducted by Wes Pinkley for the purpose of collecting data for a ministry project. In this research, you will answer questions before the project and you will answer the same questions at the conclusion of the project. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported or identified with your responses. Participation is strictly voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time. By completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this project.

Directions: Answer the following multiple-choice questions by placing a check next to the appropriate answer.

Part 1

1. Do you consider yourself a Christian?
   ___ A. Yes
   ___ B. No

2. Have you repented of your sin and trusted in Jesus Christ for salvation?
   ___ A. Yes
   ___ B. No

3. Are you married?
   ___ A. Yes
   ___ B. No

4. Do you have any children age 18 or younger living in the home?
   ___ A. Yes
   ___ B. No

5. What is your age in years?
   ___ A. 18-24
   ___ B. 25-34
   ___ C. 35-44
   ___ D. 45-54
   ___ E. 55-64
   ___ F. 65 and over

Part 2

Directions: Circle your opinion to the statements based on the following scale

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA

6.	I consider myself to be well versed in the Bible.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
7.	I am an effective biblical counselor.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
8.	I desire to grow in my faith.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
9.	I have an ability to speak to people regarding life's problems by using Scripture to help them change.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
10.	Psychology and the Bible work together.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
11.	If asked, I could share the gospel in a manner that could lead a person to Christ.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
12.	Addressing a person's salvation is a priority before addressing their behavioral needs in counseling.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
13.	The pastor is solely responsible for counseling in the church.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
14.	Lay people can be equipped for counseling.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
15.	The goals of counseling are set by the counselor.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
16.	The goals of counseling are set by the counselee.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
17.	The Holy Spirit has value in biblical counseling.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
18.	The weekly meeting has value in biblical counseling.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
19.	The use of homework has value in biblical counseling.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
20.	The understanding of a person's health history has value in biblical counseling.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
21.	The understanding of a person's life history has value in biblical counseling.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
22.	The building of a person's self-esteem has value in biblical counseling.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA

23.	The use of medications has value in biblical counseling.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
24.	The participation in group counseling has value in biblical counseling.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
25.	I am comfortable counseling someone who says he is depressed.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
26.	I am comfortable counseling someone who says his marriage is ending.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
27.	I am comfortable counseling someone who says he is anxious.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
28.	I am comfortable counseling someone who says he is without hope.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
29.	I am comfortable counseling someone who says he is addicted to pornography.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
30.	I am comfortable counseling someone who says he is grieving over past loss in life.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
31.	I am comfortable counseling a teen who hates his parents.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
32.	I am comfortable counseling someone prone to anger.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
33.	I am comfortable counseling someone who says he is ADHD.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
34.	I am comfortable counseling someone who says he is Bi-polar.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
35.	I am comfortable counseling someone who says he is addicted to alcohol.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
36.	I am comfortable counseling someone who says they want to overcome past sins.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
37.	I am comfortable counseling someone who says she cannot forgive her husband.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
38.	I am comfortable counseling someone who is unrepentant.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
39.	I am comfortable counseling someone who is full of pride and selfishness.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
40.	I am comfortable counseling someone who has an eating disorder.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA

41.	I am comfortable counseling someone who has difficulty expressing their thoughts.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
42.	I am comfortable listening to people talk about problems and keeping on track.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
43.	I am able to demonstrate God's love to counselees without being prideful of my spiritual maturity.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA
44.	I am able to ask a person questions of a deeper nature than what presents itself.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA

Personal Identification Number: _____

APPENDIX 4

POST-TEST QUESTIONNAIRE

Pin #_____

1. In a post-course situation, would you say your abilities and knowledge are improved, despite what you originally scored for answers on the test?
   Yes No

2. How do you perceive your personal improvement? What do you compare it to as a benchmark?
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

3. What were the three most important lesson topics from the course?
   A. _____
   B. _____
   C. _____

4. In what ways, if any, has the course improved your knowledge or skills?
   A. _____
   B. _____
   C. _____

5. What improvements to the course would you suggest?
   A. _____
   B. _____
   C. _____

6. Would you be willing to play a role as a counselor of Ekron Baptist Church?
   Yes No

7. In What Capacity would you be willing to counsel someone?
   ___ In a formal weekly setting
   ___ Informally, over coffee or tea
   ___ During the church invitation time
   ___ In a one on one discipleship role
   ___ Other _____

8. How do you plan to use your training as a counselor in your everyday life and ministry?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

APPENDIX 5

LESSON PLANS FOR A TWELVE-WEEK COURSE IN BIBLICAL COUNSELING FOR THE ADULT MEMBERS OF EKRON BAPTIST CHURCH, EKRON, KENTUCKY

Rev. Wes Pinkley instructor

January 4, Lesson 1: An Overview of Biblical Counseling
This class session will review a history of biblical counseling.

