TRAINING PASTORS AND CHURCH LEADERS AT GOOD

HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH IN HOUSTON, TEXAS, TO

INTEGRATE THE PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL

COUNSELING INTO PRACTICAL MINISTRY

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by

Darrell Dean Rose

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APPROVAL SHEET

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Darrell Dean Rose

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To my wife, Cynthia, who has always affirmed my spiritual gift of knowledge and

consistently encourages me to pursue excellence as I seek to minister

and pour into the lives of others. I love you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

PREFACE

This project would not be possible without the support of my wife, Cynthia. I am indebted to her for her years of encouraging me to pursue this professional doctoral degree. She has made unimaginable sacrifices that have contributed to my success. This milestone in my life would not be possible apart from Cynthia. I am forever thankful to the Lord for blessing me with the epitome of a godly woman. I love you, Cynthia.

I also thank Ronald Bell, associate pastor, and D. Z. Cofield, senior pastor at Good Hope Missionary Baptist Church, for their encouragement and invaluable support in pursuing this professional doctoral degree. In addition, I am grateful to my brothers and sisters at Good Hope, who desired to grow and sacrificed their time to participate on various levels in this project. Moreover, I want to thank Matthew Haste for providing clear instructions and Joseph Harrod for his expertise in performing adequate, practical research required for the project's success. I also want to thank my supervisor, Jeremy Pierre, for his theological discernment of biblical truths and his recommendations on the best way to communicate those truths with clarity to the readers of this project.

Last, I want to give a special thanks to my beloved mother, Roselyn Rose, who is now resting in the hands of our Lord Jesus Christ. She encouraged me decades ago to pursue a doctorate. I am forever grateful to her and to God, who has allowed her dream, which she foresaw in my service in the kingdom work of God, to become a reality.

<div align="right">Darrell Rose</div>

Houston, Texas

May 2025

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In the past, the church was where people with problems sought counsel. The church was where those seeking counsel received the gospel. Moreover, the church stood firm on the sufficiency of Scripture alone for addressing mundane problems of life. Today, many evangelical churches are facing a crisis. Church members with problems now seek help from clinical psychologists. Psychological ideologies have made their way into the church. Some church members would agree that integrating Scripture and psychology is a pragmatic solution to life problems. At the same time, other church members believe that Scripture alone is sufficient for addressing life problems. Although psychology has been helpful in providing relief to people who are struggling with hurts, habits, and hang-ups, the gospel of Christ is much more effective for changing the heart. Additionally, the effectiveness, relevancy, and authority of the Scripture alone are more than sufficient for producing life transformation, mental soundness, spiritual wholeness, and inner peace, which are essential to biblical counseling and discipleship. As such, the need to integrate the foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry is a viable avenue for fulfilling the Great Commission.

Context

Good Hope is a 150-year-old Missionary Baptist Church that has demonstrated exceptional strengths for fifteen decades. Good Hope is a multigenerational church that started in 1870 and was built by freed slaves in Freeman's Town area of Fourth Ward, Houston, Texas. Since then, Good Hope has persevered and expanded its ministry and campus. Good Hope Missionary Church, which started with just a few members, now worships in a state-of-the-art facility. Under the direction of several pastors, it has

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remained a vibrant church that has grown exponentially in the expository proclamation of God's Word, membership, ministerial efforts, and community outreach. The church building is now located at 3015 North Macgregor in the heart of Third Ward Houston, just a few miles from the medical center on a ten-acre plot of land.

Regarding church leadership, Good Hope has consistently maintained competent leadership and has only had six pastors from 1872 to 2025. The current senior pastor, D. Z. Cofield, became the sixth pastor elected by the church on March 28, 1994. He graduated from Dallas Theological Seminary and is an exceptional expositor of the Word of God. He also holds a Doctor of Ministry Degree from Faith Evangelical Seminary in Tacoma, Washington. Cofield is surrounded by twelve competent staff members, including three seminary graduates, who faithfully support the mission and vision of the church. Under Cofield's leadership, Good Hope built the Center of Hope Family Life Center, established the Barbara Jordan Child Care Development Center, and many other programs for spiritual growth. Additionally, Good Hope has a preaching ministry called the "Sons of Hope," which consists of fifteen associate ministers, including one Licensed Professional Counselor.

Since 1994, Good Hope membership has experienced significant growth. Between 1994 and 2022, Good Hope experienced tremendous growth from 200 to over 1,500 active members. The increase in membership also has positively affected Good Hope's ministerial efforts and diversity. Good Hope has 45 active ministries. Our ministries included children, youth, and young adults, praise and worship teams, Christian education ministries, biblical counseling, marriage enrichment, Sunday school, and mid-week Bible study. There are also nine membership ministries, seven guest relations ministries, including Christian workers who serve visitors on Sunday after the invitation, and four mission-related ministries.

The mission ministry is the most visible and popular among Good Hope's Members and the community. The mission ministry offers evangelistic opportunities to

bridge the church with the community. Several ministries work in collaboration with mission to serve the community. Good Hope's bridging events include Upward Soccer and Basketball, Vacation Bible School, social media ministry, children's church, Hallowed Be Thy Name Halloween Carnival for the community, and weekly food pantry. Our social media platform allows Sunday services to be viewed in over 100 countries, with an average of 1,500 viewers each week. Over the last 12 months, we have had 15 baptisms and 18 children profess their belief in Jesus Christ. Furthermore, the food pantry serves an average of 200 community families weekly and has distributed over 1603.6 tons of food in the twelve months.

Although Good Hope is a vibrant 150-year-old church that has experienced exponential membership growth, increased its ministerial efforts, and improved its outreach, a few areas of weakness are concerning. Many of Good Hope's ministry leaders and members are psychologized.[1] The cognitive term "psychologized," in the context of the church, is the attempt to synthesize modern psychology with biblical truth. For instance, a Sunday school teacher taught a class on reconciling and restoring broken relationships using *Relationships: A Mess Worth Making*, written by Timothy Lane and Paul Tripp. In *Relationships*, Lane and Tripp discuss the disappointments and hurt people experience in their relationships. The authors share that selfishness, pride, unforgiveness, irritation, and impatience are at the core of difficult relationships. They also state that although the sinful inclination of one's heart is at the root of troubled relationships, there is great hope and potential for loving reconciliation, "not based upon our gifts, experience, or track record, but hope that rest in Christ."[2] However, during his teaching, the Sunday school teacher, to some degree, deviated from the book's principles and began teaching the secular concepts of the "Four Temperaments." The premise of the Four Temperaments is

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[1] John F. MacArthur, "Insufficient Help Parts 1 & 2," Grace to You," September 10, 2014, https://www.gty.org/library/blog/B140910/~.

[2] Timothy S. Lane and Paul D. Tripp, *Relationships: A Mess Worth Making* (Greensboro, NC: New Growth, 2006), 2.

that instinctive personality differences are at the root of relational difficulties. This theory presupposes human personality traits are based on physical make-up and bodily fluids. Gary Smalley refined this theory by ascribing the four temperament types to animals, which he refers to as the Choleric Lion, the Sanguine Otter, the Phlegmatic Golden Retriever, and the Melancholic Beaver. The concern is that the Four Temperaments theory contains psychological concepts regarding the source relationship problems not found in Scripture. Although it may be helpful for a person to recognize his personality type through self-examination, it is a mistake to assert that personality differences are at the root of strained relationships. Personality differences are complicating factors that may create occasions for conflict in relationships, but they are not the source. On another occasion, a ministry leader, a licensed counselor, told a church member that people with severe mental problems need to see a professional because all biblical counselors are not qualified to handle serious life issues. There was also an incident where a small group leader shared ideologies of pop psychology while facilitating a small group discussion. The small group leader said, "We are called to love God and others, but you cannot love God and others until you learn to love yourself first." The concept of self-love stems from the counseling methodology of psychology and secular counseling.

Good Hope's weaknesses also include (1) diversified opinions among members on the meaning of discipleship, (2) many ministry leaders and members lacking the skills to minister to those who are suffering or grieving effectively, (3) a reluctance among some members to share the gospel because of inadequacy, arrogance, or fear of rejection, (4) traditional Sunday School is dying, (5) many ministry leaders are inward-focused on serving members instead of those in the community, and (6) some members use psychologized language to explain people's problems as if the explanation that psychology offers is more effective and relevant than the language of Scripture. As a result of weaknesses such as these, many millennials worldwide are leaving the church because they question the sufficiency and relevancy of the Bible.

The most significant concern is Good Hope's need for knowledge in incorporating fundamental principles of biblical counseling in practical ministry. Good Hope can resolve these areas of weakness by developing a church culture of discipleship among members integrated with biblical counseling. Foundational principles of biblical counseling are a catalyst in making disciples through practical theology because it helps those who are lost come to know Christ, and those who know Christ grow in Christ. Training church leaders at Good Hope to use foundational principles of biblical counseling in practical ministry is necessary for discipleship and for fulfilling the Great Commission.

Rationale

This project needed to take place for this time for the following reasons. First, according to Matthew 28:19–20, the Great Commission of the church is to "go and make disciples."[3] The first step in discipleship is evangelism, which is a foundational principle of biblical counseling. Some members are reluctant to evangelize and minister to the unchurched and unsaved because they believe that the spiritual growth of church members is the most important. As such, training leaders in the foundational principles of biblical counseling in practical ministry will equip the church to go and share the gospel with the unchurched and unsaved with confidence. Second, this project was necessary because many leaders, particularly deacons, are uncertain about ministering to those struggling, grieving, or suffering. Occasionally, a person shares a struggle with a church leader, and the leader will quickly hand the person off to the nearest biblical counselor.

Moreover, many leaders visit the sick, hospitalized, and bereaved but need help with how to minister to these individuals. Third, this project was essential because it promoted spiritual maturity by helping members grow in Christ. This project also helped Good Hope become a church that proclaims Christ and strives to present each member complete in Christ (Col 1:28). Fourth, this project was necessary because most Good Hope

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[3] Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the New American Standard Version.

ministry leaders lack an understanding of the dynamics of biblical counseling and its usefulness in making disciples. Good Hope is considered a historical church of 150 years, yet it has only started implementing biblical counseling since 2006. Although Good Hope has over 1,200 members, only 42 have completed the biblical counseling training program. Over the last 16 years, 30 trained in biblical counseling have left the church. Most of the biblical counselors left due to two different church plants. Other biblical counselors left because they relocated to other parts of the Houston Metropolitan area or another city. As a result, there are times when the counseling ministry is overwhelmed with counseling requests. People are being placed on a waiting list simply because there are not enough counselors. Fifth, this project was essential because there are far too many diverse opinions among Good Hope members about the meaning of discipleship. Sixth, this project was necessary because many church members have unknowingly been psychologized. Some members question the sufficiency of Scripture alone to provide hope, inner peace, fulfillment, mental soundness, and the power to persevere over the mundane difficulties of life. Some church members refer those struggling to clinical psychologists because they believe biblical counselors are not equipped to address serious problems. Last, this project was vital because the Sunday school curriculum does not incorporate the foundational principles of practical theology (elements of biblical counseling). As a result, Sunday school participation is declining because many believe the standard yearly curriculums are irrelevant to real-life struggles and do not address felt needs.

In summary, this project was necessary because integrating the foundational principles of biblical counseling with making disciples is essential for practical ministry. People who need the gospel of Christ also need the practical theology of biblical counseling. Members of Good Hope not only need knowledge of the Word but also know how to live the Word practically. The church must understand that biblical counseling and discipleship work together. Why? Because discipleship involves evangelizing the lost

and making them followers of Christ, and evangelism is a foundational principle of biblical counseling. Since becoming a disciple of Christ requires transformation, life transformation cannot occur apart from heart change. Heart change is a prerequisite to becoming a follower of Christ. The foundational principles of biblical counseling are an avenue for making disciples because it addresses the heart of man, including the need for Christ in the heart of the unbeliever, the comfort of Christ in the heart of sufferers, the transformative power of Christ for the wayward, and growth in the life of the Christian that leads to spiritual maturity.

Every member of the body needs biblical counseling or the counsel of the Word. What is the difference between biblical counseling and the counsel of the Word that is necessary for discipleship? Dale Johnson, Executive Director of the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors, says that normal discipleship could be placed "in the area of preventative care" and "biblical counseling as being reparative."[4] However, the Word of God is the foundation of biblical counseling and discipleship. Incorporating biblical counseling with discipleship is essential. Integrating principles of biblical counsel with the practical ministry will help members understand who God is, examine themselves through the lens of the Scripture, exhibit love for God and others, facilitate personal growth in Christ, and teach others to do the same. For these reasons, this project was essential for helping Good Hope fulfill the Great Commission.

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to train pastors and church leaders at Good Hope Baptist Church in Houston, Texas, to integrate foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry by developing and teaching a six-week class on how to incorporate methodologies of biblical counseling with making disciples.

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[4] Dale Johnson and Taron Defevers, "What's the Difference between Biblical Counseling and Discipleship?, July 16, 2018, Truth in Love, produced by the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors, podcast, 11:35, https://biblicalcounseling.com/resource-library/podcast-episodes/til-163-biblical-counseling-and-discipleship.

Goals

The following four goals directed the course of this project through its completion.

1. The first goal was to assess what leaders currently understand about biblical counseling (including the effectiveness, relevancy, and authority of Scripture) and disciple-making.

2. The second goal was to develop a six-week training curriculum on integrating biblical counseling principles into practical ministry.

3. The third goal was to teach the curriculum to increase understanding.

4. The fourth goal was to develop a six-week sermon series on the significance of integrating foundational principles of biblical counseling (including the effectiveness, relevancy, and authority of Scripture) with discipleship to educate and edify the church.

A specific research methodology was created to measure the successful completion of these four goals. This methodology is described in the following section.

Research Methodology

Each of the four goals was administered, assessed, and evaluated using the following methods to facilitate and determine the effectiveness of this project. The first goal was to assess what leaders currently understand about biblical counseling (including the effectiveness, relevancy, and authority of Scripture) and disciple-making. For this goal, a Biblical Discipleship Inventory Survey (BDIS) was used to measure what selected associate pastors and ministry leaders understand about biblical counseling and discipleship.[5] The survey consisted of three parts. Part 1 of the BDIS focused on the participants' understanding and beliefs about discipleship. Part 2 assessed participants' ability to differentiate between biblical truths and concepts of psychology. Part 3 focused on the participants' understanding and beliefs about the nature of biblical counseling and the sufficiency of Scripture alone. This goal was successfully met when at least twenty participants completed the BDIS, and the results were collected, analyzed, and interpreted.

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[5] See appendix 1.

The second goal was to develop a six-week training curriculum on integrating biblical counseling principles into practical ministry. This goal was measured by an expert panel consisting of at least three certified biblical counselors who have completed Good Hope's 2.5-year biblical counseling training curriculum and are certified by Good Hope as biblical counselors. The panel of Good Hope-certified biblical counselors will utilize a rubric to evaluate the biblical accuracy of the content, methodology, progressive structure, and comprehensiveness of the curriculum.[6] This goal was considered successfully met when 90 percent of all rubric evaluations met or exceeded the sufficiency level. If the rubric results fell short of the 90 percent goal, the curriculum would be modified until the desired result was reached.

The third goal was to teach the curriculum to increase understanding. This goal was measured by re-administering the BDIS given before the training to determine if the participants increased their knowledge of incorporating foundational principles of biblical counseling with practical ministry. This goal was successfully met when the *t*-test for dependent samples demonstrated a positive difference between the analyzed pre-and post-survey results.

The fourth goal was to develop a six-week sermon series on the significance of integrating foundational principles of biblical counseling (including the effectiveness, relevancy, and authority of Scripture) with discipleship to educate and edify the church. Each sermon was derived from and corresponded with the content of the six-week training curriculum. This goal was measured by the pastoral staff at Good Hope Baptist Church, who used a rubric to evaluate the theological accuracy, sermon purpose, content points, clarity, relevancy, and practical application of the sermon series.[7] This goal was considered successfully met when 90 percent of all rubric evaluations met or exceeded the sufficiency level. If rubric results fell short of the 90 percent benchmark, the

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[6] See appendix 2.

[7] See appendix 6.

curriculum was modified accordingly until the desired result was reached. Although the sermon series was developed as a part of this project, it was preached at a later date.[8]

Definitions and Limitations/Delimitations

The following terms used in the project are defined here to better assist the reader's understanding of the intent of this project:

Biblical counseling. The phrase biblical counseling refers to practical theology. Practical theology involves an accurate understanding of God's Word and how it applies to life and living. Biblical counseling aims at changing the heart, which drives man's thoughts and behaviors. Robert Jones defined biblical counseling as "the Christlike, caring, person-to-person ministry of God's Word to people struggling with personal and interpersonal problems to help them know and follow Jesus Christ in heart and behavior amid their struggles."[9]

Biblical worldview. Biblical worldview is one's concept or belief about God that determines how he views himself, relates to others, and responds to unfavorable situations, circumstances, and events that he experiences in his life. A biblical worldview involves viewing every aspect of one's life through the lens of Scripture. Dave Harvey writes, "What a person believes about God determines what he or she thinks about how we got here, what our ultimate meaning is, and what happens after we die."[10] A biblical worldview is what one believes and embraces about God, which will determine how he lives.

Discipleship. Discipleship is the process of people training other people to become committed followers of Jesus Christ. Discipleship involves evangelism, baptism,

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[8] All of the research instruments used in this project were performed in compliance with and approved by The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Research Ethics Committee prior to use.

[9] Robert D. Jones, *The Gospel for Disordered Lives: An Introduction to Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling*, by Robert Jones, Kristin Kellen, and Rob Green, (Nashville: B & H, 2021), 20.

[10] Dave Harvey, *When Sinners Say I Do: Discovering the Power of the Gospel for Marriage* (Wapwallopen, PA: Shepherd, 2007), 20.

and edification through teaching. The basic definition of a disciple is a learner. George Barna defines a disciple as "someone who is a learner or follower who serves as an apprentice under the tutelage of a master. We may define discipleship as becoming a complete and committed follower of Jesus Christ."[11] The mission of all disciples is to disciple others.

Psychology. Psychology refers to concepts, philosophies, presuppositions, and methodologies derived from human theories and observations that form the foundations of secular counseling. Saul McLeod defines psychology as "the scientific study of the mind and behavior, according to the American Psychological Association."[12] C. W. McLemore states, "Clinical psychology is focally concerned with understanding and alleviating human psychological misery."[13] In this project, secular counseling is referred to as psychology, and integrated counseling (integrating the methodology of psychology with the Bible) is referred to as integration.

Sufficiency of Scripture. The doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture is a fundamental principle of the Christian faith. It forms the basis of biblical counseling that embraces the Word of God alone to identify the root of man's deepest problems and provide the solution. A biblical worldview is built upon the absolute truth and sufficiency of Scripture. As such, God's Word is the authority. Not only are the Scriptures sufficient for man's sense of meaning and fulfillment regarding his existence and the understanding of the world around him and himself, but it is also significant for counseling every aspect of the inner person. Rich Thomson explains, "The Word of God is sufficient and unequaled

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[11] George Barna, *Growing True Disciples: New Strategies for Producing Genuine Followers of Christ* (Colorado Springs: Waterbrook, 2001), 17.

[12] Saul McLeod, "What Is Psychology?" Simply Psychology, accessed December 30, 2022, https://simplypsychology.org/whatispsychology.html.