Lesson Scripture:

- Matthew 28:18-20

Lesson Objectives:

- To administer the class pretest survey.
- To give an overview of counseling as seen in the New Testament, as well as a history of the modern biblical counseling movement from Jay Adams to the establishment of Association of Certified Biblical Counselors.
  Review for the students the assigned reading, as well as the values of the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors.
- New Testament counsel is seen in the pastoral epistles as well as the various times that Jesus spoke directly to the disciples. (Matthew 11:1, 13:36, 15:32, 16:13, 16:24, 19:23, 21:6, 24:3.)
- To demonstrate the mandate of the church to counsel biblically.
  Discuss the meaning of the words disciple, justification, gospel, and sanctification.

Practical Example: The pastor's personal example of helping others through biblical counseling.

Lesson Reading:

- Overview of historical biblical counseling. John MacArthur, Counseling, How to Counsel Biblically. Biblical Counseling in Recent Times P. 18-30

January 11, Lesson 2: Building a Counseling Relationship
The importance and procedures of building a helpful relationship with the counselee will be taught.

Lesson Scripture: Matthew 7:1-8

Lesson Objectives:
- To learn how to listen without hasty analysis
- A short summary of terms used in biblical counseling will be given
- An overview will be given over data gathering
- An overview of building hope will be given
- Students will learn how to ask leading questions.
- A counseling session video will be viewed as to what not to do in counseling.

Practical Example: The counseling session video
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qmrGUVbaaRs

Lesson Reading:
- John MacArthur, Counseling, How to Counsel Biblically. Developing a Helping Relationship with Counselees. p. 101-113

January 18, Lesson 3: The Bible Offers Hope in the Gospel
The importance of building hope and the need to share to Gospel will be taught.

Lesson Scripture:
- 2 Timothy 3:14-17, Ephesians 1:9-14

Lesson Objectives:
- To know several relevant scriptures for hope.
  These scriptures include; Psalms 42:5, 1 Corinthians 10:13, Romans 5:2-5, 8:24-25, 28-39, Hebrews 14:6, 1 Peter 1:13.
- To make evident how Biblical counseling offers hope unlike secular counsel.
- Discuss the plague of sin and the problems that man faces.
  Discuss the world's responses to a need for hope verses the hope that is found in scripture.
- To demonstrate how hope is built in a counseling session.
  Discuss listen to the counselee and discerning how to provide hope in Jesus.
- Discuss the role of scripture in combating thoughts, behaviors, and habits.
  Discuss giving the counselee practical sanctifying solutions to applying scripture to various problems a counselee needs hope to combat.

Practical Example: Discussion of counseling a despondent woman in the loss of her boyfriend.

Lesson Reading:
- John MacArthur, Counseling, How to Counsel Biblically. Instilling Hope in the Counselee P. 114-130

January 25, Lesson 4: How to Gather Data for Understanding the Heart of the Problem

The methods of data gathering and the counseling process will be taught.

Lesson Scripture:

- Colossians 3:1-17

Lesson Objectives:

- Help the student understand the role of the Holy Spirit in counseling. (Psalms 51:11, Luke 12:12, John 14:17,26, 15:26, 16:13, Romans 8:2-16,26
- Provide an overview listening skills, keeping the counselee on track, and note taking.
- Provide an understanding of record keeping and data gathering. Discuss the need for privacy as well as when to involve other persons.
- Familiarize the student with the Personal Data Inventory form, the Health History Questionnaire, and other resources.
- To demonstrate how a counselor probes for information using questions, homework, halo data, and listening skills.
- Discuss the importance of homework in the life of a counselee for change.
- Begin discussing the need to focus attention on heart issues.

Practical Example: Walk through the steps a counselee takes beginning with the initial request for counseling, the first general meeting, and the first session.

Lesson Reading:

- John MacArthur, Counseling, How to Counsel Biblically. Taking Counselee Inventory: Collecting Data, Interpreting Counselee Data, and Providing Instruction Through Biblical Counseling., P. 131-175

February 1, Lesson 5: Habits and Hope

The importance of understanding habituation will be taught.

Lesson Scripture: Ephesians 4:11-24

Lesson Objectives:

- Discuss heart issues as the core of counseling and hope.
- Discuss habituation, compounding problems, and hope as they intertwine in problem solving.
- Highlight the hope filled passage of scripture regarding the renewing of the mind, putting off and putting on. (Romans 12:1-2, Ephesians 4:24, Colossians 3:4-13)
- Establish an understanding of the doctrine of sanctification and our hope in Christ.
- Share how to use stop signs of scripture as a reminder.

Practical Example: Share how various people have placed scripture throughout their life in places as reminders and acted upon it.

Lesson Reading:

- John MacArthur, Counseling, How to Counsel Biblically. Biblical Counseling and Inducement P. 176-189

February 8, Lesson 6: A Theology of Biblical Counseling
The value of the Scriptures for counseling will be taught.

Lesson Scripture: Psalm 1

Lesson Objectives:
- To help the students understand the necessity of salvation for change. Here we will discuss the doctrines of sin and repentance. (Romans 1:21, 3:18, 5:8, 7:1)
- Discuss how to evangelize non-believers, and how to counsel someone who is not able to discern spiritual things. (Peter and the sermon at Pentecost (Acts 2) for those with Bible knowledge and Paul on Mars Hill for those without Bible knowledge, (Acts 17:16-34))
- To teach how the sanctification process is integral to the life of a believer
- To help understand grace, repentance, restoration. (Luke 17:4, Galatians 6:1, Ephesians 2:8-9, 4:28)

Practical Example: The counseling of Lawrence a distraught unbeliever verses counseling Paul a believer with the same captivating anxiety of the future.

Lesson Reading:
- John MacArthur, Counseling, How to Counsel Biblically. The Godward Focus of Biblical Counseling p. 51-63

February 15, Lesson 7: Psychology vs Biblical Counseling and the Absence of a Good Compromise
The differences between psychology and biblical counseling will be taught.

Lesson Scripture: 2 Corinthians 11:3, Colossians 2:8, 2 Peter 2:1

Lesson Objectives:
- Students will be given an overview of the history of psychology.
- Students will be presented with the basic premises and methods of psychology
- Students will be educated in the basics of biblical counseling as it differs from psychology.
- Students will be shown the positive aspects of psychology.
- Students will be made aware of the DSM V and how it functions.
- Students will discuss the book, The Christian's guide to Psychological Terms.
- Students will learn the difference between a psychological diagnosis and a sinful one.
- Students will also learn how physiological problems affect the thinking of a person, where medicine is advisable, and the counselee's need for physical examination by a doctor.

Practical Example: Share the story of Wilma and her visits between a psychologist and a biblical counselor.

Lesson Reading:
- John MacArthur, Counseling, How to Counsel Biblically, Rediscovering Biblical Counseling and Why Biblical Counseling and Not Psychology. P. 3-17, 31-47

February 22, Lesson 8: Humility is Required by All
The spiritual disciplines of the biblical counselor will be taught.

Lesson Scripture: Proverbs 18:21, Philippians 2:3, James 1:21, 1 Peter 5:5

Lesson Objectives:

- To recognize our own faults and failures
- To seek the Holy Spirit to lead in counseling
- To reaffirm the need for grace
- What does humility look like

Practical Example: Listening to the audio of Stuart Scott on humility as time allows.

Lesson Reading:

- John MacArthur, Counseling, How to Counsel Biblically, The Work of the Spirit and Biblical Counseling and Spiritual Discipline and the Biblical Counselor. p. 79-97

March 1, Lesson 9: Confrontation of Sin for the Purpose of Grace
The confrontation of sin and the sanctification process will be taught.

Lesson Scripture: Matthew 7:1-5, 18:14-20, Galatians 6:1

Lesson Objectives:

- Students will learn to use scripture to demonstrate sinful behaviors and thinking.
- Students will be given an understanding of self-esteem versus pride. Romans 5:8, 1 Timothy 3:2, 4:3.
- Students will learn to motivate people to strive for the glory of God. 1 Corinthians 10:31, Colossians 1:9-10.
- Students will learn how to help gain a commitment from the counselee to change.
- Students will learn how to address someone while speaking truth in love to someone who does not want to take responsibility for their behavior.

Practical Example: Personal example of the pastor being confronted by two brothers in love.

Lesson Reading:

- John MacArthur, Counseling, How to Counsel Biblically, Counseling and the Sinfulness of Humanity. p. 64-78

March 8, Lesson 10: Giving the Counselee the Tools for Change

Helping the counselee to take responsibility and procedures for change will be taught.