[13] C. W. McLemore, "Clinical Psychology," in *Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology & Counseling*, ed. David G. Benner and Peter C. Hill (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999), 210.

for counsel concerning the man's inner person because true happiness comes from ordering one's life not according to the counsel of the unbeliever but according to Scripture."[14]

Two limitations applied to this project. First, most of the associate pastors and ministry leaders are busy serving in church events and activities throughout the year except for the summer months. To mitigate this limitation, this project occurred during summer to allow for more participation. Second, this project was limited by the number of associate pastors and ministry leaders who were not able to participate due to summer vacations and other scheduling conflicts. To mitigate this limitation, the six-week training curriculum of this project was condensed with longer meeting times and included small group leaders to generate more participation.

Two delimitations applied to this project. First, the six-week training curriculum was limited by focusing less on discipleship and more on teaching the foundational principles of biblical counseling that can easily be integrated with the church's existing discipleship ministry model. Second, at least twenty combined associate pastors, ministry, and small group leaders were selected to participate in this project. These leaders were chosen based on those who would best represent a sample of the Good Hope church context for assessing and training on integrating foundational principles of biblical counseling with practical ministry. Limiting the number of project participants facilitated realistic pre-session and post-session assessment results based on a consistent number of participants committed to completing the training.

Conclusion

The fundamental principles of biblical counseling and discipleship are necessary for spiritual growth and development. An anticipated outcome of this project was to help church pastors and leaders understand the need for biblical counseling and its role in making disciples. The foundational principles of biblical counseling are essential for

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[14] Rich Thomson, *The Heart of Man and The Mental Disorders: How the Word of God Is Sufficient*, 2nd ed. (Alief, TX: Biblical Counseling Ministries 2012), 124.

evangelizing the lost and are a catalyst for conforming believers to the image of Christ. The following chapters will provide biblical evidence that supports the need for integrating foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry, as well as identify the impediments to fulfilling the Great Commission. Chapter 2 focuses on the biblical and theological basis for integrating the foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry. Chapter 3 will focus on the theoretical and cultural influences that impede integrating the foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry. Chapter 4 provides an insightful overview of the implementation of this significant ministry project at Good Hope Missionary Church. It details the meticulous preparation, weekly class discussions, and comprehensive teaching curriculum. Finally, chapter 5 aims to determine the success of this project by evaluating the project's goals, strengths, and weaknesses of the project, possible changes to be made for future attempts to implement the project, theological and personal reflections regarding the project, and a conclusion about the project as a whole. This project aimed to help members of Good Hope understand and employ the foundational principles of biblical counseling as essential for the practical ministry of evangelizing the lost and a catalyst for conforming believers to the image of Christ.

CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS FOR INTEGRATING
THE FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL
COUNSELING INTO PRACTICAL MINISTRY

Scripture commands mutual care and encouragement as essential to the

formation of Christians as they suffer in this world. Teaching the church skills on mutual

care, derived from the foundational principles of biblical counseling, is helpful for church

ministry. The foundational principles of biblical counseling are rooted in practical

theology, which involves the interpretation and practical application of God's Word to

life and living.

What is the definition of practical theology? David Powlison states that

Scripture "reveals the one true God and His gracious purposes. It reveals Jesus as the

unique Son and only Savior. It reveals the mind and power of the one life-giving Spirit.

. . . Because Scripture reveals God at work, the Scriptures are practical theology."[1] In

making disciples, Powlison also states, "Ministry must always answer our questions and

address our struggles aiming to [practically] apply God's Words to life with fresh

relevance."[2] In essence, biblical counseling is practical theology.

What does practical theology look like? Jesus personified practical theology by

how he lived his life on earth. He taught the disciples that their purpose in life is to glorify

the Father. He taught the disciples how to relate to God, walk in humility, relate to others

(especially those in need), and endure suffering. As such, the believer's purpose in life is

to glorify the Father by reflecting the image of Christ (Rom 8:28–29; 2 Cor 5:9). With the

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[1] David Powlison, "The Practical Theology of Counseling," *Journal of Biblical Counseling* 25, no. 2 (2007): 3.

[2] Powlison, "The Practical Theology of Counseling," 3.

purpose in life in mind, biblical counseling aims to help believers understand and embrace attributes of (1) God and his will, (2) themselves and God's will, (3) relationships and God's will, and (4) suffering and God's will. For these reasons, biblical counseling stands firm on the authority of Scripture as the inspired Word of God. As such, the following passages of Scripture are some of the biblical and theological bases for integrating the foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry.

First, Hebrews 11:6 provides evidence that it is impossible to please God apart from embracing him for who he is. The foundational principle of biblical counseling is teaching converts the practical theology of embracing the attributes of God. Second, the Bible provides overwhelming evidence that the inspired Word of God alone is more than adequate for the practical ministry of making disciples (2 Tim 3:16). Third, Psalms 8:1–4 proves how insignificant man is in comparison to the supreme majesty of God. As such, a foundational principle of biblical counseling involves teaching converts that practical theology helps obtain a proper view of oneself against God's attributes. Fourth, Matthew 28:18–20 is the Great Commission of the church that provides a reason to integrate foundational principles of biblical counseling with making disciples. Evangelism and edification in the formation of Christians are essential to discipleship. Fifth, 1 Thessalonians 5:14 provides further evidence of the usefulness of integrating foundational principles of biblical counseling in terms of how we are to lovingly relate to others by providing mutual care and encouraging one another with longsuffering. Sixth, Colossians 1:28 gives biblical evidence to integrate foundational principles of biblical counseling in practical ministry to expedite the edification and spiritual maturity of every believer. Seventh, an essential principle of biblical counseling involves teaching disciples how to respond to suffering in this world (Nah 1:7; 1 Pet 5:9). Last, Colossians 3:16 shows the importance of practical theology and the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of believers while supporting the need for integrating foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry. Since the principles of biblical counseling stand on the

necessity of understanding and embracing the attributes of God, this chapter will begin with Hebrews 11:6 and its biblical and theological basis for integrating biblical counseling into practical ministry.

The Theological Basis for Teaching Disciples
to Embrace the Attributes of God

An essential principle of biblical counseling is teaching converts the practical theology of embracing the attributes of God. Embracing God involves more than simple head knowledge of God. Embracing the attributes of God is to have absolute trust by faith that what the Bible says about the character of God is absolute truth. The writer of Hebrews wrote, "And without faith, it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him" (11:6). Life as a disciple of Jesus Christ is a life of faith. Failing to embrace the attributes of God by faith makes it impossible to please him. What is faith? An anonymous person once wrote that "faith is confidence in the righteous character of God that fosters hope and trust even when our circumstances foster doubt and despair."

Some attributes of God that disciples of Christ must embrace, by faith, include God's sovereignty, supreme authority, holiness, power, faithfulness, and goodness (1 Chr 29:11–12; 1; Ps 62:11; 89:8; Eccl 7:13–14; Isa 6:23; Nah 1:7). Other attributes of God to embrace encompasses God's patience, unconditional love, grace, mercy, and loving-kindness (Neh 9:17; Ps 145:9; Lam 3:32; Rom 8:38–39; 2 Cor 12:9). These attributes of God to embrace, presented in this work, is not exhaustive. Furthermore, how one lives his life indicates what he believes about God. Discipleship consists of the community of believers who walk in practical righteousness in response to the character of God and teach other converts how to do the same. Embracing the attributes of God is essential to discipleship, foundational to the counseling methodology of practical theology, and a mandate for all believers. An accurate view of God compels one to worship and be thankful (Rom 1:21). God revealed himself to all men through general revelation by what

has been made (Ps 19:1–7). God also reveals himself through special revelation in Scripture. An accurate view of God also dramatically affects how one views himself.

The Authority, Value, and Benefit of Scripture in Practical Ministry (2 Tim 3:16)

Second Timothy 3:16 provides overwhelming evidence that the inspired Word of God alone is the basis of biblical counseling and is more than adequate for the practical ministry of making disciples. As such, Scripture is the authority of the Christian life and an invaluable resource for providing mutual care and encouragement in the formation of Christians as they suffer in this world. The Word of God transforms the whole person and equips him "for every good work." Biblical counseling is practical theology and the vehicle for Christian growth. Practical theology is the building block of faith and a vehicle for fulfilling the Great Commission of making disciples of Christ.

The Authority of Scripture in Practical Ministry (2 Tim 3:16)

The Bible is the authority in practical ministry because it contains the inspired Word of God. In 2 Timothy 3:16, the apostle Paul declares that "All Scripture is inspired by God." The phrase "inspired by God" is the Greek word *theopneustos*, which is a combination of *theos*, meaning "God," and *pneustos*, from *pnein*, which means "to breathe." Essentially, "inspired by God" is a compound word meaning "God-breathed."[3] Biblical scholars Robert Jamieson, Andrew R. Fausset, and David Brown write,

> The sacred writers did not even always know the full significance of their own God-inspired words (1 Pe 1:10, 11, 12). Verbal inspiration does not mean mechanical dictation, but all "Scripture is (so) inspired by God," that everything in it, its narratives, prophecies, citations, the whole—ideas, phrases, and words—are such as He saw fit to be there.[4]

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[3] Kenneth Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 150.

[4] Robert Jamieson, Andrew R. Fausset, and David Brown, *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos, 1997), 2:427.

Since the apostle Paul references the Scripture as "the sacred writings" of the Old Testament in 3:15, the "all Scripture" Paul refers to in verse 3:16 is also the sacred writings of the Old Testament. In the Old Testament, God often spoke through the Prophets (1 Kgs 14:18; 2 Kgs 9:36; 14:25; Jer 37:2). Regarding Old Testament Prophetic passages, Wayne Grudem notes, "The cumulative force of these passages, including hundreds of passages that begin, *Thus says the Lord,* is to demonstrate that within the Old Testament we have written records of words that are said to be God's own words."[5] The apostle Peter also affirms that Old Testament Scripture is the inspired Word of God, but the same inspiration applies to the New Testament as well, as the apostles spoke under the power of the Holy Spirit (John 15:21; Acts 1:8; 5:32; 2 Pet 1:20–21). All of Scripture, Old and New Testament, is God's inspired, authoritative Word.

Moreover, Scripture is the authority in the foundational principles of biblical counseling because it is inerrant. Grudem says, "The inerrancy of Scripture means that Scripture in the original manuscripts does not affirm anything contrary to fact."[6] Duane Litfin states, "All Scripture is God-breathed (*theopneustos*, 'inspired'), that is, God's Words were given through men superintended by the Holy Spirit so that their writings are without error. This fact was virtually taken for granted by the Jews."[7] Grudem explains that the definition of the inerrancy of Scripture means that "the Bible always tells the truth, and that it always tells the truth e."[8] His definition of the inerrancy of Scripture does not suggest that the Bible addresses every subject, aspect, and issue of life. The inerrancy of Scripture affirms that what the Bible speaks about any subject, aspect, or life issue is always true. Some people may say that "all Truth is God's truth." While "all truth

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[5] Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 74.

[6] Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 90.

[7] Duane A. Litfin, "2 Timothy," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1985), 2:757.

[8] Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 91.

is God's truth" is pragmatic, human wisdom, reasoning, and perceived truth do not always qualify as God's truth. Since absolute truth is the authority, Scripture is the authority. As such, the Bible is the authority in employing the fundamental principles of biblical counseling and implementing absolute truth into practical ministry. How is the authority of Scripture defined? Grudem writes, "The Authority of Scripture means that all words in Scripture are God's Words in such a way that to disbelieve or disobey any of the Word of Scripture is to disbelief and disobey God."[9] Not only is the inspired Word of God the authority in practical ministry, but it is also invaluable for the formation of Christians as they suffer in this world.

The Value of Scripture in Practical
Ministry (2 Tim 3:16)

All Scripture is inspired by God and is a profitable resource for the edification of Christians as they seek to provide mutual care and encouragement, which are essential to the formation of disciples of Christ as they suffer in this world. In 2 Timothy 3:16, the apostle Paul reminds the young pastor Timothy of the authority of Scripture and then transitions to reminding him of the usefulness of Scripture in practical ministry. Lifton states, "For each aspect of Timothy's ministry, whatever it might be—teaching (instructing believers in God's truths), rebuking those in sin, correcting those in error, and training (lit., "child-training") in righteousness (guiding new believers in God's ways)— for all of these and more the written Word of God is profitable."[10]

Marvin Vincent provides the following helpful insight regarding four aspects of the profitability of Scripture. First, Scripture is profitable for "teaching." The word for "teaching" that Paul uses in this text is another form of doctrine, and it refers to the wisdom

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[9] Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 73.

[10] Litfin, "2 Timothy," 757.

that comes from God (2 Tim 3:15).[11] Second, Scripture is profitable for reproof, a word better rendered "conviction," mainly in the sense of "rebuke, curse, or punishment."[12] Third, Scripture is profitable for correction, restoring one to an upright state or to "set right."[13] Last, Scripture is profitable for instruction, better rendered "chastisement or discipline." The word "instruction" may also refer to "correction, sometimes admonition."[14]

Furthermore, the four areas of value of Scripture that the apostle Paul mentions establish the basic foundations of Christian living. Lifton is correct that Scripture is profitable for the four areas Paul shares with Timothy, but Paul's list is incomplete. Lifton alludes that Scripture is profitable in areas other than what Paul listed. Moreover, teaching, rebuking sin, correction, and training in righteousness are profitable for pastors, church leaders, and every believer. They are also the fundamental principles of biblical counseling, essential for providing mutual care and valuable encouragement for practical ministry.

As has been demonstrated, there is excellent value in Scripture for practical ministry. The inspired Word of God is profitable in many areas. Nevertheless, "hope" is one of the greatest needs among the saved and unsaved as they suffer in the world. The good news is that God's Word offers hope through instruction, perseverance, and encouragement. The apostle Paul wrote that whatever was written (the inspired Word of God) in ancient times was written for our instruction so that through the perseverance and encouragement of the Scripture, we may have hope (Rom 15:4). Giving hope is one of the most important foundational principles for providing the mutual care and encouragement that are essential to the formation of Christians as they suffer in this

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[11] Marvin R. Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament* (New York: Charles Scribner's, 1887), 4:317.

[12] Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament*, 4:317.

[13] Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament*, 4:317.

[14] Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament*, 4:318.

world. Not only is Scripture the authority and invaluable for practical ministry, but it is also beneficial for equipping believers for the work of service.

The Benefits of Scripture in Equipping
Believers for Practical Ministry
(2 Tim 3:17)

Scripture is beneficial for equipping believers for the practical ministry of equipping others for the work of mutual care and encouragement essential to the formation of Christians as they suffer in this world. Regarding 2 Timothy 3:16–17, Donald Guthrie writes, "The four functions of Scripture cover a wide range from imparting doctrine to challenging behavior and training in righteousness. These functions are still the valid purpose of Scripture and are vital in equipping *the man of God*, a term which stands particularly for all Christian teachers but is applicable to every Christian worker."[15] In essence, Guthrie suggests that the four functions of Scripture mentioned in 2 Timothy 3:16 are not limited to equipping church leaders but are also applicable to all those serving in church ministry in whatever capacity.

Specifically, the apostle Paul says the purpose of Scripture is so that the "man of God," including the Christian worker, may be "adequate, equipped for every good work" (2 Tim 3:17 NASB). The King James Version reads, "That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Warren Wiersbe notes, "Two words in this verse are critical: 'perfect' and 'furnished.'"[16] The word translated "perfect" means "complete, in fit shape, in fit condition." It does not begin to suggest sinless perfection but implies being fit for use.[17] Every Christian is a work in progress. The purpose of Scripture is to perfect believers, not in terms of being without sin, but in terms of full spiritual maturity. Wiersbe continues by pointing out that "the Word of God

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[15] Donald Guthrie, "2 Timothy," in *New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition*, ed. D. A. Carson et al., 4th ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1994), 1309.

[16] Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary* (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1996), 2:253.

[17] Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, 2:253.

furnishes and equips a believer so that he can live a life that pleases God and do the work God wants him to do."[18] For these reasons, the authority, value, and benefits of Scripture play a significant role in practical ministry and are essential in fulfilling the Great Commission of the church. Scripture also helps Christians to acquire an accurate view of God that dramatically affects how they view themselves.

The Theological Basis for Teaching Disciples to View Themselves Biblically

A foundational principle of biblical counseling involves teaching converts the practical theology helpful in obtaining a proper view of oneself against the backdrop of God's splendorous, majestic, holy, and solitariness nature. In comparing himself to God, David wrote,

> O LORD, our Lord, How majestic is Your name in all the earth, Who have displayed Your splendor above the heavens! From the mouth of infants and nursing babes, You have established strength Because of Your adversaries, To make the enemy and the revengeful cease. When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained; What is man that You take thought of him, And the Son of man that You care for him? (Ps 8:1–4)

In his comments regarding Psalms 8:1–4, biblical scholar Terry Betts writes, "David is astonished how God could be mindful of human beings, who in comparison to the cosmos, appear so insignificant. . . . Human beings may enjoy a lofty position in creation, but it is the Creator, Yahweh our sovereign Lord, who deserves all honor and glory," and not ourselves.[19] Because of who God is, biblical counseling aims to help disciples acquire a proper self-view. Biblical counseling is helpful in helping converts see themselves as God sees them. Viewing oneself against the backdrop of the attributes of God compels one to subject himself to God's authority, walk in obedience to God's, and exhibit a heartfelt spirit of thanksgiving and humility (Jas 4:10). The view of oneself

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[18] Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, 2:253.

[19] Terry Betts, *40 Days in the Psalms* (Nashville: B & H, 2021), 23.

starts with his view of God. In other words, a person can only obtain a proper view of self when he has a proper view of God.

On the other hand, one who has a distorted and deflated view of God will instinctively have an inflated view of self. Self-exaltation is indicative of someone who is prideful and arrogant. A prideful person's standard for righteousness is usually himself (Ps 16:2). Scripture says, "When pride comes, then comes dishonor, But with the humble is wisdom" (Prov 11:2). "Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord; Assuredly, he will not be unpunished" (Prov 16:5). Proverbs 11:2 and 16:5 declare that God hates pride, and those who struggle with pride will face the consequences of their haughtiness. In his comment concerning Proverbs 11:2, biblical scholar Tom Constable states, "A proud person refuses to accept instruction from God, which, if he or she would follow it, would result in his or her receiving honor. The humble take God's advice, and that is their wisdom. Pride goes before a fall. King Nebuchadnezzar had to learn this lesson the hard way (Dan. 4)."[20]

Disciples are commanded to humble themselves before the Lord. A foundational principle of biblical counseling is teaching converts the practical theology helpful in obtaining a proper view of oneself that facilitates humility. Puritan preacher Thomas Watson once said, "A humble spirit is emptied of all swollen thoughts of himself."[21] Not only is practical theology useful for encouraging disciples to walk in a spirit of humility, but it is also essential for teaching disciples how to function in relationships by sharing the gospel and showing the love of God to others.

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[20] Tom Constable, *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible* (Garland, TX: Galaxie, 2003), Prov 11:2, Logos.

[21] Thomas Watson, *The Godly Man's Picture* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1666), 78.

The Theological Basis for Integrating Foundational Principles of Biblical Counseling in Making Disciples (Matt 28:18–20)

Matthew 28:18–20 is the Great Commission of the church that supports the need to integrate foundational principles of biblical counseling essential to the formation of Christians as they suffer in this world. In this passage, Jesus commanded the church to "Go and make disciples." As Jesus gave the commission, some of the disciples who were present had doubts (John 20:24–25). But, unbeknownst to the disciples, Jesus had been preparing them for the Great Commission all along, during the time he spent with them (John 15:16; 15:18–25; 17:18). John Pentecost writes on Jesus's authority to commission the church:

> In order to dispel this doubt, Christ gave a commission to the eleven. He said his reason for being able to commission them to go as His witnesses to represent Him was, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me." He could confer authority on them because of the authority that the Father had conferred on Him. He could exercise his authority in authorizing them to "go and make disciples of all nations." (Matt. 28:18–19).[22]

In exercising his authority, Jesus commissions the church to make disciples by baptizing and teaching others to obey his commandments.[23]

However, the initial step to making a disciple is evangelism. In Matthew 28:18–20, evangelism begins with sharing the gospel of Christ. Additionally, those who profess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ need biblical instructions. For this reason, Jesus says disciples need to be taught. The word "teaching" in Matthew 28:20 refers to edification, the building up of the saints for serving others and making other disciples. Pentecost highlights the sequential process of making disciples: "Men become disciples, first, by hearing the word; second, by believing the word; and third, by submitting to the word."[24] Evangelism,

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[22] John J. Pentecost, *The Words and Works of Jesus Christ* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 509.

[23] Donald A. Carson, "Matthew," in *Zondervan NIV Bible Commentary: New Testament*, ed. Kenneth L. Baker and John R. Kohlenberger III (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 134.

[24] Pentecost, *Words and Works of Jesus Christ*, 510.

believing, teaching, and edification are all elements of the foundational principles of biblical counseling that are essential for the practical ministry of making disciples.

**The Theological Basis of Evangelism
in Practical Ministry (Matt 28:19)**

Jesus commissioned the church to make disciples, first by sharing the gospel, which is also an essential foundational principle of biblical counseling in practical ministry. Wiersbe states, "The term *disciples* was the most popular name for the early believers. Being a disciple meant more than being a convert or a church member. . . . A disciple attached himself to a teacher, identified with him, learned from him, and lived with him. He learned, not simply by listening, but also by doing."[25] Jesus's commission to the church is to reproduce by making more of the same. The church is commissioned to go into all nations as disciples who make disciples of others. Craig Blomberg writes, "Believers' task in life, in essence, is to duplicate themselves in others, leading men and women in every part of the world to faith, baptism, and obedience to all of Christ's commands."[26] However, making disciples is impossible apart from sharing the gospel of Christ.

The initial step to making a disciple is evangelism, and evangelism begins with sharing the gospel of Christ. Concerning the gospel, the apostle Paul wrote, "How are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard?" (Rom 10:14). Grudem explains that three critical elements must be included in preaching, teaching, and sharing the gospel: "An explanation of the facts concerning salvation must include the following: all people have sinned, the penalty for sin is death, and that Jesus Christ died to pay the penalty for our sins" (Rom 3:23; 5:8, 6:23).[27] Knowing what Christ promises to those who come to

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[25] Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, 2:107.

[26] Craig L. Blomberg, "Matthew," in *Holman Concise Bible Commentary*, ed. David S. Dockery (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1998), 426.

[27] Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 694.

him in repentance and faith is essential. Those who come to Christ are recipients of God's promise of forgiveness and eternal life (John 3:16). The promises of the gospel infiltrate the foundational principles of biblical counseling. After sharing the gospel, there is an invitation for the recipient to profess belief in Christ's death, burial, and resurrection.

The Theological Basis of Faith in Christ
in Practical Ministry (Matt 28:19)

Jesus also commissioned the church to make disciples by baptizing those who profess faith in Christ in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Baptism further establishes the theological basis of the significance of faith in Christ in practical ministry. Genuine faith in Christ is necessary for becoming a disciple and is an essential foundational principle of biblical counseling in practical ministry. Baptism is a profession of one's faith in Christ. New Testament scholar D. A. Carson explains, "Those who become disciples are to be baptized 'into' the name of the Trinity. The preposition 'into' strongly suggests a coming-into-relationship-with or a coming-under-the-Lordship of Jesus."[28] Carson affirms baptism is a sign of entrance into Messiah's community of faith and pledged submission to his lordship. Baptism is a public proclamation of one's wholehearted belief in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

However, Scripture says that, without faith, it is impossible to please the Lord. Hebrews 11:6 says, "And without faith, it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him." Biblical scholar Thomas Lea notes that two convictions must provide the foundation of faith in the lives of every Christian: "First, they must believe that he (God) exists. Anyone wanting to commune with God must have the deep conviction that God is real. Second, God's servants must believe that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. Faith

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[28] Carson, *Matthew*, 134.

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is not selfish; rather, faith has confidence in a God of love and goodness."[29] So, what does faith in God have to do with one's faith in Jesus? John 12:44–45 says, "And Jesus cried out and said, 'He who believes in Me, does not believe in Me but in Him who sent Me. He who sees Me sees the One who sent Me.'"

Therefore, baptism is a proclamation of one's faith in Jesus and the Father who sent him. Robert Hugh and Carl Laney concur, "Faith is the key to knowing God. As people respond by faith to the general revelation of God in nature (Rom. 1:19–21), God directs them to the special revelation of himself found in his Son through his word."[30] Essentially, God makes himself known through his Son, the Word of God, who was made flesh. Baptism is a symbolic public declaration of one's faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Genuine faith in Christ is necessary for becoming a disciple. Faith in Christ is a foundational principle of biblical counseling for providing mutual care and encouragement that is essential in the formation of Christians as they suffer in the world. Many people in the world suffer and are without hope because they do not know Jesus. On the other hand, some know Jesus but suffer because of their lack of faith. For these reasons, the need to integrate foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry is significant. However, the road to discipleship does not end with one's faith in Jesus. The one who professes faith in Jesus must also be instructed in the Word on how to live the Christian life.

The Theological Basis of Teaching in Practical Ministry (Matt 28:20a)

Jesus commissioned the church to make disciples, third, by teaching new converts how to live for Christ. Jesus's commission to teach the Word of God establishes the theological basis of teaching as a foundational principle of biblical counseling in

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[29] Thomas D. Lea, *Hebrews, James*, Holman New Testament Commentary, vol. 10 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999), 201.

[30] Robert B. Hughes and J. Carl Laney, *Tyndale Concise Bible Commentary* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 2001), 672.

practical ministry. Regarding the disciples whom Jesus commissioned, Pentecost pointed out, "These men, then, were to make disciples by preaching the word that Christ had delivered to them, by persuading men to accept the word that they had preached, and then by exhorting those who believed to submit to the authority of the Word in their lives."[31] Although biblical counseling does not contain a preaching element, it does involve the three factors of making disciples, as Pentecost eloquently states. Biblical counseling consists of sharing the Word, persuading men to embrace it, and exhorting those who believe to submit to the authority of the Word in their lives.

However, teaching God's Word effectively requires divine wisdom and knowledge of Scripture. Wiersbe notes, "Jesus had opened the minds of His disciples to understand the Scriptures (Luke 24:44–45). They knew what He wanted them to teach to their new converts. It is not enough to win people to the Saviour; we must also teach them the Word of God. Teaching the Word of God is also a part of the Great Commission."[32] New converts need to be taught to come to know Christ. More mature converts need to be taught to grow in Christ. Blomberg states, "There must be a balance between evangelistic proclamation and relevant exposition of all parts of God's Word, including the more difficult material best reserved for the mature."[33]

Whether the church is ministering to new converts or mature believers, effectively teaching God's Word requires divine intervention through the presence of the Holy Spirit. After Jesus commissioned the disciples to go and make disciples, he encouraged them by telling them that he would be with them "always, even till the end of the age" (Matt 28:20b). In reference to Matthew 28:20, the late New Testament scholar Archibald Robertson remarks, "This is the amazing and blessed promise. He is to be with

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[31] Pentecost, *Words and Works of Jesus Christ*, 511.

[32] Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, 108.

[33] Craig Blomberg, *Matthew*, New American Commentary, vol. 22 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1992), 432.

the disciples when he is gone, with all the disciples, with all knowledge, with all power, with them all the days (all sorts of days, weakness, sorrows, joy, power), till the consummation of the age."[34] The goal Jesus mentioned was about the future, which was unknown to the disciples at the time.[35] Jesus assured the disciples that he would always be present with them. He assured the disciples of his presence because he wanted to keep them from becoming complacent in the work of making other disciples. Robertson writes that Jesus's promise to be with disciples was "an incentive to the fullest endeavor to press on to the farthest limits of the world that all the nations may know Christ and the power of his Risen Life."[36]

Essentially, Jesus's Great Commission to the church is the theological basis for integrating biblical counseling principles in making disciples. Matthew 28:18–20 provides a framework for the formation of Christians as they suffer in this world. Evangelism, proclaiming faith in Christ, and teaching are factors of the church's commission that are also prevalent in biblical counseling. The theological factors of the Great Commission are essential for making disciples and facilitating believers' spiritual growth. However, the subject matter to be taught should be shaped according to the individual's condition and needs. Some believers may need to be admonished, other disciples may need encouragement, and still others may need help. Addressing the specific needs of members of the body of Christ is part of the foundational principles of biblical counseling.

The Theological Basis for Integrating Principles of Biblical Counseling for Meeting the Needs of Believers (1 Thess 5:14)

First Thessalonians 5:14 provides a theological basis for integrating foundational principles of biblical counseling that are useful for mutual care and encouragement and

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[34] Archibald T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Nashville: Broadman, 1933), Matt 28:20, Logos.

[35] Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, Matt 28:20.

[36] Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, Matt 28:20.

essential to forming Christians as they suffer in this world. As stated previously, practical theology compels one to have a proper view of God, resulting in a proper view of self. A biblical view of self dramatically affects how one relates to others.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:12–13, Paul discusses the need for church members to honor their respective leaders who diligently labor in ministry. Then Paul begins 1 Thessalonians 5:14 with, "We urge you, brethren." *Adelphos* is the Greek word for "brethren," which Spiros Zodhiates states, "Generally denotes a fellowship of life based on the identity of origin, e.g., members of the same family (Matt 1:2; Luke 3:1, 19; 6:14). Paul's use of the word 'brethren' affirms that he addresses all believers' responsibility toward one another."[37] Paul encourages church leaders and members to meet the needs of one another by patiently admonishing, encouraging, and helping each other grow in spiritual maturity. Each member of the body of Christ has specific individual needs. For that reason, the church must shape its ministry's discipleship efforts to be relevant to members' needs. Meeting the needs of those in the household of faith is not just the responsibility of church leaders. Constable confirms,

> Not only the leaders but all the believers were responsible for ministering to one another. Those who neglected their daily duties needed to be stirred up to action. Those who were timid or tended to become discouraged, despondent, worried, or sad more easily than most needed cheering up, stimulation to press on, and extra help. Those who had not yet learned to lean on the Lord for their needs as they should—the spiritually weak—were worthy of special support.[38]

In considering Constable's descriptions of the unruly, the faint-hearted, and the weak, every member of the body of Christ has struggled in at least one of these three areas during their Christian journey. For this reason, admonishing the unruly, encouraging the faint-hearted, and helping the weak are three foundational biblical counseling principles necessary for practical ministry.

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[37] Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament* (Chattanooga: AMG, 2000), s.v. "brethren," Logos.

[38] Constable, *Expository Notes*, 1 Thess 5:14.

First, the theological basis for integrating foundational principles of biblical counseling in practical ministry is the biblical imperative to admonish the unruly. In 1 Thessalonians 5:14, the verb "admonish" in the original language is the Greek word *nouthetéō*, meaning to warn, teach, confront, and exhort another out of love and deep concern. To admonish is a foundational principle of biblical counseling, referred to as nouthetic confrontation. Jay Adams writes, "Nouthetic confrontation always implies a problem and presupposes an obstacle that must be overcome; something is wrong in the life of the one who is confronted."[39] Adams also notes, "The fundamental purpose of nouthetic confrontation, then, is to effect personality and behavioral change."[40] With Adams's comments in mind, there are times when the church must deal with inerrant Christians. In those times, Paul says every believer has an obligation to admonish one another. Additionally, those who need admonishing also need words of comfort.

Second, the theological basis for integrating foundational principles of biblical counseling in practical ministry is the biblical imperative to encourage the faint-hearted. According to Zodhiates, the word "encourage" in the original language means to speak kindly, soothingly, to comfort or pacify" (John 11:19; 31; 1 Thess 2:11).[41] Robert Thomas points out, "In light of chapter four, those who needed comfort were both troubled over their friends who had died in Christ (4:13) and confused about what the *parousia* (Greek for the "arrival" or "presence" of Christ) held for themselves (1 Thess. 5:1–11)."[42] About 1 Thessalonians, Thomas writes, "Within this letter, Paul has given ample information for removing misgivings."[43] Paul instructs believers to address the faint-hearted's feelings of

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[39] Jay Edward Adams, *Competent to Counsel: Introduction to Nouthetic Counseling* (Grand Rapids: Ministry Resources Library, 1986), 44.

[40] Adams, *Competent to Counsel*, 45.

[41] Zodhiates, *Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, s.v. "encourage."

[42] Robert Thomas, "1 Thessalonians," in Baker and Kohlenberger, *Zondervan NIV Bible Commentary: New Testament*, 869.

[43] Thomas, "1 Thessalonians," 869.

doubt, mistrust, and apprehension by providing encouragement and comfort. Not only do some believers need encouragement and comfort, but some also need help overcoming sin.

The third theological basis for integrating foundational principles of biblical counseling in practical ministry is the biblical imperative to help the weak. The Greek word for "help" is *antéchō*, which means to be devoted to, to hold firmly to, or to support.[44] In referring to the meaning of "help," Vincent explained, "The primary sense is keeping one's self directly opposite to another so as to sustain him."[45] However, who are the weak whom Paul says need help? Thomas explains, "Help the weak almost certainly relates to moral and spiritual debility. Whether it was weakness in shrinking from persecution, yielding to the temptation of immorality, or something cannot be determined" in the text.[46] Whatever weakness a brother or sister in Christ is experiencing, Paul says those strong in faith must help them. However, what should the attitude of the one who admonishes the unruly, offers encouragement to the faint-hearted, and helps those who are weak be? Scripture says each person must be addressed with patience.

Last, the theological basis for integrating foundational principles of biblical counseling in practical ministry is the biblical imperative to admonish, encourage, and help everyone with patience. In 1 Thessalonians 5:14, Paul says that no matter the situation, believers must minister to one another with "patience." The Greek word for "patience" means to suffer long, be longsuffering, forebear, and endure patiently instead of losing faith and giving up.[47] In this text, patience is another word for longsuffering. Longsuffering denotes tolerating and putting up with the imperfections, frailties, and

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[44] Zodhiates, *Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, s.v. "Help."

[45] Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament*, 4:49.

[46] Thomas, "1 Thessalonians," 869.

[47] Ronald F. Youngblood, F. F. Bruce, and R. K. Harrison, eds., *Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995), s.v. "Patience."

failures of another. Patience is the exercise of self-restraint amid provocation. Patience

and longsuffering are much-needed character traits in practical ministry, especially when

one faces opposition from the person he is attempting to admonish, encourage, and help.

In reference to the phrase, "be patient with all men," that Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians

5:14c, Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown remark, "There is no believer who needs not the

exercise of patience 'toward' him; there is none to whom a believer ought not to show it;

many show it more to strangers than to their own families, more to the great than to the

humble; but we ought to show it "toward *all men.*'"[48] Disciples of Christ must be patient

with all men, especially those in the household of faith, because all are a work in progress,

and none are exempt from being unruly, faint-hearted, or weak. I. Howard Marshall

makes an interesting comment concerning the unruly, the faint-hearted, and the weak

when he says, "They needed people to stand alongside them and sustain them. Those who

give such help may need to be *patient* to put up with people, their awkwardness, and even

their opposition to being helped."[49] The theological basis for integrating foundational

principles of biblical counseling is not only useful for addressing the unruly, the faint-

hearted, and the weak, but it is also essential for promoting spiritual maturity.

The Theological Basis for Integrating Foundational Principles of Biblical Counseling in Promoting Spiritual Maturity (Col 1:28)

Colossians 1:28 provides further evidence for integrating foundational principles

of biblical counseling in practical ministry, which is helpful for mutual care and

encouragement and essential to the formation of Christians as they suffer in this world.

According to Curtis Vaughan, Paul wrote this epistle to the church at Colosse "to express

his personal interest in the church, to warn them against reverting to their old pagan

vices," and even more importantly, "to refute the false teachings that was threatening the

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[48] Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*, 2:392.

[49] I. Howard Marshall, "1 Thessalonians," in Carson et al., *New Bible Commentary*, 1284.

Colossian church."[50] In this text, the apostle Paul states that the church's goal is to proclaim

Christ and present every member mature in Christ. Paul emphasizes admonishing

(nouthetic confrontation) and the teaching of God's Word as avenues to spiritual growth

for the entire church. Vaughan eloquently summarized Colossians 1:28:

> "Counseling" ("admonishing," *nouthetountes*) and "teaching" (*didaskontes*) describe two attendant circumstances of Paul's preaching. The former word concerns the will and emotions and connotes warning. "Teaching," which probably refers to a ministry for converts, stresses the importance of instruction in proclaiming the Word. "With all wisdom" seems to express the way the teaching was done.[51]

Constable comments, "Admonitions and teaching, presented through appropriate methods

("with all wisdom"), were and are necessary to bring all people, not just the privileged

few as in Gnosticism, to maturity in Christ."[52] By Paul's use of the phrase, "to present

every man complete in Christ," one can conclude that the need for admonishing and

teaching is essential for promoting spirit maturity and applies not just to new converts

who need to know Christ but helping those who know Christ grow in Christ. Regarding

Colossians 1:28, systematic theologian Norman Geisler notes, "Paul was interested in

believers not remaining spiritual babies (cf. 1 Cor. 3:1–2) but in becoming spiritually

mature" (cf. Heb 5:11–14).[53] As such, admonishment is a foundational principle of

biblical counseling essential for promoting spiritual maturity.

**The Theological Basis for Admonishment
in Promoting Spiritual Maturity
(Col 1:28)**

Admonishment is a foundational principle of biblical counseling in practical

ministry necessary for mutual care and encouragement, which are essential to the formation

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[50] Curtis Vaughan, "Colossians," in Baker and Kohlenberger, *Zondervan NIV Bible Commentary: New Testament*, 814.

[51] Vaughan, "Colossians," 825.

[52] Constable, *Expository Notes*, Col 1:28.

[53] Norman L. Geisler, "Colossians," in Walvoord and Zuck, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, 2:676.

of Christians as they suffer in this world. Regarding new converts and babes in Christ, Max Anders writes that these individuals are "susceptible to being misled by false teachings and the world's philosophies that contradict the doctrine of Christ."[54] False teaching and its influence on believers were a concern for the apostle Paul when he wrote Colossians 1:28. False teachings and the philosophies of this world are counterfeits of the gospel of Christ. Max Anders states, "Counterfeits are dangerous because they can look so much like the genuine article. The casual observer sees no apparent difference between real and imitation."[55] Nevertheless, all Christians must be warned (admonished) to protect themselves against counterfeits.