Lesson Scripture: Proverbs 7, 1 Timothy 6:11

Lesson Objectives:

- Teach about "radical amputation". Matthew 5:30, Romans 13:14.
- Discuss the importance of taking practical steps to help the counselee change habit patterns. These include changing thinking patterns, fellowshipping with believers, removing oneself from temptious people and situations, accountability, devotional time, diet rest and exercise, actively serving others, and preparing for temptation.
- Communicate about renewing the mind. Romans 12:2, Philippians 4:8
- Impart the urgency of putting off the old man in order to put on the new man. Hebrews 5:14
- Discuss the importance of prayer, Bible reading, and the local church. Romans 12, Ephesians 4

Practical Example: Discuss Sarah and her change of heart, from depression to joy, by implementing the practical.

Lesson Reading:

- John MacArthur, Counseling, How to Counsel Biblically, Implementing Biblical Instruction. p. 190-200

March 15, Lesson 11: The Counselor as Student

An overview of resources, legal issues, certification benefits, and continuing education will be taught.

Lesson Scripture: Ezra 7:10, 2 Timothy 2:15

Lesson Objectives:

- To discuss when a counselee is released from ongoing counseling.
- To equip the students with practical resources for ongoing education. Provide a list of helpful websites.
- To provide the student tools for homework, record keeping, and assisting clients beyond the office. Provide the student with handouts for record keeping, a PDI, Health History Questionnaire, and various other data gathering homework assignments.
- To promote inspiration toward certification in biblical counseling. Discuss the benefits of certification with the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors.
- To inform the students of situations wherein legal or police reporting is necessary.
- Additional information will be covered as to dealing with decision making, suffering, and building faith.

Practical Example: Pastoral explanation of how he personally had benefitted from training to help others.

Lesson Reading:

- John MacArthur, Counseling, How to Counsel Biblically, Resources for Biblical Counseling. p. 231-243
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March 22, Lesson 12 Review
A review of the course material and the post course survey will be administered.

Lesson Scripture: Matthew 25:14-30

Lesson Objectives:

- To review the highpoints of the course in biblical counseling.
- To accentuate the practicality and soundness of Biblical counseling.
- To administer the final course survey.

Lesson Reading:

- John MacArthur, Counseling, How to Counsel Biblically, Frequently Asked Questions About Biblical Counseling, p. 244-264

APPENDIX 6

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF T-TEST
DEPENDENT SAMPLES

Table A1. Raw data of pre and post-test scores

Student	**Pre Test**	**Post Test**
1	177	160
2	158	165
3	167	181
4	171	202
5	179	185
6	147	179
7	89	190
8	103	181

Table A2. T-test for pre and post-test scores for all students

	Variable 1	*Variable 2*
Mean	148.875	180.375
Variance	1184.696	176.5536
Observations	8	8
df	7	
t Stat	-2.25762	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.029268	
t Critical one-tail	1.894579	

APPENDIX 7

CHURCHWIDE SURVEY OF GENERAL OPINIONS REGARDING
PSYCHOLOGY AND BIBLICAL COUNSELING AT
EKRON BAPTIST CHURCH

Dear Church,
I would like to thank you in advance for taking a few moments to fill out this survey as it will help me with my school project. Your name is not required for this study. Please answer each of the questions and return this form to either the basket outside my office or simply place it in the offering plate today. For the scale questions of 1 to 10, 1 represents the least and 10 the most; please circle your answer.

1. Have you ever been asked to give advice to someone with a difficult life problem?
   Yes No

2. How confident are you in providing wisdom and advice to those who ask for it?
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. The last time you gave advice to someone who had a difficult life decision, did you use scripture?
   Yes No

4. How confident are you in using the Bible to give advice to those who ask for it?
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. When advising a person do you often use personal experiences to offer guidance?
   Yes No

6. In your last opportunity to advise someone with a life problem, how did you advise a person to handle the situation? Please circle all that apply.