Biblical scholar Richard Melick notes that "admonish" "Speaks to the task of calling to mind a correct course of action. It encourages people to get on with what they know to do."[56]As stated previously, Adams defines "admonish" as "nouthetic confrontation," a foundational principle of biblical counseling. Adams writes, "Colossians 1:28 does not refer primarily to Paul's public ministry, but principally to his private ministry to individuals. This is apparent when he speaks of "authentically confronting *every man.*"[57] The most effective vehicle by which disciples are made is through interpersonal relationships.

However, what was Paul's admonishment (warning) to the Colosse church? In Colossians 2:8, he wrote, "See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ." Here, Paul issues the first of several admonishments and reminds them of who they are in Christ and the significance of his

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[54] Max Anders, *Galatians-Colossians*, Holman New Testament Commentary, vol. 8 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999), 286.

[55] Anders, *Galatians-Colossians*, 286.

[56] Richard R. Melick, *Philippians, Colossians, Philemon*, New American Commentary, vol. 32 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1991), 242.

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

death, burial, and resurrection (Col 2:9–15). In his comment regarding Paul's admonishment in Colossians 2:8, Peter O'Brien explains, "The Colossians are to be on their guard so that they are not carried away from the truth into the slavery of error. *Takes you captive* means 'kidnap,' and the method these false teachers would use is their brand of philosophy, which was seductive and misleading."[58]

What are some modern examples of false teachings and philosophies plaguing the church today? O'Brien points out, "Today legalism, justification by works or any teaching that devalues Christ's saving work on the cross, can be used by the powers of darkness to hold men and women in spiritual slavery."[59] O'Brien's list is incomplete. The church is being challenged with many other false teachings that contradict the doctrine of Christ. Nevertheless, the Word of God declares that admonishing believers against false teaching is the theological basis for promoting spiritual maturity. All believers must also be taught how to stand on the doctrine of Christ.

**The Theological Basis for Teaching in
Promoting Spiritual Maturity
(Col 1:28)**

In addition to admonishing believers, teaching the doctrine of Christ is a foundational principle of biblical counseling in practical ministry that is helpful for mutual care and encouragement and is essential to the formation of Christians as they suffer in this world. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus commissioned the disciples to teach other disciples to obey his commandments. In Colossians 1:28, the teaching the apostle Paul refers to is the context of teaching believers how to distinguish between false doctrine and the truth of Scripture. Anders writes,

> How can we learn to recognize deception when it is intentionally cloaked in the appearance of truth? . . . If we devote ourselves to studying the genuine article, the truth of Scripture, then we do not need to know the particulars of every heresy we

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[58] Peter T. O'Brien, "Colossians," in Carson et al., *New Bible Commentary*, 1270.

[59] O'Brien, "Colossians," 1270.

encounter. An intimate knowledge of the Word of God is the only defense we need against all the different deceptions in our world.[60]

Despite the heresy, believers must be spiritually equipped to stand for truth in the face of opposition.

As Anders puts it, Christians must stand on "the truth about the gospel and Christ is that the gospel changes lives all over the world, and Christ has supremacy over all of creation."[61] Essentially, believers need to be taught to embrace the doctrine of Christ, which includes the humanity of Christ, deity of Christ, divine attributes of Christ, work of Christ, resurrection of Christ, ascension, and exaltation of Christ. Regarding the doctrine of Christ, William Evans and Maxwell Coder state, "From beginning to end, in all its various phases and aspects and elements, the Christian faith and life is determined by the person and the work of Jesus Christ."[62]

The church is commanded to proclaim Christ to those who need salvation. Church leaders are to admonish and teach to help those who know Christ grow in Christ. Admonishing believers to refute heresies and philosophies contradicting the Scripture and teaching them the doctrine of Christ is the theological basis of practical ministry. Proclaiming Christ, admonishing, and teaching are also foundational principles of biblical counseling essential for facilitating the spiritual maturity of Christians as they suffer in the world. The purpose of integrating foundational principles of biblical counseling in practical ministry is to present every believer complete in Christ. The more one becomes complete in Christ, the more he is compelled to worship God. Although admonishing and teaching believers are catalysts for Christian growth, spiritual maturity and worship are only possible with the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. However, spiritual maturity and the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit do not exempt believers from suffering.

[60] Anders, *Galatians-Colossians*, 286.

[61] Anders, *Galatians-Colossians*, 286.

[62] William Evans and S. Maxwell Coder, *The Great Doctrines of the Bible*, enlg. ed. (Chicago: Moody, 1974), 53.

Theological Basis for Teaching Disciples
How to Respond to Suffering

The foundational principles of biblical counseling are helpful for teaching converts practical theology as it relates to exhibiting a proper response to suffering. Principles of biblical counseling offer help, hope, and comfort to those suffering from unfavorable circumstances, situations, and events. As a disciple encounters unfavorable circumstances, situations, and events in life, he may be tempted to question God's goodness, which indicates a person who struggles with a lack of trust in God. In suffering, one may also be unwilling to accept what God allows or struggle with forgiving others who have hurt or wronged him. As such, biblical counseling aims to help those who suffer learn to embrace God's goodness and sovereignty, trust in God's promises, recognize the reason for suffering, reassure them of God's love, and teach them to cast all their cares upon the Lord. First, as part of the counseling methodology of practical theology, disciples need to learn to embrace God's goodness and trust him. For instance, Nahum 1:7 says, "The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble, he cares for those who trust in him."

Biblical counseling is useful in helping disciples who are suffering to accept the sovereignty of God (Eccl 7:13–14). Disciples of Christ also need to know that God does not afflict them willingly, but he holds to his promises; therefore, he can be trusted (Lam 3:30–32; Isa 26:3). They also need to be reminded that people will sometimes hurt them because there is inherited sin and they live in a fallen world. Nevertheless, Jesus commands his people to forgive others who have wronged and offended them as they have been forgiven (Luke 17:3–10; Col 3:13–14). Disciples also need to be reminded that all things work together for their good and God's glory to conform them to the image of Christ (Rom 8:28–29). Additionally, principles of biblical counseling are helpful in practical ministry because they seek to ensure disciples of the love of God and the good news (because of what Christ did on the cross) that they can cast all their cares and concerns upon the Lord in prayer (Rom 8:38–39; 1 Pet 5:9).

Last, an essential principle in biblical counseling is helping disciples realize that they serve a God well acquainted with human suffering. Hebrews 4:14–16 says that Jesus can sympathize with because he was tempted in every way. Jesus sets an example of how disciples are to respond to suffering. The apostle Peter said that followers of Christ must respond to suffering by continually entrusting themselves to God (1 Pet 2:21). Biblical counseling also seeks to encourage those who are suffering by reminding them to boldly ask God for help with the assurance that they will receive mercy and find grace (Matt 5:4). Christ tells his disciples to turn to him and learn from him, and they will find rest. He promises to give rest to those who are weary and heavily burdened (Matt 11:28–30). Principles of biblical counseling are helpful in practical ministry because they remind disciples of their victory over suffering, which compels them to worship the Lord.

The Theological Basis for Integrating Foundational Principles of Biblical Counseling in Stimulating Worship (Col 3:16)

Colossians 3:16 shows the importance of practical theology and the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of believers, further supporting the need to integrate foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry. The Holy Spirit is the guiding agent for spiritual maturity that compels one to worship and is essential to the formation of Christians as they suffer in the world. In his comments concerning the Pauline Epistles, David Lowery notes, "Though Paul believed strongly in the necessity of proclaiming the gospel to all people (Rom. 1:14), he recognized that a response of faith to this message was possible only because of the Spirit's ministry."[63] As he told the Corinthians, 'No one can say Jesus is Lord, except by the Holy Spirit' (1 Cor. 12:3)."[64] As such, biblical counseling relies heavily on the work of the Holy Spirit in practical ministry.

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[63] David Lowery, "A Theology of Paul's Missionary Epistles," in *A Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, ed. Roy B. Zuck and Darrell L. Bock (Chicago: Moody, 1994), 274.

[64] Lowery, "A Theology of Paul's Missionary Epistles," 274.

First, the apostle Paul commands believers to allow "the Word of Christ" to "richly dwell" within them so that the Word will infiltrate their lives (Col 3:16). The Word of Christ that Paul refers to is the doctrine of Christ. Considering the doctrine of Christ residing in the believer, Albert Barnes writes, "That doctrine is adapted to make you wise. The meaning is that they were to lay up the doctrines of the gospel in their hearts; to meditate upon them; to allow them to be their guide, and to endeavor wisely to improve them to the best purpose."[65] Furthermore, in his comment regarding the phrase "Let the Word of Christ richly dwell within you," Adam Clarke states, "I believe the apostle means that the Colossians should be well instructed in the doctrine of Christ; that it should be their constant study; that it should be frequently preached, explained, and enforced among them; and that all the wisdom comprised in it should be well understood."[66] Wuest points out, "The exhortation is to the effect that the Christian is to so yield himself to the Word that there is a certain at-homeness of the Word in his being. The Word should be able to feel at home in his heart."[67] In other words, the apostle Paul says believers must allow the Word of Christ to rule their hearts and guide their lives. However, allowing the Word of Christ to richly dwell in one's life is synonymous with being filled with the Holy Spirit. Colossians 3:16 parallels Ephesians 5:18, where Paul discusses the need for believers to be filled with the Spirit. Regarding the parallelism between Colossians 3:16 and Ephesians 5:18, Anders writes,

> The parallel between Colossians 3:16–4:1 and Ephesians 5:18–6:9 must not be missed. The structure and terminology are almost identical. The Ephesians passage exhorts believers to be filled with the Spirit, whereas the Colossians passage exhorts believers to let the Word of Christ dwell in them. The two concepts must be synonymous.[68]

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[65] Albert Barnes, *Notes on the New Testament: Ephesians, Philippians & Colossians*, ed. Robert Frew (London: Blackie, 1884–1885), 279.

[66] Adam Clarke, *The Holy Bible with a Commentary and Critical Notes*, new ed. (Bellingham, WA: Faithlife, 2014), 6:529.

[67] Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies*, 226.

[68] Anders, *Galatians-Colossians*, 332.

What is the correlation between the indwelling Word of Christ and the filling of the Holy Spirit? Wuest notes, "The Holy Spirit uses the Word of God that we know as He talks to us and guides our lives. He can efficiently talk to us to the extent to which we know the Word. That is the language He uses."[69] So, what are some avenues for allowing the Word of Christ to richly dwell within believers?

Paul says allowing the Word of Christ to dwell richly is accomplished through wisdom teaching and admonishing one another (nouthetic confrontation), with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs that stimulate public and private worship. Wuest states that the word "wisdom" refers to "skills in the affairs of life, practical wisdom, wise management as shown in forming the best plans and selecting the best means, including the idea of sound judgment and good sense (Acts 6:3; 7:10: Col. 1:28; 3:16; 4:5)."[70] The foundational principles of biblical counseling also involve wisdom teaching, wise counsel, and admonishing believers in a way that stimulates spiritual growth and public and private worship of God. As Constable states, teaching is "imparting truth," and admonishing "is to warn against error. . . . Christians should perform these activities of teaching and admonishing one another joyfully and with song."[71]

The apostle Paul commands believers to teach and admonish one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Though, what is the difference between psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs? The words "psalms" means to sing or chant. Zodhiates writes, "In all probability, the psalms of Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16 are the inspired Psalms of the Hebrew Canon," accompanied by musical instruments.[72] A "hymn" is a song of praise, honor, and thanksgiving to God.[73] English theologian Joseph Lightfoot comments, "'Spiritual songs'

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[69] Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies*, 226–27.

[70] Zodhiates, *Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, s.v. "wisdom."

[71] Constable, *Expository Notes*, Col 3:16.

[72] Zodhiates, *Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, s.v. "psalms."

[73] Zodhiates, *Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, s.v. "spiritual songs."

probably refer to all types of expressions of Christian experience set to music."[74] In modern vernacular, "spiritual songs" may include a large variety of Christian music that contains theological/biblical themes but whose lyrics are not explicitly stated in Scripture. John MacArthur provides a poignant description of spiritual songs when he writes that these songs are "not just public, but private. The Lord Himself is both the source and the object of the believer's song-filled heart."[75]

Finally, the apostle says that believers, being filled with the indwelling presence of the Word of Christ and the Holy Spirit, are to sing with thankfulness in their hearts to God (Col 3:16). Paul said the church must come together in corporate worship to sing songs of praise and gratitude to God with the focus being on Jesus Christ and what he did on Calvary. MacArthur comments that the spiritual songs may have included "songs of personal testimony expressing truths of the grace of salvation in Christ."[76] Reflecting upon one's life and acknowledging God's deliverance from sin, the extent of his love, grace, and mercy compels a powerful testimony. It stimulates a heart filled with gladness concerning what the Lord has done, is, and will do. When believers come together to lift their voices in song to God, it creates an amazing spirit-filled worship experience. Wuest advises,

> The believer sings to *himself* as well as to the other believers and the Lord. Our singing must be from our hearts and not just our lips. . . . Our singing must be with grace. This does not mean "singing in a gracious way," but singing because we have God's grace in our hearts. It takes grace to sing when we are in pain or when circumstances seem to be against us.[77]

In summary, Colossians 3:16 shows the importance of the Word of Christ and the presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of believers, further supporting the need to

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[74] Joseph B. Lightfoot, *Saint Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*, Classic Commentaries on the Greek New Testament, 8th ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1886), 221, Logos.

[75] John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible* (Nashville: Word, 1997), 1812.

[76] MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, 1812.

[77] Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, 140.

integrate foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry. Biblical counseling is practical theology that teaches believers how to apply God's Word to their lives. Biblical counseling also emphasizes the need for the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit to produce concrete change. Anders summarizes the main point of Colossians 3:16: "When the word of Christ finds a comfortable home in individual believers and the new community, there will be teaching (positive instruction), admonishing one another (negative correction), and thankful worship, evidenced by singing and gratitude."[78] Colossians 3:16 provides evidence for the need to integrate foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry for stimulating spiritual growth and worship, which is essential in the formation of Christians as they suffer in the world.

Conclusion

This chapter presented the biblical and theological basis for integrating the foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry. Scripture commands mutual care and encouragement as essential to the formation of Christians as they suffer in this world. Teaching the church skills on mutual care, derived from the foundational principles of biblical counseling, is helpful for practical ministry. The foundational principles of biblical counseling are rooted in practical theology, which involves the interpretation and practical application of God's Word to life and helps one to endure trials and troubles of living.

Moreover, the gospel of Christ is practical theology suitable for practical ministry. Pete Ward writes, "The gospel is fundamental in practical theology because our understanding of the gospel creates the lens for practical theology. . . . The *Gospel,* as I am using it here, is more than doctrine or theology. Gospel refers to the work of God in the world and how this work is understood and experienced" in individual lives.[79] In

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[78] Anders, *Galatians-Colossians*, 332.

[79] Pete Ward, *Introducing Practical Theology: Mission, Ministry, and the Life of the Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2017), 48.

essence, the life of Jesus personified practical theology as he taught the disciples that their purpose in life was to glorify the Father. He taught the disciples how to relate to God, walk in humility (resulting from a proper view of self), relate to others (especially those in need), and endure suffering. Jesus taught the disciples that practical theology, the foundational principle of counseling methodology, is essential to making disciples.

Furthermore, embracing God and submitting to the authority of Scripture as the inspired Word of God is the theological basis for integrating foundational principles of biblical counseling in practical ministry. Biblical counseling also aims to teach disciples to have a proper view of self and love others by providing mutual care and meeting their needs. Jesus's Great Commission of the church to make disciples is one of the theological grounds for integrating foundational principles of biblical counseling as essential to the formation of Christians as they suffer in the world. Evangelism, proclaiming faith in Christ, and edification are elements of discipleship and foundational principles of biblical counseling (Matt 28:18–20). The command for the church to care for and encourage one another, with longsuffering, provides further evidence of the necessity of integrating foundational principles of biblical counseling in practical ministry (1 Thess 5:14). Admonishing the unruly, encouraging the faint-hearted, and helping the weak are essential to the formation of mature Christians.

Finally, the Word of Christ and the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of believers further support the need for integrating foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry (Col 3:16). The riches of the Word of Christ and the filling of the Holy Spirit are foundational principles of biblical counseling that promote public and private worship. God created man to be a dependent worshipper. A dependent worshipper indicates a mature disciple who acknowledges God, depends on God, submits to God's authority, and worships God with thanksgiving (Rom 1:18–22). The goal of biblical counseling is to make disciples, mature disciples, and teach disciples to reproduce by making disciples of those in the world so that new converts may grow to maturity and

do the same as they go and make disciples of others. The purpose of integrating foundational principles of biblical counseling in practical ministry is to present every man, woman, boy, and girl "complete in Christ" (Col 1:28).

CHAPTER 3

THEOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL INFLUENCES THAT IMPEDE
INTEGRATING THE FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES
OF BIBLICAL COUNSELING INTO
PRACTICAL MINISTRY

This chapter will address theological misconceptions within the church as well as the cultural influences from secular ideologies, including popular psychology that is embraced by culture, viewpoints held by most seminary-trained clergy, and traditional and social media platforms that impede the church from integrating the foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry. Misconceptions about God and cultural influences create challenges and missed opportunities for the church to minister to those in need. Theological and cultural influences have compelled some members of the body of Christ to question the credibility and competency of the church to provide adequate care for those who are suffering. David Powlison writes, "Counseling in the Christian church continues to be compromised significantly by the secular assumptions and practices of our culture's reigning psychologies and psychiatrist."[1] If the church's mission is to make disciples of Christ, then efforts must start with an understanding of the context of church culture, the mindset of the members, and the potential impediments to embracing the sufficiency of Scripture alone, and the relevancy of God's Word to life and living. Since how one lives life indicates one's view of God, this chapter will begin with addressing the theological misconceptions that impede the church from integrating the foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry.

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[1] David Powlison, "Crucial Issues in Contemporary Counseling," *Journal of Biblical Counseling* 9, no. 3 (1988): 54.

Addressing Theological Impediments

Theological misconceptions about God and themselves, held by some believers within the church, are impediments to integrating the foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry. In defining theology, biblical scholar Charles Ryrie says, "Theology simply means thinking about God and expressing those thoughts in some way."[2] Ryrie also states at least three elements that are included in the concept of theology:

> (1) Theology is intelligible; it can be comprehended by the human mind; (2) Theology requires explanation, which involves exegesis and systematizing Scripture; and (3) Christian faith finds its source in the Bible, so Christian theology will be a Bible-Based study. . . . Theology, then, is the discovery, systematizing, and presentation of the truths about God.[3]

Any misconceptions about the attributes of God, his Word, or a failure to embrace what one knows about God has diametric effects on how one views self and how he views and relates to others.

In terms of the church's theological belief system, it must be stated that it is generally made up of good people who love the Lord. Most members worship the Lord and are generous givers to the missions and vision of the church. Some church members know how to proclaim powerful public prayers. Other Christians who have been in church for decades are gifted, experienced expositors of the Scriptures. Some are great teachers, zealous for serving in ministry, and reliable in meeting the needs and requests of the church leadership. In many cases, however, the outward expressions of one's faith do not always reveal the inner sins of the heart. Formal theology does not always line up with functional theology. In other words, what Christians profess to believe about God publicly does not always reflect the hidden sinful attitudes of their hearts. Nonetheless, believers are commanded to show the world the love of God. All believers are commanded to reach the lost with the gospel and to love their neighbor as themselves. Believers are called to love their enemies, to do good, and to lend to those in need, expecting nothing in

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[2] Charles Ryrie, *Basic Theology: A Popular Systematic Guide to Understanding Biblical Truths* (Chicago: Moody, 1986), 9.

[3] Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 13.

return (Luke 6:35). The church is called to meet the needs of those who suffer in the world (Matt 25:44-45). Believers' love for God is measured by how much they exhibit love for others, especially toward those in need and those who are lost. However, Christians sometimes struggle because they do not always love and esteem God's attributes equally. Some Christians are guilty of esteeming certain attributes of God while minimizing others. While it is true that, apart from his Word, believers do not know everything there is to know about God in totality, a failure to embrace and honor every aspect of his character, which they have knowledge of, equates to a distorted view of God. All believers must learn to embrace the attributes of God to experience spiritual growth. However, some Christians misunderstand God's attributes concerning how the church should relate to those in the community.

The theological misconception among some mature believers is that some specific attributes of God only apply to the church and not others outside the four walls of the church context. While it is true that specific attributes and blessings of God (such as holiness, righteousness, and forgiveness) are only available to believers, God is the one who decides who will be recipients of his divine favor (grace), not the church. Moreover, some believe that once God has saved and sanctified them, they are part of an elite group of people in the kingdom of God. As a result, some tend to view themselves as better than those in the world. In other words, because of misconceptions about God, in a subtle way, some Christians are inclined to exhibit the self-righteousness of the pharisees of the Bible. Having a distorted view of God produces an inflated view of self. For instance, Jesus vividly compares self-righteousness with justified righteousness from God's grace.

Jesus told a parable about a pharisee and a tax collector to people who trusted in their own righteousness and despised others they believed were the epitome of sinners (Luke 18:14–19). In his comments about Luke 18:14, Tom Constable writes, "Jesus meant that to be righteous in God's sight, one must acknowledge his lack of personal righteousness, rather than claiming to have a righteousness that he does not have.

Justification depends on God's grace, not on human works or merit."[4] Biblical scholar F.

F. Bruce states, "Jesus declared the tax collector 'justified' (i.e., declared righteous in

God's sight, a judicial act, not made righteous; cf. Rom. 3:24–25). God declared him

righteous because he looked to God for the gift of righteousness, rather than claiming to

be righteous on his own merit like the Pharisee did."[5]

Pharisaical self-righteousness shows up in several ways in the modern-day

church. In comparing the lives of modern church members to the pharisees, Tom

Hovestol writes, "The Pharisees provide one of the best mirrors the Bible offers for us to

see our religious selves as we really are. Yes, the Pharisees are us."[6] Hovestol goes on to

say that the four "warning lights of self-righteousness" include "a contemptuous view of

others, a shallow sense of forgiveness, a wrong sense of grace and fairness, and an

unhealthy view of failures."[7] Based on Hovestol's warning lights, a self-righteous person

compares himself to others and looks down on those who do not live as he does. Hovestol

also suggests that a self-righteous person has a shallow view of forgiveness because he

minimizes his sin while maximizing the sins of others. As a result of his shallow view of

forgiveness, he is delusional regarding his minimal need for God's forgiveness, and he

does not love nor forgive others as God commands because he views others as the worst

of sinners. Furthermore, a self-righteous person has a wrong sense of grace and fairness

because he views grace and fairness as the same. He fails to realize that if righteous

justice were served, all would be doomed to suffer God's wrath because no one is

righteous. Finally, the self-righteous person has an unhealthy view of personal failures.

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[4] Tom Constable, *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible* (Garland, TX: Galaxie, 2003), Luke 18:14, Logos.

[5] F. F. Bruce, "Justification by Faith in the Non-Pauline Writings of the New Testament," *Evangelical Quarterly* 24 (1952): 66–77.

[6] Tom Hovestol, *Extreme Righteousness: Seeing Ourselves as the Pharisees* (Chicago: Moody, 1997), 45.

[7] Hovestol, *Extreme Righteousness*, 50–53.

When his sin is exposed, and he is confronted with the truth, he does not yield himself to the mercy of God with a contrite heart but becomes defensive to the accusation of his accuser. Self-righteous people are prideful, legalistic, critical, and overly judgmental of others.

For this reason, a self-righteous mindset held by some supposedly mature Christians is an impediment that must be addressed because it creates challenges to the integration of the foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry. Having a heart of compassion and showing genuine concern for hurting people is a fundamental principle of biblical counseling. Biblical counseling requires giving hope, help, and encouragement to those who struggle with sin (1 Thess 5:14). It also involves locking arms with others and walking with them, step by step, through healing and restoration (Gal 6:1–3). Biblical counseling involves viewing others as more important than oneself (Phil 2:3–4). In essence, integrating foundational principles of biblical counseling requires wisdom, understanding, and humility, which are indicative of spiritual maturity (Jas 3:13). With humility in view, it would be difficult for a self-righteous believer to integrate foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry if he views himself as better than others. He may employ a list of legalistic mandates upon others who struggle with sin and nullify the significance of God's grace. Self-righteous believers are usually insensitive to the struggles of others. Furthermore, the self-righteous believer will more than likely prescribe Scripture as opposed to ministering Scriptures to those who are hurting. The characteristics of self-righteousness contradict the character of Christ and a mature believer.

As such, any theological misconceptions about God and themselves in the life of believers that impede integrating the foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry must be addressed by teaching believers to embrace the sovereignty and supreme authority of God in a spirit of humility by loving, sacrificial giving, and serving all men as they suffer in the world, as an act of worship to the Lord (Rom 12).

However, addressing the theological misconceptions alone is insufficient without addressing cultural impediments.

Addressing Cultural Impediments

Over the last several decades, some ideologies of psychology have influenced the mindset of culture. Some of these ideologies include the reason for existence, purpose in life, the source of man's problem, sin is called sickness, and the source and solution to mental illnesses and emotional problems.

Keven Vanhoozer defines culture as "the world of meaning, made by humans, in which we dwell. . . . Culture proceeds from freedom alone."[8] The belief that one is autonomous, self-knowledgeable, and self-sufficient is a common mindset among youth and young adults, reflecting culture's desire for freedom. Vanhoozer also comments, "Culture refers to everything that humans do voluntarily as opposed to involuntarily. . . . The best way to understand a particular culture or epoch is to discover its greatest anxiety and its greatest hope. We begin to understand others and groups of others when we begin to understand what concerns them and why."[9] Regarding cultural contexts, Vanhoozer writes, "Cultural contexts—soap operas, the lives of celebrities, films—serves up ready-made 'scripts' that provide templates for everything from the perfect relationship and the perfect kiss and the perfect crime. Cultural texts are maps and scripts that orient us in life and give us a sense of direction."[10]

Culture tremendously influences how Christians think, function, and relate to the world. Richard Lints explains, "Each person's identity is wrapped up in the whole

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[8] Kevin Vanhoozer, "What Is Everyday Theology?," in *Everyday Theology: How to Read Cultural Texts and Interpret Trends*, ed. Kevin J. Vanhoozer, Charles A. Anderson, and Michael J. Sleasman (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 248.

[9] Vanhoozer, "What Is Everyday Theology?," 21.

[10] Vanhoozer, "What Is Everyday Theology?," 29.

cultural web and, as a result, moves in many different directions."[11] Culture has a powerful influence on the church, yet the life messages the culture communicates are severely ambiguous. For instance, a few cultural concerns involve the purpose of existence, the human freedom to exercise one's perceived rights, and eliminating suffering. Culture hopes to improve health and to enjoy a better quality of life, including spiritual, emotional, and mental well-being. Culture is no longer concerned about living "the American Dream." Culture's new mission in life is infinite survival. The mission of infinite survival is to enjoy abundance, pleasure, and satisfaction in every area of one's life. Cultural influences impede the integration of the foundation of biblical counseling into practical ministry in several other ways.

Culture permeates the church's mindset from the pulpit to the pews. Since believers live in a psychologized culture, some of the most popular ideas, influenced by psychology concerning believers' purpose in life, the source and solution to man's emotional and mental problems, have made their way into the mindset of some believers. Some pop psychology ideologies include the need for self-love, self-forgiveness, self-esteem, and mental soundness. According to some facets of secular wisdom, the solution to man's emotional and mental problems is self-love's personal fulfillment, medication, or seeking help from a licensed psychologist. The ideologies of psychology held among some church members are impediments to integrating the foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry.

First, the cultural mindset regarding man's reason for existence and purpose in life impedes integrating foundational principles into practical ministry, which must be addressed. L. Ron Hubbard, founder of Dianetics and Scientology, states, "Our purpose in life is to experience life to the fullest . . . and maintain high self–esteem. . . . The purpose

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[11] Richard Lints, *The Fabric of Theology: A Prolegomenon to Evangelical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 103.

of the mind is to solve problems necessary for infinite survival."[12] Regarding freedom, it is culturally believed that man has the authority to embrace and exercise his divine-given right to live, do, speak, and think however he pleases so long as he does not oppress another human being.

However, these cultural ideologies contradict what the Bible says about the reason for man's existence, purpose in life, and authority. The Bible says that man was created in the image of God (Gen 1:1:26–27). The Scripture declares that man's purpose in life is to glorify the Father (2 Cor 5:9), and man can only glorify the Father by conforming to the image of his Son, Jesus Christ.

Moreover, man is called to exercise dominion (authority) over the earth. However, man's authority is restricted to the confinements of God's supreme authority. Secular ideologies may suggest that "all truth is God's truth." The point is that absolute truth is the authority. Since God's Word is absolute truth, he alone is the authority, and human logic does not always qualify as God's truth. God's power and sovereignty qualified him as the supreme authority.

Second, some implications of psychology suggest that the source of man's problem is that he is a product of his environment, unmet needs, or chemical imbalance in the brain and body. Secular ideology regarding the source of man's problem impedes integrating foundational principles into practical ministry that must be addressed in the church. Secular beliefs presuppose that a person's social group, the conditions in which he was raised as a child, his parents, or the suffering he experiences in life shapes his thoughts and behaviors. In essence, culture embraces the notion that who one is as a person is determined by life experiences. Man is a victim of life circumstances.

Moreover, some psychologists suggest that man's problems may stem from a chemical imbalance in the brain and body. Chemical imbalances are typically referred to

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[12] L. Ron Hubbard, "Dianetics: Modern Science of Mental Health," Scientology, accessed March 9, 2024, https://www.scientology.org/what-is-dianetics/basic-principles-of-scientology/the-goal-of-life.html.

as "psychiatric problems." Edward Welch writes, "Psychiatric problems, however, are in a different class from traditional medical diseases. In most medical diseases, you can see what is wrong."[13] It is also interesting that different people can have the same chemical imbalances in their brains and bodies, but not all of them exhibit defining features of a mental illness. Robert Smith states, "There is hardly a diagnosis given by sound psychologists and psychiatrists today for which *a* chemical imbalance is not considered to be the cause or at least part of it."[14] Most studies on the effects of chemical imbalances are performed on animals, not humans. Smith explains the effects of changes in chemical imbalances in the brain and body: "The specific changes allegedly causing the behavior have not been proven in the laboratory. There is no explanation of how those changes produce the abnormal behavior allegedly resulting from the change."[15]

While life experiences or possible chemical imbalances may certainly influence Christians, they do not determine who believers are as a person or diametrically affect behavior. Members of the church need to realize that their identity is not determined by life experience, but their identity is in Christ. Furthermore, God does not necessarily hold man responsible for what happens to him. God does not hold man responsible for things out of control or his genetic make-up, including chemical imbalances in the brain and body (Job 1:13-19; Eccl 7:13-14; John 9:1-3). Rich Thomson writes, "Man is not responsible to God for morally neutral thoughts, attitudes, feelings, words, and behaviors— things which are neither right nor wrong according to Scripture."[16] Additionally, God does not hold man responsible for what others do and say to him (Rom 12:14–21).

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[13] Edward Welch, *Blame It on the Brain: Distinguishing Between Chemical Imbalances, Brain Disorders, and Disobedience* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 1998), 105.

[14] Robert Smith, "What Is This Thing Called 'Chemical Imbalance?,'" *Journal of Biblical Counseling* 9, no. 4 (1989): 4.

[15] Smith, "What Is This Thing Called 'Chemical Imbalance?,'" 4.

[16] Rich Thomson, *The Heart of Man and the Mental Disorders: How the Word of God Is Sufficient*, 2nd ed. (Alief, TX: Biblical Framework Ministries, 2012), 45.

Though, God does hold man accountable for how he chooses to respond to what happens to him, whether his response is loving toward God and others or unloving toward God and others.

Furthermore, secular ideologies of psychology suggest that man's problems are rooted in feelings of emptiness, unmet needs, or trauma. In his comments concerning Christian psychologists, Powlison states, "Diverse as they are in the details, popular Christian psychologists are united in teaching that man's fundamental problem stems from some lack, emptiness, unmet need, woundedness or trauma (e.g., low self-esteem, love hunger)."[17] This secular ideology has made its way into the mindset of some church members. The Bible contradicts this idea that man's problem stems from lack, emptiness, unmet needs, woundedness, or trauma. The Scriptures declare that man's problem is rooted in the desires, thoughts, and intentions of the heart. Man sometimes chooses to respond to life's unfavorable circumstances, situations, or events in improper, unbiblical (unloving) ways, not because he is a product of his environment or dramatic life experiences, but because believers are all born sinners and shaped in iniquity (Ps 51:5). But God by his grace saved Christians even though they do not deserve it.

Third, believers live in a culture where sin is called sickness or mental illness and offers talk therapy, medication, and other psychological methodologies as the ultimate answer to problems. The secular ideologies (in the mindset of believers) regarding sin, sickness, and mental illness are impediments to integrating foundational principles into practical ministry that must be addressed. Some things believers experience in life result from living in a fallen world. Believers are well acquainted with sin, sickness, or physical brain trauma and deficiencies.

There are clear distinctions between sickness, brain function abnormalities, and sin. The term "sickness" is sometimes used interchangeably with "disease." According to

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[17] David Powlison, "Queries and Controversies: Do You Ever Refer People to Psychologists or Psychiatrists for Help?," *Journal of Biblical Counseling* 13, no. 2 (1995): 64.

Dorland's Medical Dictionary, "A disease is a particular abnormal condition that adversely affects the structure or function of all or part of an organism and is not immediately due to any external injury. Diseases are often known to be medical conditions associated with specific signs and symptoms" that are observable or detectable.[18] Brain specialist Angela Morgan explains, "The term 'brain abnormalities' encompasses overt damage, dysfunction, or morphological abnormality (i.e., detectable using quantitative MRI analysis methods) to grey or white matter structures."[19] MRI scans and ultrasounds detect brain abnormalities, dysfunction, and injury. So, how is sickness different from sin?

Sin is a violation of God's law that produces guilt. According to *Tyndale Bible Dictionary*, sin is "evildoing that is not only against humanity, society, others, or oneself but against God."[20] Biblical scholar Mathew Easton defines sin as "any want of conformity unto or transgression of the law of God in the inward state and habit of the soul, as well as in the outward conduct of the life, whether by omission or commission (Rom 4:15; 6:12–17; 7:5–24;1 John 3:4)."[21] In essence, sin is an offense against a personal lawgiver that warrants punishment. Scripture declares God as the only lawgiver and judge (Jas 4:11–12). Sin means "missing the mark" or to "fail in duty." The person who misses the mark will usually experience unpleasant emotions such as guilt and anxiety.

Except for having a seared conscience, the one who misses the mark (or does what he knows to be wrong) instinctively experiences guilt and anxiety (Gen 3:6–8; Ps 28:1; Rom 2:14–15). Objective guilt is man's position before God at birth because of the inherited sin of Adam. Subjective guilt is the guilt feelings one experiences due to

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[18] "Disease," Dorland's Medical Dictionary Online, accessed February 20, 2024, https://www.dorlandsonline.com/dorland/definition?id=14449&searchterm=disease.

[19] Angela Morgan, "Neural Bases of Childhood Speech disorders: Lateralization and Plasticity for Speech Functions during Development," *Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews* 36, no. 1 (2012): 439.

[20] Walter A. Elwell and Philip Wesley Comfort, *Tyndale Bible Dictionary* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 2001), 1203.

[21] Matthew Easton, *Illustrated Bible Dictionary and Treasury of Biblical History, Biography, Geography, Doctrine, and Literature* (New York: Harper, 1893), 632.

sinning in practice. Guilt is also accompanied by anxiety. Anxiety, the most common defining feature of most, if not all, mental illnesses, consists of punitive feelings of fear when there is no discernable threat. The biblical remedy for objective guilt feelings and anxiety is confession and repentance (1 John 1:8–9). In many cases, people in today's culture, including some church members, seek counseling from clinical psychologists to rid themselves of feelings of guilt and anxiety. John MacArthur writes,

> Our culture has declared war on guilt. The very concept is considered medieval, obsolete, and unproductive. People who trouble themselves with feelings of personal guilt are usually referred to therapists, whose task is to boost their self-image. No one, after all, is supposed to feel guilty. Society encourages sin, but it will not tolerate the guilt sin produces.[22]

MacArthur speaks well about how culture views sin and guilt. The problem is that believers and non-believers alike live in a culture that seeks freedom from guilt, pain, and suffering. Moreover, as has already been noted, there are clear distinctions between sickness, sin, and brain abnormalities. Sickness and brain trauma/abnormalities are due to a physical ailment in the brain and body that are detectable, diagnosed, and treated by doctors with medical resources. However, no medical tests, evaluations, x-rays, or CT scans are available to detect sickness in the mind and emotions that produce wrong behavior. Psychologists use specific categorical defining features based on human theories to identify and diagnose thought and behavioral patterns and conclude that a person has a mental illness. Yet, psychology does not acknowledge sin as the root of man's problem, particularly when it comes to mental health, because in acknowledging sin, one becomes accountable to God for his attitudes, thoughts, words, and behavior.

For this reason, secular ideologies exclude sin as a possible source of man's problem because sin encompasses accountability, and accountability thwarts one's freedom to live as he chooses. Avoiding the use of the term "sin" in treating mental illness and calling sin sickness is an attempt to help a person avoid responsibility. Shunning one's responsibility for sin is what makes secular ideologies of psychology so attractive to

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[22] John F. MacArthur Jr., *The Vanishing Conscience* (Dallas: Word, 1994), 19, Logos.

culture and members of the church. As such, a person guilty of sin can attribute his

problems in life to being a victim of unfavorable life circumstances. MacArthur states,

"Anyone can escape responsibility for his or her wrongdoing simply by claiming the

status of a victim. It has radically changed the way our society looks at human

behavior."[23]

The victim mentality and the secular ideologies regarding sin and sickness

have slowly begun to impact the church. According to biblical scholars David Tyler and

Kurt Grady, "In the mid–1960s, a major shift began in how evangelicals viewed and dealt

with sin. The church stopped calling sinful and deviant behavior 'sin' and started calling

it 'sickness.'"[24] Tyler and Grady reveal a shocking reality when they write,

> The sinner that Paul wrote about in 1 Corinthians 6:9 became a sex addict. The thief
> (1 Corinthians 6:10) became a kleptomaniac. The drunkard became an alcoholic.
> The rebellious child (2 Timothy 3:2) became afflicted with "Oppositional Defiant
> Disorder." The liar became a compulsive liar. The gambler became a compulsive
> gambler. The idolator became a person who has obsessive-compulsive disorder.[25]

Culture's view on effectively addressing and treating life problems is even more

troubling. Peter Breggin explains,

> People suffering from what used to be thought of as "neuroses" and "personal
> problems" are now being treated with drugs and shock. Children with problems that
> were once handled by remedial education or improved parenting are instead being
> subjected to medical diagnoses, drugs, and hospitals. Older people who used to be
> cared for by families are being drugged in nursing homes that find it more cost-
> effective to provide a pill than a caring, stimulating environment. Increasing numbers
> of elderly women are being given electroshock.[26]

It must be acknowledged that some of the problems Christians experience are

legitimate physical issues in the brain and body that can be treated with medication. For

instance, Alzheimer's disease, dementia, and head trauma are ailments that can be treated

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[23] MacArthur, *Vanishing Conscience*, 19.