Sleep on it	Follow their heart
Pray	Seek a counselor
Pray until they gain a peace about it	Seek a biblical counselor specifically
Not worry about it, God will handle it.	Make a list of pros and cons
Get a divorce	See the doctor
Read a helpful book (not the Bible)	Read the Bible
Seek a support group	Find an activity to get their mind off of it.
Quit	See a psychologist/psychiatrist
Forgive someone	Forgive yourself
Other_____	

7. When advising a person, do you base your counsel directly upon the expressed need of the person?
   Yes No

8. Please circle all the potentially helpful solutions to dealing with sin related habits.

Psychiatric help	Seeking a friends advice
See a biblical counselor	Talk to the pastor
Seek a doctor's advice	Enroll in a support group (or 12 step program)
Follow the advice of a self-help book	Just stop sinning
Seek to forgive yourself	Let go of your problem
Medication	Pray about it
Repent	Remove the temptation source

9. Please circle all the life problems listed below that should be addressed by a trained biblical counselor, other than the pastor.

Sinful habits	Anorexia/Eating Disorders
Fear	Schizophrenia
Difficult children	Anger
Potential Suicide	Divorce
Hearing voices	Cutting
Dysfunctional life	Co-dependency
Addiction to pornography	Addiction to alcohol
Addiction to Drugs	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
ADD/ADHD	Dealing with sinful past
Dealing with abuse	Anxiety
Marriage relationship issues	Depression
Conflict	Recovery from abuse
Grief	Job related stress
Family related stress	Personal failures
Bipolar Disorder	Bad Memories
Thyroid disease	Insomnia
Salvation needs	Lack of self-control
Feelings of worthlessness	Feelings of failure
Perfectionism unrealized	Disappointments with life
Mid-life crisis	Loss of a child
Loss of a spouse	doubt/confusion
Sexual dysfunction	Homosexuality
Rebellious attitude	Pre-marital counseling
Need for discernment	Making life decisions
Uncontrollable emotions	Obsessive behaviors

10. Would you enroll in a 12 session midweek class in biblical counseling to help you better help others? This class would include studies in the use of scripture, lessons and methods, and practical demonstrations. The class would need to last 75 minutes.
    Yes No

11. Would you enroll in a 12 session Sunday school hour class if it would equip you to better help others? This class would include studies in the use of scripture, lessons and methods, and practical demonstrations. (The class would need to last 75 minutes, running 9:15 till 10:30)

    Yes No

12. What reasons would apply to you for not enrolling in a course to help you with helping others through biblical counseling? (Circle all that apply)

Time is limited	No interest
I am not good at giving advice	Counseling is the pastor's job
I do not know the Bible well	Counseling is the deacon's job
Fear	I have too many problems of my own to help others

    Other_____

APPENDIX 8

ACBC PERMISSION LETTER

Association of Certified
Biblical Counselors

To whom it may concern,

This letter is to confirm that Wes Pinkley has permission from the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors to use and make copies of the following resource for his doctoral program for teaching purposes:

Pride and Humility by Dr. Stuart Scott (Raleigh, regional CDT conference 2013)

If there are any questions please contact me at our offices either by phone or by email.

Thank you,

Renee Jarrett
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ABSTRACT

A TWELVE-WEEK COURSE IN BIBLICAL COUNSELING FOR THE ADULT MEMBERS OF EKRON BAPTIST CHURCH, EKRON, KENTUCKY

Wesley Raymond Pinkley, Jr., D.Min.
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2015
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Stuart W. Scott

This project equipped a select group of adult members at Ekron Baptist Church to counsel people using biblical means. Chapter 1 provides the details of the project as well as the parameters by which it is exercised.

Chapter 2 establishes the theological basis of the project by exploring five biblical passages on discipleship and the reliability of God's Word. These scriptures demonstrate the sufficiency of Scripture to aid believers in living a transformed life.

Chapter 3 provides a basis of practical application for uniting a man with God's Word for sanctification. The ensuing methods assist the counselor and believer in addressing the heart of a person rather than symptoms alone or adapting behavioral management.

Chapter 4 explains how the project implementation.

Chapter 5 depicts the results of the project's effectiveness toward reaching the desired goals. Statistical results are demonstrated as well as a depiction of strengths and weaknesses discovered in the course.

VITA

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EDUCATIONAL

A.A., Daytona Beach Community College, 1988
B.A., University of North Florida, 1991
M.Div., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1996

MINISTRY

Youth Intern, Riverside Baptist Church, Denver, Colorado, 1993
Pastor, Fellowship Baptist Church, Plainville, Georgia, 1996-1999
Senior Pastor, Park Avenue Baptist Church, Mt. Vernon, Illinois, 1999-2002
Pastor, Holiday Shores Baptist Church, Edwardsville, Illinois, 2002-2013
Senior Pastor, Ekron Baptist Church, Ekron, Kentucky, 2013-