[24] David Tyler and Kurt Grady, *Deceptive Diagnosis: When Sin Is Called Sickness* (Bemidji, MN: Focus, 2006), 2.

[25] Tyler and Grady, *Deceptive Diagnosis*, 2.

[26] Peter Breggin, *Toxic Psychiatry: Why Therapy, Empathy, and Love Must Replace the Drugs, Electroshock, and Biochemical Theories of "New Psychiatry"* (New York: Saint Martin's, 1991), 12.

but not cured with medication. Edward Welch notes that, even in these conditions, "problems with the brain and body can expose what is our hearts," whether good or evil.[27] Biblically, the human heart is the seat of emotions, reasoning, intellect, thoughts, desires, affections, and will. Although secular ideologies are helpful, the Word of God is sufficient and provides the solution to heart issues, specifically emotional problems that are associated with mental health.

Fourth, secular ideologies regarding the solution to man's emotional and mental problems have entered the mindset of some believers. These pop psychology ideologies include the need for self-love, high self-esteem, self-forgiveness, and mental soundness. The need for self-love is one secular ideology regarding the solution to man's emotional and mental problems. There is an escalation of preaching from the pulpit on the subject of self-love that church members embrace. Some preachers will misuse Jesus's commandments to love God and one's neighbor as he loves himself to justify the need to love oneself (Matt 22:37–40). The premise is, "You cannot love others unless you have a good self-image and are able to love yourself first." A preacher once said from the pulpit, "You cannot export what you have not imported." But what makes a person lovable? According to the ideology of pop psychology, a man is lovable based on the belief that he is naturally good. Paul Brownback writes, "The basic assertion of self-theory is I am lovable; therefore, I should love myself."[28] Brownback also notes that the secular ideology of self-love embraces the mindset that "my lovability places on me the obligation to love myself."[29] As a result, some believe that self-love is "a duty, a necessity for happy and productive living, a prerequisite to relating well to others and

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[27] Welch, *Blame It on the Brain*, 57.

[28] Paul Brownback, *The Danger of Self Love: Reexamining a Popular Myth* (Chicago: Moody, 1982), 67.

[29] Brownback, *The Danger of Self Love*, 67.

contributing to society."[30] The ideology of self-love impedes the integration of the foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry. However, according to the secular flow of thought, self-love is also foundational to self-esteem.

Another secular ideology that some church members embrace is the theory that self-esteem is the solution to man's emotional and mental problems. According to the Weber State University Counseling Service Center, "Self-esteem is your overall opinion of yourself and your beliefs about your abilities and limitations. Self-esteem is shaped by your thoughts, relationships, and experiences, including those related to culture, religion, and societal status."[31] Self-image is how one perceives himself, but self-esteem is related to how one feels about his perception of self. George Scipione writes, "Self-esteem doctrine is a Christian heresy which is an enemy of the true good news [of the gospel of Christ]. . . . Self-esteem is a modern form of the ancient heresy of Pelagianism, which Augustine and the church repudiated."[32] Powlison states, "No aspect of your identity is self-referential, feeding your 'self-esteem.' Your opinion of yourself is far less important than God's opinion of you, and accurate self-assessment is derivative of God's assessment."[33] However, too many church members embrace a secular ideology of self-esteem based on their human abilities and limitations and fail to recognize that their identity, self-worth, and fulfillment can be founded on who they are in Christ (Eph 1). The ideology of self-esteem impedes the integration of the foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry.

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[30] Brownback, *The Danger of Self Love*, 67.

[31] "Self-Esteem," Weber State University Counseling and Psychological Services Center, accessed March 15, 2024, https://www.weber.edu/CounselingCenter/self-esteem.html.

[32] George Scipione, "Self-Esteem Is Sweeping Over America," *Journal of Biblical Counseling* 10, no. 1 (1989): 26.

[33] David Powlison, "The Therapeutic Gospel," *Journal of Biblical Counseling* 25, no. 3 (2007): 2.

The need for self-forgiveness is another secular ideology of pop psychology that some members of the church embrace as the solution to emotional and mental problems. Self-forgiveness is a theory that man must learn to forgive himself to experience freedom from self-condemnation (guilt feelings) and enjoy peace of mind. Adams states, "Ever since the modern emphasis on self flooded the church, along with the principles of the self-esteem movement, there has been an emphasis on forgiving oneself. Just as it is said that one has difficulty loving himself, it is also said that he will have difficulty forgiving himself."[34] Many Christians embrace the psychological need to forgive oneself as a biblical concept. While all Christians experience regrets for wrongful things that they have done, the concept of self-forgiveness is never mentioned in Scripture. Nonetheless, some counselors, Bible teachers, and preachers attempt to teach the theory of self-forgiveness by misusing Scriptures as biblical support for this secular ideology. The truth is that the Bible speaks of forgiveness on the vertical level (God's forgiveness of sinners/parental forgiveness) and on the horizontal level (believers need to forgive one another). Yet, the Bible never speaks of internal forgiveness (forgiving self).

There are several possible reasons why members of our church are tempted to embrace the secular ideology of self-forgiveness. MacArthur eloquently provides at least one possible reason: "The person who complains about not being self-forgiving is often simply looking for flattering or consoling words from others as a way of salving the hurt that guilt has caused to their pride."[35] David Montgomery provides another possible reason for embracing the concept of self-forgiveness: "Sometimes, as an alternative to self-forgiveness, we will engage in self-deprivation or penance in the mistaken belief that we

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[34] Jay Edward Adams, *From Forgiven to Forgiving* (Wheaton, IL: Victor , 1989), 61.

[35] John F. MacArthur, *The Freedom and Power of Forgiveness* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1998), 190, Logos.

know something bad about our sin that God does not already know."[36] Some Christians do certain things in an attempt to resolve what they believe is their struggle with self-unforgiveness. Montgomery eloquently writes, "Alternatively, we will become compulsive activists, burying ourselves in good works in order to impress God and thereby 'atone' for our wrongdoing."[37] Essentially, the secular ideology of self-forgiveness is an unbiblical concept that nullifies God's grace and discounts Christ's work on the cross. Forgiveness is a declaration of guiltlessness for a sin committed (1 John 1:8–9). This requires the authority to forgive. So, only one with the authority to forgive sins may do so. God alone has the authority to forgive sins (Mark 2:1–12; Luke 5:24). Instead of "forgiving oneself," a person needs to align his perspective of himself with God's perspective. In other words, a person must view himself as forgiven by God. Contrary to God's forgiveness, the concept regarding the need for self-forgiveness impedes the integration of biblical foundational principles into practical ministry, which must be addressed. Moreover, trusting God's forgiveness is the key to mental and emotional soundness.

In addition, the secular ideologies of pop psychology offer several avenues for mental soundness that some members of the church embrace as the solution to emotional and mental problems. Some secular avenues for mental soundness include meditation, yoga, and visualization techniques. The concept of meditation communicated in the New Testament carries the connotations of dwelling or thinking, considering, pondering, setting one's mind or affections, and remembering. Many Scriptures emphasize the importance of meditating on Scripture and the transformational power of God's Word, accessible only through special revelation. For instance, in Psalms 19:7–9, King David uses four adjectives

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[36] David J. Montgomery, "Forgiveness," in *The Complete Book of Everyday Christianity: An A to Z Guide to Following Christ in Every Aspect of Life*, ed. Robert Banks and R. Paul Stevens (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1997), 428.

[37] Montgomery, "Forgiveness," 428.

to describe the Word of God and how the Word transforms the heart, mind, and one's view of life.

Meditation is a biblical concept for drawing near to God, for emotional tranquility, and for mental soundness. The problem among some believers is that they have wrong ideas about how meditation should be practiced. David Saxton writes, "Meditation is flourishing today like never before. Unfortunately, the kind of meditation currently in fashion is not taught in God's Word."[38] Saxton further states, "Mysticism [direct access to God and truth], Transcendental meditation [silent meditation and mantra], and yoga [the emptying of one's mind] are among the most popular unbiblical ideologies of meditation that are being practiced by some believers today."[39] Mysticism is the belief and pursuit of a special revelation from God that is not explicitly stated in the Bible. Some church members embrace mysticism and assert that God has spoken directly to them. Some church members who embrace mysticism also claim to find peace of mind by sharing what God told them to tell specific individuals.

Furthermore, transcendental meditation is a secular practice that involves sitting quietly with closed eyes, exercising breathing rhythms, humming a vibration of mantras (meaningless words), and relaxing one's mind twice daily for twenty minutes. Supposedly, transcendental meditation results in peace of mind and better sleep, reducing stress and anxiety. Yoga is another secular form of meditation believed and practiced by some church members as an avenue for mental and emotional tranquility. Yoga is a form of Hinduism and an ancient religious practice that started in ancient India. The unorthodox Christian connotations associated with the historical foundation of yoga may be the source of debate among some evangelicals on whether yoga is a permissible practice among church members when it involves meditating on God's Word.

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[38] David Saxton, *God's Battle Plan for the Mind: The Puritan Practice of Biblical Meditation* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage, 2015), 17.

[39] Saxton, *God's Battle Plan for the Mind*, 18.

Visualization techniques are very similar to meditation. It involves relaxing the mind and the subconscious by visualizing pleasurable and gratifying things.[40] Those who embrace visualization techniques believe they are effective for dealing with anger control, success, relationships, anxiety, self-esteem, and for acquiring peace of mind. From a theological perspective, "visualization techniques" appear analogous to the concepts and methodology of the modern-day "faith movement." The idea is reliance upon one's faith alone to produce anything he desires. Several visualization techniques are unbiblical. First, man's purpose in life is to please God by being more Christ-like and should not be centered on seeking avenues to gratify selfish desires (Rom 8:28–29; 2 Cor 5:9; Phil 3:19). Second, Jesus said, "Apart from Him, we can do nothing" (John 15:5). Visualization techniques are a form of seeking personal gain apart from Christ.

Psychologist Jennifer Gerlach offers yet another avenue for emotional and mental soundness when writing, "A curious mind" is "the key to mental wellness."[41] Geriach says curiosity is the key to mental soundness that can be cultivated in the following ways: "(1) Revisiting childhood joys (memories); (2) Doing something unexpected; (3) Pick something random and learn about it; (4) Ask questions that you never asked; and (5) Explore new things."[42]

These secular ideologies for acquiring mental and emotional soundness may be helpful but pale compared to the peace, mental, and emotional tranquility available to those in Christ. God's Word alone is sufficient and unequaled for man's inner soundness. Thomson states that mental soundness is "produced in the believer's life through an

[40] Kristine Moe, "5 Visualization Techniques to Help You Reach Your Goals," BetterUp, June 4, 2021, https://www.betterup.com/blog/visualization.

[41] Jennifer Geriach, "A Curious Mind: A Key to Mental Wellness," *Psychology Today*, September 14, 2023, https://www.psychologytoday.com/intl/blog/beyond-mental-health/202309/the-curious-mind-a-key-to-mental-wellness.

[42] Geriach, "A Curious Mind."

intimate relationship with God in Jesus Christ, as he is guided by the Holy Spirit according to his Word."[43]

In essence, some ideologies of psychology have influenced the mindset of culture and church members. As stated, some of these ideologies include the reason for existence, man's purpose in life, the source of man's problem, sin is sickness, and the source and solution to mental illnesses and emotional problems. Theological misconception and cultural influences impede the integration of foundational biblical principles into practical ministry. However, it is also necessary to address the ministerial educational impediments that stem from the methodologies and beliefs about biblical counseling held by some seminary-trained clergy.

Addressing Pastoral Educational Impediments

There are more than twelve hundred Bible schools, colleges, and seminaries in the United States alone. According to Bob Kellemen, there are only "twenty US schools where you can earn a degree in biblical counseling."[44] Interestingly, the number of theological educational institutions offering degrees in biblical counseling equates to a disheartening 1.6 percent of all US Bible schools, colleges, and seminaries combined. Even more alarming is that the remaining Bible schools, colleges, and seminaries that offer counseling training in the United States integrate principles of psychology with theology, creating an impediment to the migration of foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry. One reason most theological educational institutions offer training in integrated counseling is that the concepts of the biblical counseling movement are still relatively new compared to the long history of psychology. Howard Eyrich writes, "In 1970, there was no academic education in what we now label the

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[43] Thomson, *Heart of Man*, 7.

[44] Bob Kellemen, "20 US Schools Where You Can Earn a Degree in Biblical Counseling," RPM Ministries, January 8, 2019, https://rpmministries.org/2019/01/13-us-schools-where-you-can-earn-a-degree-in-biblical-counseling/.

'modern biblical counseling movement.'"[45] Since the 1970s, there has been growing

tension between schools regarding whether institutes should embrace a biblical perspective

versus an integration perspective of counseling. Eyrich writes,

> During that same period, Dr. Clyde Narramore developed the Rosemead Graduate School of Psychology to provide a Ph.D. with a biblical perspective on psychology/counseling. Fuller Seminary developed a similar program. Thus, a new tension began. On one side was the integrationist perspective, and on the other was the biblical one.[46]

As a result, many pastors and ministers who are graduates of Bible schools, colleges, and

seminaries do not have a clear understanding of biblical counseling, embrace the integrated

approach to counseling, designate the task of counseling to members licensed by the state,

or certified biblical counseling. If all else fails, some pastors and ministers may refer

members needing counseling to other churches or clinical psychologists. Although pastors

and church clergy are responsible for shepherding the respective members of their flock,

many are not equipped to counsel biblically or are too busy with other ministerial duties

to commit to counseling.

Nevertheless, all members of the church should be able to counsel others to

some degree. When considering the high demands placed on pastors and church clergy as

they strive to fulfill their ministerial duties within the church, it is essential to distinguish

between counsel and counseling. All members of the church should be able to offer

general counsel to one another. General counsel involves showing a loving concern for

those who are hurting, giving hope and encouragement, asking questions to understand

the problem, and providing answers from God's Word. If it is discovered that member

needs more intensive help that goes beyond the scope of general counsel then that

member needs to be referred to someone in the church who has been trained in biblical

counseling and who is better equipped to address the heart of the issues, offer biblical

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[45] Howard Eyrich, "A Short History of Biblical Counseling and Higher Education," Biblical Counseling Coalition, August 20, 2015, https://www.biblicalcounselingcoalition.org/2015/08/20/a-short-history-of-biblical-counseling-and-higher-education/.

[46] Eyrich, "A Short History of Biblical Counseling and Higher Education."

instructions, assign practical theological homework that produces change and leads to conformity the Christ.

Furthermore, if pastors are committed to shepherding their members by helping them grow to maturity, then they should provide avenues where members can receive general counsel and biblical counseling within their respective church context. In reference to pastoral responsibility and counseling, Jay Adams explains, "The Christian minister must be willing (and able) to assume the full task to which God has called him: that of ministering to men and women who suffer from the pains and miseries that stem from personal sins."[47] Adams suggests that new pastors equipped for biblical counseling should begin their counseling ministry by advertising. However, he also notes, "It is unfortunate that this is necessary, but because many pastors have avoided their counseling responsibilities or have shown themselves to be so incompetent, congregations do not know what to expect from a new man unless he lets them know."[48] Adams is correct. The problem is that most pastors who have received formal seminary training are either ill-equipped to counsel biblically or misunderstand biblical counseling. For some, any counseling training they received while attending seminary was integrated. Professors persuaded some students to avoid biblical counseling training. While there is some truth to Adam's assessment of church clergy who are incompetent to counsel, in fairness to pastors and ministers (particularly at Good Hope MBC), it is worth examining reasons why most church leaders are incompetent in biblical counseling, which could impede the integration of biblical counseling into practical ministry.

First, most pastors and ministers at Good Hope who have received formal seminary training are ill-equipped to counsel biblically. Many Bible schools, colleges, and seminaries train students to serve as pastors, preachers, and teachers of God's Word. Most theological training curriculums in seminary training involve studies in Greek,

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[47] Adams, *Christian Counselor's Manual*, 11.

[48] Adams, *Christian Counselor's Manual*, 217.

Hebrew, hermeneutics (the study of Scripture interpretation), and the fundamental principles of expository preaching. Some theological training institutions only require one or two classes in psychology or psychology methodologies as in fulfillment of degree curriculums. Most graduates do not readily embrace the foundational principles of biblical counseling because of their lack of knowledge.

Second, most pastors and ministers at Good Hope misunderstand biblical counseling and lean more toward integrated counseling. Like the beliefs of Christian counselors (Christians who are licensed psychologists), some formally trained church leaders advocate integrating psychology with biblical principles because they believe that "all truth is God's truth:" which is a common phrase used to support integration. In other words, there are some things about life and living that the Bible does not address. Integration advocates believe that certain truths can be gleaned from life that the Bible does not explicitly address.

In addition, some seminarian-trained pastors, preachers, and teachers view psychology and biblical counseling as having the same goal in mind; that is, to help a person overcome problems using different methodologies to arrive at the same result. Some formally educated leaders may conclude that it is permissible to integrate because God's Word and human wisdom complement one another, and both are necessary for effectively helping those who suffer in the world. While it is true that "all truth is God's truth," human wisdom (theories of psychology) does not always qualify as God's truth.

Moreover, a few "seminary-trained" pastors and ministers are led to believe that biblical counseling methods alone are too simplistic and shallow to address serious life problems. As such, they may view biblical counseling as substandard to the methodology of the expert in psychology. Besides, licensed psychologists' educational requirements are much more intensive than those formally trained or certified in biblical counseling. For this reason, pastors and ministers may view those trained in psychology as the experts for handling severe life problems, including mental illness. The problem with

integrated counseling is that the principles of psychology are based on theories rooted in human wisdom (unbelievers). Suggesting that psychology is essential in counseling implies that the Word of God alone is insufficient for life problems. It also implies that human wisdom (theories of psychology) carries equal authority and value to God's Word. However, the Bible explicitly warns of the dangers of following the counsel of the wicked (Ps 1:1–3). Scripture also confirms the vast distance and superiority of God's thoughts and ways compared to the inferiority of man's thoughts and ways (Isa 55:8–9). While most Christian counselors, pastors, and ministers have good intentions and desire to minister to those who suffer by referring to integrationists or clinical psychologists, there are caveats. Regarding those who embrace the integration approach to counseling, Thomson writes, "Though these integrationists may be fine Christian people, even here they are counseling believers to accept, to one degree or another, the counsel of unbelievers, contrary to the warnings of Scripture itself."[49]

Third, some professors encourage pastors and ministers who received a formal theology education to avoid biblical counseling training. There are five common reasons some professors at integrated Bible schools, colleges, and seminaries discourage pastoral students from taking the counseling track in seminary. The five common reasons include the following: (1) a pastor's responsibility is to preach the Word and shepherd his flock; counseling would overload him with additional pastoral duties; (2) a pastor should assign the task of counseling to a qualified person in the church; (3) a pastor can always out-source and refer his members to seek professional counseling from a licensed expert; (4) the preached Word from the pulpit on Sunday, if done well, is an adequate form of counseling; and (5) there is a career as a pastor, licensed Christian counselor, or an LPC, but opportunities for a biblical counselor to earn a decent salary is limited.

Here are arguments against each of the five common reasons biblical professors give their students for avoiding biblical counseling training. First, the preached Word

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[49] Thomson, *Heart of Man*, 11.

from the pulpit, even if done well, does not equate to biblical counseling. A pastor and teacher can present God's Word and still be disconnected from the congregation's struggles. True discipleship does not necessarily occur on Sunday morning worship, from the pulpit, in Sunday school, or in small group settings, even though they are all wonderful avenues for promoting spiritual growth. True discipleship takes place through interpersonal relationships. What better way to cultivate interpersonal relationships than through one-on-one biblical counseling? Second, the cultural context of the church is established and relegated by the beliefs held by church leadership concerning the sufficiency of Scripture alone. The counseling methodology embraced by church leaders, pastors, or preachers is sometimes evident from what is preached from the pulpit. The beliefs held by church leadership will typically bleed into the fabric of the mindset of the church. Third, too many opportunities for pastors and ministers to connect with and help those who are hurting are missed when members are referred to integrationists or clinical psychologists. Of course, many pastors are overworked and underpaid.

For this reason, it may be much easier and more convenient for some church leaders to shun the responsibility of counseling into the hands of someone else. Nevertheless, if counseling is referred to others, the pastor and leaders still need to be abreast with the counseling their members are receiving, the progression of the counseling, and whether members are being helped. Last, people, including churches, will readily spend money on things they deem valuable. Churches will pay large amounts of church funds for pastors, associate ministers, youth pastors, musicians, and worship leaders. Even though it is not always intentional, the fact that career opportunities are limited for those trained in biblical counseling speaks volumes about the value of biblical counseling among churches.

In essence, many pastors and ministers who graduate from Bible schools, colleges, and seminaries do not understand biblical counseling clearly, embrace the integrated approach to counseling, designate the task counseling to members licensed by

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the state, or are certified in biblical counseling. As such, some pastoral educational impediments to integrating foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry must be addressed. Not only is this important, but church leaders must also address the traditional and social media impediments that influence how church members, from the pulpit to the pews, think about the source and solution to their problems.

Addressing Traditional and Social Media Impediments

Church members are seduced by traditional and social media that promote secular ideologies, which impede integrating foundational principles into practical ministry. Traditional and social media compel church members to question the sufficiency and practical application of the Scriptures alone. The messages being communicated are driven by popular culture, and these messages strongly influence their minds. Lints states, "Popular culture presumes to teach us not only what to think but how to think, not only what to do but how to live."[50] The messages of secular media are communicated in the many ways. Celebrities, broadcast media (such as television, radio, and the Internet), social media (Facebook, TikTok, and Instagram), print media (e.g., self-help books, newspapers, Christian books, *Psychology Today, Time Magazine*), and the internet are vehicles of secular communication, and the messages communicated have a tremendous influence on how church members think.

First, celebrities, influential athletes, and famous music artists publicly disclose private information on media platforms concerning their bouts with mental illnesses and the treatment they receive. The information they share about the source and solution to their struggles significantly influences some church members on what to think, how to think, what to do, and how to live. For example, Olympic gymnast Simone Biles is widely considered the greatest gymnast of all time, but in 2021, she withdrew from the final Olympic team competition due to mental health issues. She stated it is crucial to "protect

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[50] Lints, *Fabric of Theology*, 322.

our mind and our body, rather than just go out there and do what the world wants us to do."[51] Serena Williams is regarded as one of the greatest tennis players in the world and was ranked number one in singles tennis matches for three hundred nineteen weeks. She opened up on social media regarding her serious struggle with post-partum depression. Post-partum depression includes feelings of sadness, anxiety, and mood swings and is usually treated with therapy and antidepressants. Williams spoke out about its devastating effects on athletes' performance.[52] Michael Phelps is an American swimmer who has won a record-breaking nineteen Olympic medals during his swimming career.[53] He announced on social media that he also lives with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder. Singer and actor Donny Osmond disclosed on social media that he has been battling social anxiety while performing since he was a child. He stated the reason for his public transparency: "I want to let people know that they are not alone and that help is available."[54] Here are some secular messages these celebrities, athletes, and artists communicate: (1) your struggle is not unique, and you are not alone; (2) it is not your fault; (3) the source of your problem is a mental condition and disease; (4) the effects of your problem are debilitating; and (5) the solution to your problem is therapy and medicine that are available to you. The messages make no mention of sin as the source of problems and follow the disease model as the source of mental struggles. These ideologies influence the minds of church members.

Second, television, including all broadcast media such as traditional radio, SiriusXM radio, and Pandora, has significantly influenced how culture, including some members of the church, thinks about their identity and the solution for emotional problems

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[51] "Athletes and Mental Illness," White Sands Treatment, July 15, 2022, https://whitesandstreatment.com/2022/07/15/7-athletes-that-have-struggled-with-mental-health/.

[52] "Athletes and Mental Illness."

[53] "10 Celebrities Who Struggle with Mental Health," Health University of Utah, April 26, 2017, https://healthcare.utah.edu/healthfeed/2017/04/10-celebrities-who-struggle-mental-health.

[54] "10 Celebrities Who Struggle with Mental Health."

such as depression and anxiety. Statically, television and broadcast media platforms are extremely influential in today's culture. According to surveys conducted in 1970 and 1971, American adults' weekly viewing time was 23.3 hours.[55] Even worse, there seem to be extreme rivalries and contradictions between the messages preached from the pulpit and the messages concerning identity and the solutions to emotional problems (including depression and anxiety) communicated through television/broadcast media.

In reference to identity, more commercials today depict same-sex couples than in the history of television history. Modern culture is overly obsessed with self-identity. There was a time when one's sexual identity determined one's gender. Now, sex is based on one's genitals at birth, but gender is one's chosen identity. Regarding sex, sexuality, and identity, Carl Trueman writes, "While sex may be presented today as little more than a recreational activity, sexuality is presented as that which lies at the very heart of what it means to be an authentic person."[56] Television promotes the message that it is permissible and acceptable to choose one gender despite one's sex at birth. The secular ideology of sexual identity presents a challenge within Christian family units with children and teens. Parents who are devoted Christians and have taken their children to church most of their childhood lives now struggle to help their children and teens who claim to struggle with their gender and same-sex attraction. The cultural mindset regarding gender and identity extremely contradicts Christian beliefs and disrupts family unity in the church. Secular ideology concerning gender also creates new challenges among youth pastors that they have never faced. Some youth pastors are unsure about how to address the issue of same-sex attraction and gender identity adequately.

Moreover, television, including all broadcast media, significantly influences how culture, including some members of the church, think about the solution for their

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[55] Marie Winn, *The Plug-In Drug: Television, Children, and the Family* (New York: Viking, 1977), 4.

[56] Carl Trueman, *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self*: *Cultural Amnesia, Expressive Individualism, and the Road to Sexual Revolution* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020), 35.

emotional problems, such as depression and anxiety, which impedes integrating foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry. A myriad of commercials being broadcast over the airwaves declare that depression and anxiety are diseases or mental illnesses that are treatable with medication. Antidepressants such as Lexapro, Zoloft, Prozac, Effexor XR, and Paxil CR are heralded as the cure for depression and anxiety, and the messages resonate in the thoughts of society, including members of the church. Some commercials suggest that if antidepressants are not enough to relieve some of the symptoms of depression and anxiety, then one should talk with a doctor about taking Abilify in addition to antidepressants to bring about relief and better results. The television and broadcast media messages to culture, particularly church members, that depression and anxiety are diseases that are treatable with medication is an impediment that must be addressed.

Third, print media platforms (e.g., self-help books, newspapers, Christian books, *Psychology Today*, *Time Magazine*) have significantly influenced some church members in ways that impede integrating biblical counseling into practical ministry. Print media is usually labeled to deliberately capture the attention of casual gazers or readers by appealing to their needs. Many Christian bookstores are replete with psychology/self-help books that capture the eye because they appeal to felt needs. Gary Shogren offers a few titles of self-help books that give a glance at popular sellers: *Peace, Love & Healing: Bodymind Communication and the Path to Self-Healing*; *Forgive & Forget: Healing the Hurts We Don't Deserve*; *Healing the Shame that Binds You*; and *People of the Lie: The Hope for Human Healing Evil*.[57] Some books are labeled as Christian but are nothing more than ideologies of pop psychology sprinkled with Scripture to make them appear biblical. *The Five Love Languages* by Gary Chapman and *Emotions: Can You Trust Them?* by James Dobson are examples of books presented as Christian resources, yet the

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[57] Gary Shogren, "Recovering God in the Age of Therapy," *Journal of Biblical Counseling* 12, no. 1 (1993): 14.

content of these presumably Christian resources contain secular ideologies with little Scripture. Furthermore, the messages that some print media communicate are attractive and influential because, according to Shogern, people are "immersed in a culture in which psychiatry, psychology, religion, and the media are champions of a "disease or trauma model" for whatever disturbs them.[58] Some information provided through print media dramatically influences the minds of some church members and impedes integrating principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry.

Fourth, social media platforms and cell phones (e.g., Facebook, TikTok, Instagram) significantly influence some church members, especially youth and young adults, on how to resolve problems. Social media allows people to share their life struggles with one another, seek advice, and exchange recommended solutions to their problems. The problem with social media and cell phone messages is that the information being exchanged and the advice given is misleading and based upon human opinion rather than biblical truths. Moreover, some people subscribe to and use social media platforms to promote their businesses as life coaches and marriage coaches to teach secular ideologies of pop psychology ideologies, including coping skills, behavior modification, and thought techniques. Social media influences and promotes eclecticism among church members in many ways. Eclecticism involves drawing conclusions or embracing a system of beliefs by blending a variety of human logic and ideas with biblical principles. Eclecticism in the minds of church members, fueled by social media platforms, is an impediment that must be addressed.

Last, the internet is a search vehicle for finding supposed solutions to life problems based on secular ideologies that stem from pop psychology that may impede integrating foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry. More and more members of the church are now doing Google searches and diagnosing themselves with a mental illness. Many will look for defining features of mental illness

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[58] Shogren, "Recovering God in the Age of Therapy," 14.

and juxtapose the symptoms they are experiencing with the symptoms listed on the internet and declare themselves mentally ill. Based on their findings, some members go a step further in seeking clinical psychologists for validation. If the treatment and medication prescribed by the psychologist do not result in relief, they will seek biblical counseling as a last resort. A few come into the biblical counseling session, notifying the counselor that they have been diagnosed with a mental illness. Providing information concerning one's mental condition is helpful to the counselor and the biblical counseling process. A biblical counselor should always be concerned about the counselee's mental condition and any previous treatment. However, in many cases, the counselee's motive for providing information to his biblical counselor about his struggle with mental illness is not intended to be helpful. In some cases, the counselee provides information about self-diagnosed mental illness to imply that he is not responsible for some of his actions. It is possible that the person seeking biblical counseling, in sharing his mental condition, is actually communicating the following: I have an illness; I am a victim of my environment; my brain and body are making me do and say bad things, so I do not believe that it is my fault; and as such, I cannot be held accountable for my attitudes, thoughts, and behavior.

Church members are being seduced by traditional and social media platforms that promote secular ideologies. Traditional and social media compel church members to question the sufficiency and practical application of the Scriptures. The messages communicated through traditional and social media are driven by popular culture and strongly influence minds. For these reasons, the influence of traditional and social media upon church members is an impediment to integrating foundational biblical counseling into practical ministry that must be addressed.

Conclusion

This chapter addressed theological misconceptions within the church and cultural influences from secular ideologies, including popular psychology that is

embraced by culture, viewpoints held by most seminary-trained clergy, and traditional and social media platforms that impede the church from integrating the foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry. Misconceptions about God and cultural influences create challenges and missed opportunities for the church to minister to those in need. Theological and cultural influences compel the community and those within the body of Christ to question the credibility and competency of the church to provide adequate care for those who are suffering. Furthermore, most of what is being taught in biblical institutes regarding counseling methodology involves integrating the Bible with psychology. As a result, the pastoral educational training curriculums taught in most Bible colleges, schools, and seminaries impede integrating biblical counseling into practice. Last, the information communicated through traditional and social media platforms strongly influences how church members think, which impedes the integration of foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry.

The thrust of this project is that the Word of God is far more superior and satisfying than culture and the ideologies of pop psychology can offer. Christ is the example of how to respond to suffering in this world, and believers are commanded to follow his example. Moreover, Scripture commands mutual care and encouragement as essential to the formation of Christians as they suffer in this world. Any hope that the world gives is false hope. Addressing impediments to integrating foundational principles of biblical counseling in making disciples and teaching the church skills on mutual care, derived from foundational biblical counseling principles, is essential for practical ministry.

CHAPTER 4

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

The purpose of this project was to train pastors and church leaders at Good Hope Baptist Church in Houston, Texas, to integrate foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry. The goals of this project were to assess leaders' currently understand about biblical counseling, develop a six-week training curriculum on integrating biblical counseling principles into practical ministry, teach the curriculum to increase understanding, and create a six-week sermon series that aligns with the teaching curriculum.

This chapter provides an overview of the implementation of this significant ministry project at Good Hope Missionary Church in Houston, Texas. It details the meticulous preparation, weekly class discussions, and comprehensive teaching curriculum. The project, which lasted six weeks, impacted the church community and enriched the spiritual journey of its participants.

The class, a diverse and inclusive group, met for six weeks on Sundays from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m. The first and second meetings were in person, and the remaining four classes were hybrid (in-person and virtual). The class started with eighteen registered participants, but only sixteen completed the project. The class consisted of four males and twelve females. Converting the class into a hybrid made it possible for more people to attend because of convenience. The class began on July 28 and ended on September 1, 2024. Although the teaching portion of this project was six weeks, the implementation, including preparation and promotion of this project, from start to finish, was three months, from June 1 through the culmination date of September 1. This chapter will begin by briefly discussing how I prepared to implement this ministry project.

Preparation

The following sections describe the general steps I took in preparing to implement the project. First, I will discuss how I developed the project instruments, including the Biblical Discipleship Inventory Surveys (BDIS), the six-week teaching curriculum, sermon outlines, and a rubric an expert used to evaluate the content. Second, I will describe the timeline for promoting the class and gaining interest. Third, I will share how I solicited, encouraged, and persuaded leaders to attend. This thorough preparation was not just a process but a journey that instilled confidence in the successful execution of the project.

Developing Project Instruments

I began preparing to implement this project by developing pre-and post-test surveys, a six-week teaching curriculum, and sermon outlines on May 1, 2024, approximately four months before the first day of class. The BDIS assessed what the pastors and ministry leaders currently understand about biblical counseling and discipleship. During my thirty-year tenure as a member of Good Hope Church, ten years as a deacon, and the last fourteen years as a staff pastor and director of Christian Education and Biblical Counseling, I have gained insight into the context and pulse of Good Hope. For this reason, I developed project instruments (surveys, six-week teaching curriculum rubric, and sermon outlines) based on Good Hope's context, the research I completed on the biblical and theological basis for integrating the foundational principles of biblical counseling with making disciples in chapter 2, and my discoveries on the theological and cultural influences that impede integrating foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry in chapter 3. Developing the BDIS was the best place to begin preparing for the implementation of this project.

The initial BDIS consisted of seven pages and thirty-five statements/questions. The first page required the participant's signature. It included an "agreement to participate" paragraph explaining the purpose of the survey, an overview of the content of the survey,

and a confidentiality statement. The BDIS was divided into seven sections. Section 1 contained three questions on demographics, including age, membership, and leadership capacity within Good Hope Church. In sections 2–6, I listed statements where each participant could answer based on the following scale: SD = Strongly disagree, D = Disagree, DS = Disagree somewhat, AS = Agree somewhat, A = Agree, or SA = Strongly Agree. The final section was multiple choice or chose the best answer.[1] Each answer was assigned a numeric value ranging from 0 to 5, with 5 being the most favorable answer and 0 being the least favorable answer.

In section 2 of BDIS, I listed seven anthropocentric statements concerning their view of man. The word "anthropocentric" means human-centered philosophies, ideologies, and beliefs. Most of the statements listed in section 2 were laced with ideologies of pop psychology. Section 3 contained three statements about their understanding of discipleship, evangelism, and discipleship. Section 4 contained four statements that focused on their knowledge of biblical counseling, psychology, and their differences. In section 5, I listed nine popular psychology and integration (the integration of the Bible with psychology) statements or beliefs some Christians embrace about the source and solutions to human problems. Section 6 contained statements concerning the sufficiency of the Scriptures. In the final section, I presented eight statements, with multiple-choice answers, about man's purpose in life, the measure of spiritual maturity, and the evidence of one's love for God.

After creating the BDIS, I developed a six-week "Foundational Principles of Biblical Counseling Training" curriculum to address what, why, and how to integrate biblical counseling principles into the practical ministry of making disciples. The six-week curriculum topics (listed in numeric order) included "The Nature of Man and the Attributes of God," "Hope and the Sufficiency of Scripture Alone," "Understanding Your Identity in Christ," "Relationships: Loving and Serving Others," "How to Endure Suffering," and finally, "Discipling Others through Practical Ministry by Employing the

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[1] See appendix 1.

Eight I's of Biblical Counseling."[2] Each lesson ended with five to six application questions. Most application questions or statements in the teaching curriculum were also on the BDIS.

In conjunction with developing the six-week teaching curriculum, I created a rubric that an expert panel used to evaluate its content.[3] I asked the panel to assess the curriculum to ensure it was biblically and theologically accurate, comprehensive, and practical. The panel evaluated the curriculum in four categories on a scale from 1 to 4, with 1 = Poor, 2 = Needs Improvement, 3 = Sufficient, and 4 = Exemplary. I also included a section at the end of the evaluation rubric for additional comments. I asked the panel to evaluate the curriculum based on biblical hermeneutics, curriculum purpose, content points, methodology, and the practical application of each lesson. The panel consisted of three people, including an associate minister who holds a Master of Divinity from Southwestern Theological Seminary, a ministry leader with a master's in pastoral counseling from Liberty University, and a deacon who serves as an active member of the counseling ministry. They evaluated the curriculum and gave the content a combined average score of 3.91 in each category. One panel member commented, "The curriculum was very well put together. It provides clear definitions and profound Scripture references, enabling one to develop an insightful understanding and ample knowledge of each topic."

In the last step in preparation, I created six sermon outlines that align with the content and key principles I taught during the six-week training classes.[4] Although titled differently, the sermon outlines correspond to each topic of the teaching curriculum. Each sermon outline includes a title, key text of Scripture, a sermon purpose, an outline consisting of three to four points, and concludes with four to five application questions. I created each sermon outline using the Point, Text, Explanation Application (PTEA) formula for developing sermons. In other words, the body of each sermon outline contains

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[2] See appendix 2.

[3] See appendix 3.

[4] See appendix 5.

three to four main points. A Scripture text, an explanation, and an application of the text follow each point. Although I did not preach these sermons, I felt the need to include these sermon outlines in this project as a resource that others can use in their respective church contexts or sermons series that I could potentially preach later. Moreover, sermon outlines allow preachers and teachers to massage the content to fit their church context. After developing these project research documents, I focused on creative ways to promote the class.

Promoting the Class

On March 5, 2024, I began preparing to implement this project by developing and utilizing avenues to promote the class. I promoted the class by informing church leadership during our weekly staff meeting and creating announcements and invitations on Good Hope's monthly newsletter publications, Facebook page, and church website. The timing for this project was perfect for the following reasons.

On January 1, 2021, Good Hope Church made a deliberate cultural shift from inward-focused to outward-focused, targeting the community and those outside the church's four walls to spread the gospel and make disciples. Small groups have become the dominant vehicle for making disciples and are now the culture of Good Hope. Small groups heavily emphasize making disciples, loving, and serving others through service projects. Good Hope leadership emphasizes making disciples of Jesus Christ the main thing and the only thing to fulfill the church's Great Commission. The time was ripe for implementing the research project. For this reason, In March 2024, I began promoting the project with the staff and directors.

The staff and directors are the church's top executive core leadership team. The leadership team consists of twelve members, including the Senior Pastor, an Operations Manager, a Director of Membership, Worship Arts, Ministry Operations, Ministry Mobilization, Missions, Youth and Young Adults, Small Groups, Children's Ministry, and a Director of Maturity; the position in which I hold. Good Hope has a total of thirty-

five active ministries. All ministries and ministry leaders fall under the leadership umbrella of core directors. I started promoting the project with the core leadership because they represent the entire church. So, I reminded the leaders, at least once a month during one of the Tuesday morning staff meetings, of the upcoming project and the project purpose and asked each of them to disseminate the information to their respective ministries and leaders.

Additionally, on May 15, 2024, I created a graphic announcement of the project for the monthly newsletter publication, and the marketing team posted the announcement in the June, July, and August editions. Furthermore, I created an electronic registration form on Hope Network, a churchwide online communication platform and database designed specifically for churches. I also made a QR code linked to a registration form in Hope Network that I included in the announcement for those interested. I created a registration form in Hope Network, which simplified the registration process. After completing the survey, each registrant received a confirmation email that included the pre-test survey and instructions on submitting it.

Soliciting Participation

Third, I solicited, encouraged, and attempted to persuade leaders to attend the classes. Initially, I relied heavily on an announcement I posted in the June newsletter to solicit participants. However, members were slow to respond. Around June 15, I used Hope Network to broadcast email invites to all leaders in the church database. I also contacted the leaders (whom we call Lead Servants) of the small group discipleship ministry, requesting a list of all small group leaders. The Lead Servants helped by providing eighty-five small group facilitators' names and contact information. I imported the email addresses of all small group leaders into my Gmail account and sent all of them invites. A few people registered, but considering the enormous number of members, I was still dissatisfied with the low number of registrants. After June 15, I began personally inviting members as I encountered them during Sunday morning worship services,

encouraging leaders to participate. Tapping members on their shoulders and providing personal invites was the most effective way to solicit participants. As a result, twenty-four leaders registered. With this number of participants, I was excited and ready to implement my research project.

Implementation

This section will describe the formal steps I took to implement this project, including dates I asked the expert panel to evaluate the six-week curriculum to ensure that it was theologically accurate, the chronological flow of what took place each week, how I went about gathering data using the pre-test and post-test surveys, and how I used a *t*-test to analyze the results to determine whether the teaching made a statistically significant difference.

Before the start date of teaching the curriculum, I asked an expert panel to evaluate the curriculum content. I received their evaluations two weeks before the first day of class, confirming that the curriculum was theologically accurate. Moreover, before starting the discussion in week 1, I allowed all participants who did not complete and submit the survey before the first day of class to complete it at the beginning of class. I also reviewed the teaching schedule for the remaining five weeks and my expectations of each participant. Next, I was ready to begin implementing the project. At the beginning of each class, I provided handouts/outlines with a few fill-in-blanks for participants to complete during class discussion. I also emailed each participant a completed teaching with answers and an audio recording of the class discussion no later than three days after the conclusion of each session so that they could have the option to review the previous week's lesson.

Week 1

I taught the first class on July 28, 2024, at 12:24 p.m. The class was scheduled to begin at noon, but the 10 a.m. service, which usually ends at 11:45, went overtime. As

people entered the classroom, a member who lives in Austin, Texas, sent me a text message from home asking if the class would be available on Zoom because he wanted to attend. I told him I would immediately create a Zoom meeting and sent him the link. He could engage and participate in class discussions, ask questions, and make comments. As a result, I converted the research project into a hybrid class to allow more people to participate. Ten attendees were in the first class.

During this session, I addressed the nature of man and the attributes of God. I started class with a warm welcome and thanked each of them for participating. From there, I introduced the class by explaining the project's purpose, why it is important, and the benefits of completing the project. The project's purpose was to teach Good Hope ministry leaders how to integrate the foundational principles of biblical counseling. I reminded the class that since making disciples is the church's culture, the foundational principles of biblical counseling are beneficial for practical ministry as we aim to make disciples of Jesus Christ. I also stated that many of them will realize that as they go through the material, they have been using some of the foundational principles of biblical counseling as they minister to others in need.

After presenting an overview and purpose of the project, I asked a few general questions about God and man's purpose in life as an introduction to week 1's topic: "The Nature of Man and the Attributes of God." I presented questions to the class: What is your purpose in life? Why did you exist? What determines how a person lives his life? Then I asked, if I was an alien from another planet who stopped by to visit today and asked, what are you? What would you say? How would you respond? A few gave the typical church answer, "I am a child of God." Still pretending to be an alien, I asked, "Who and what is God?" I explained that these are important questions because one's view of God determines how he lives. If a person has a deflated view of God, then he will instinctively have an inflated view of himself, struggle in relationships with others, and not respond well when unfavorable things happen.

With these four elements of one's worldview in mind, I explained that the goal of discipleship is to evangelize the lost and teach those who declare faith in Christ how to live according to the biblical worldview of knowing God, their identity in Christ, loving and serving others, and enduring suffering. The goal of discipleship is also to teach disciples to evangelize and become disciples who make disciples.

After the introduction, I presented a definition of biblical counseling and how it differs from psychology and Christian counseling. From there, I transitioned to the teaching outline about "The Nature of Man and the Attributes of God." This session discussed that man is made in the image of God and man's condition after the fall. Moreover, according to Scripture, man's purpose in life is to glorify God. The only way to glorify God is by conforming to the image of his Son. I concluded class 1 by asking, who or what is man according to the world, and how does the world's definition of man compare to what the Bible says? Then, I asked each participant to schedule a time to answer the application questions at the end of the lesson. The class ended at 1:30 p.m., even though some participants wanted to continue.

Week 2

In week 2, on August 4, I taught a lesson on "Hope and the Sufficiency of Scripture Alone." Sixteen participants attended class in person, and three attended virtually on Zoom. I started class by reviewing what was discussed in the previous session regarding the nature of man, man's fallen conditions, and the attributes of God. I reminded participants that man's view of God dictates how he lives his life. I then explained the distinction between how culture views man and how the Bible defines man. I pointed out that secular wisdom will say that man is a species, an animal. Then, I explained that when I use the phrase "secular wisdom," I am referring to psychology. I reminded the class that psychology's methodologies, presuppositions, and ideologies heavily influence culture. I also explained that culture has a tremendous influence on how Christians think. Culture attempts to tell all of its ethnic groups, including some Christians, how to think, what to

do, and how to live. Social media and broadcasting platforms are how culture communicates its messages. The cultural messages preached on the airways often contradict the preached Word heard on Sunday mornings.

After reviewing the previous lesson, I introduced lesson 2 by asking several questions. First, what is the one thing we all need, including unbelievers? I reiterated the fact that all of us need hope and encouragement. Why? Because all believers will encounter trials of one kind or another. It is times like these when Christians need God the most. I explained that Christians also need one another. I also discussed the definition of hope and identified things in which man places his hope other than God. Any hope that the world offers is false hope.

Moreover, I stated that the Word of God is unequal and infallible. Then I asked, what determines supreme authority? Many participants said that God is the authority. Then I asked, what makes God's Word the authority? After a moment of silence, I said, absolute truth is authority. I explained that since God is a God of truth and his Word is absolute truth, God and his Word is the authority.

In addition to establishing God and his Word as the Supreme authority, I emphasized in week 2 that man's basic need is hope; hope is available to everyone who professes Christ as Lord and Savior, and the hope God gives is far superior to the hope the world offers. I concluded session 2 by asking a few application questions listed at the end of the teaching outline. I also reminded participants that giving hope is a foundational principle of biblical counseling that Good Hope church leaders must integrate into the practical ministry of making disciples.

Week 3

In week 3, August 11, I taught "Our identity in Christ." In this class, I deviated slightly from the original teaching format—instead of reviewing the previous sessions, I began by asking questions about some of the most concerning answers that some participants provided on the survey. I presented the following statement from the pre-

survey: Some people do bad things because they have a mental illness. Therefore, they are not responsible for their actions. I then asked participants if they strongly disagreed, disagreed, disagreed somewhat, agreed somewhat, agreed, or strongly agreed. The class was divided on this issue. Approximately 50 percent disagreed, and the other half agreed. They said it depends on the mental illness.

Since I anticipated how they were going to answer, I played a five-minute video clip of a news story about sixteen-year-old Ethan Anthony Couch, who killed four people while driving under the influence on June 15, 2013, in Burleson, Texas. While intoxicated and under the influence of drugs, Couch was driving on a restricted license and speeding in a residential area when he was involved in a fatal crash. During the trial, a psychologist took the stand and said that he was diagnosed with a mental illness called Affluenza. Supposedly, Affluenza is categorized as a person who lacks a moral compass and cannot distinguish right from wrong; therefore, he is not responsible for his actions. The prosecuting attorneys sought twenty years, but the judge only sentenced Couch to ten years of probation and continuous therapy. Two years later, Ethan was having a beer party with his friends, which was a direct violation of his parole. After the video, the emotions of the participants were a little elevated. So, I posed the question, should a person like Couch, who has been diagnosed with mental illness, be held accountable for wrong behavior? Most participants changed their position and said that he deserved jail time. As such, I ended the initial discussion by saying that, according to Scripture, every man is born with a moral compass. According to Romans 2:14–15, humans instinctively know right from wrong because of the work of the conscience. Affluenza does not seem to align with the biblical truths of Romans.

Afterward, I transitioned into the lesson. I reviewed what was discussed in sessions 1 and 2 regarding the nature of man, man's fallen conditions, the attributes of God, hope, and the sufficiency of the Scripture. Then, I asked participants if they believed some people in today's culture face an identity crisis, and why or why not. Anyone who

said they felt culture was facing an identity crisis was asked to give specific examples. We all agreed that same-sex marriages and transgender sports participation on college campuses are issues, and freedom to use the bathroom of one's choice has become a concern.

In addition to the discussion of a sexual identity crisis, I also mentioned my position on mental illness labels such as Bipolar, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder, and addictions labels such as alcoholic or substance dependency. The problem with labels is that, to some degree, they convey the idea of hopelessness. In other words, individuals are labeled according to their struggles, as if what they struggle with defines who they are. Christians should not be assigned labels. I explained that although Christians are not exempt from experiencing some of the same defining features associated with mental health illnesses or addictions, labels do not define their identity. Their identity is in Christ. Instead of assigning labels to a Christian who struggles with obsessions, anxiety, depression, or addiction, members of the body of Christ should say, "Here is a Christian who struggles with obsessions, anxiety, depression, or bondage to a particular thing." I concluded week 3 with a brief discussion of a couple of application questions at the end of the lesson.

Week 4

In week 4, August 18, I taught "Relationships: Loving and Serving Others." As in week 3, I deviated slightly from the original teaching format. Instead of reviewing the previous sessions, I started class by presenting the following statements, including 1 question, from the pre-test survey, also listed as application questions on the teaching curriculum: (1) Even though God has forgiven us, we need to learn to forgive ourselves; (2) What is the evidence of one's love for God; (3) Anger is not a sin. how you handle it matters; and (4) Some believe you cannot love others until you learn to love yourself first. Then, I asked participants if they strongly disagreed, disagreed, disagreed somewhat, agreed somewhat, agreed, or strongly agreed with any of these statements. Most

participants agreed or strongly agreed with statements 1, 3, and 4. Three participants were indecisive. I was not surprised because their answers indicated how pop psychology's cultural influence affects Christians' mindset. There were various answers to the question about the evidence of one's love for God and the cultural influence of pop psychology. Most participants said love for others is evidence of love for God. Some said one's knowledge of the Bible is evidence of one's love for God. A few stated that a person's time serving in ministry is evidence of his love for God. After hearing their responses, I began to address each question/statement from a biblical perspective.

First, I explained to the class that the belief about the need to forgive oneself, the idea that anger is a neutral human emotion, and the need for self-love are unbiblical concepts that stem from pop psychology. Second, a person who says, "I know God has forgiven me, but I can't forgive myself," has mistakenly viewed self-forgiveness as superior to God's forgiveness (1 John 1:8–10). Refusing to embrace God's forgiveness devalues the death of Christ on the cross as payment in full for sins. The need for self-forgiveness is also driven by a misunderstanding or refusal to embrace the grace of God (Eph 2:8–9). Third, there are two types of anger: Godly and sinful. Godly anger centers on injustice and unrighteousness. It judges things that insult, denounce, and defame the character of God. Sinful anger focuses on the self and is driven by the sinful desires of the heart. Then I asked, which type of anger do you display most? They laughed and said in unison, "sinful anger." At this moment, I pointed out that most of people, in Christians, do not have godly anger. Furthermore, James 1:19–20 says the "anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God." Fourth, self-love and the need to love self before one can love others is unbiblical. In Mathew 22:39, Jesus says we are to love our neighbors as we already love ourselves. The implication in Matthew 22:39 is that we already love ourselves (Eph 5:28–29). The problem is that we love ourselves too much, and self-love causes disunity in relationships (2 Tim. 3:1–5). Last, while obedience to God's Word indicates one's love for God, open expression of love and serving others, done in

90

humility, are the overarching measure of one's love for God (1 John 4:20–21). I used our discussion on the measure of one's love for God as a segue into today's lesson on "Relationships: loving and Serving Others." The content of the topic "Relationships: Loving God and Serving Other," which I taught during week 4, is provided in the Content Overview section of this chapter.

Week 5

In week 5, I presented an encouraging lesson on "How to Endure Suffering?" I opened this session with an overview of what was discussed in weeks 1–4, including (1) the nature of man and the attributes of God, (2) hope and the sufficiency of Scripture, (3) our identity in Christ, and (4) relationships: loving and serving others.

After reviewing previous sessions, I began a discussion on depression as an introduction to "How to Endure Suffering." I did this because it appears, in some cases, there is a link between suffering and depression. Since I wanted to understand participants' beliefs concerning the source and solution of depression, I started class by presenting an application question included in week 5 lesson: a statement also listed on the pre-test and post-test surveys. I said, "Medication is the best solution for people with depression." I asked the class to share their thoughts about this statement, and I received various answers. Most were uncertain about how to answer, so I reframed the question to: psychologists are a better resource for helping people who struggle with depression than the Word of God. A few said they believed that the Word of God is sufficient. Some others said they agree that psychologists are more equipped to address depression. Most said they think that both psychology and the Bible, used together, would be the best resource to help a person overcome depression.

As a result of the diversity of answers, I took a moment to explain the sources and solutions to depression from a psychological view versus a theological view. I asked, according to psychology, what is the source and solution for depression? A few said the source of depression, according to some psychologists, is one's parents. Another person

says unfavorable situations, circumstances, and events people experience are the source of depression. Someone else said that some psychologists will say a chemical imbalance in the brain and body causes depression. Then, I asked about the secular solution for depression. Most participants responded, almost in unison, with "medication" and "therapy." They chuckled over how several responded at almost the same time.

After discussing the popular psychological views of the source and solution for depression, I shifted to explaining the biblical view of depression. Although the English word "depression" is not in the Bible, there are biblical characters who experienced episodes of depression and displayed symptoms that fit the defining features of psychology. I explained, from Scripture, that there are three biblical causes of depression. First, unconfessed sin could be a cause of depression, as seen in the life of King David after he sinned against Bathsheba and murdered her husband as a cover-up (Ps 32:1–5). An unbiblical value system is a second possible cause of depression. An unbiblical value system is to seek personal fulfillment, self-worth, and satisfaction in anything else other than God. Asaph wrote in Psalms 73:1–3, "Surely God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart. But as for me, my feet had almost slipped; I had nearly lost my foothold, for I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked." A third biblical cause of depression is an unbiblical response to an unfavorable situation, circumstance, or event. A biblical example of this is the life of Elijah in 1 Kings 19. Elijah challenged Ahab's prophets of Baal to prove who the true and living God is. After Elijah called out to God and won the contest, the children of Israel declared that the Lord was God. Elijah then ordered that the prophets of Baal be put to death. When Jezebel, the wife of King Ahab, heard about what happened, she threatened to kill Elijah. In response to Jezebel's threat, Elijah fled to the desert and hid in a cave without proper food. Elijah's actions are common among people who are experiencing depression. Instead of depending on God in unfavorable situations, they run from God and try to flee their troubles because they have

an inaccurate view of their situation. Some people experience a loss of appetite in difficult situations, which is a defining feature of someone who is depressed.

Based on the three biblical causes of depression, we discussed three biblical responses to depression:

1. Confess, repent, and seek God's forgiveness (Ps 32:5; 1 John 1:8–9).

2. Learn to be content and seek satisfaction in God alone (Phil 3:8; 1 Tim 6:6–11)

3. Learn to accept the Sovereignty of God and accept what he allows (Eccl 7:13–14)

After discussing the source of and responses to depression, I transitioned to teaching the lesson topic for week 5 on "How to Endure Suffering." The content of the topic "How to Endure Suffering," which I taught during week 5, is provided in the Content Overview section of this chapter.

Week 6

In the final week, I taught "Discipling Others through Practical Ministry by Employing the 8 I's of Biblical Counseling," a methodology of biblical counseling developed by Wayne Mack.[5] I opened by asking the class a few questions. First, I asked, "Who is called to counsel?" Some said pastors and ministers. Others said, "Those who are trained in counseling?" A few responded by saying, "All Christians." I explained that according to Romans 15:14, all Christians should be able to counsel one another on some level. The second question I asked was, what does biblical counseling involve? A few stated that biblical counseling involves helping others with their problems by teaching them the Word. I agreed. However, I also explained that biblical counseling is cultivating interpersonal relationships with those suffering and walking them through healing through the practical application of God's Word.

Too many Christians prescribe Scripture as they attempt to offer counsel to others. Then I asked, what is the difference between prescribing Scripture versus

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[5] Wayne Mack, "A Practical Guide for Effective Biblical Counseling: Utilizing the 8 I's to Promote True Biblical Change," (Wapwallopen, PA: Shepherd Press, 2021).

ministering Scripture? There were a variety of responses. So, I said prescribing is simply giving Scripture verses alone to a person who is hurting, as a doctor would prescribe medicine to his patient. Prescribing Scripture implies, "Take this, and you will be fine." I shared that ministering Scripture involves teaching a person what God's Word says about their problem, locking arms with the person, and showing him, step-by-step, how to live out God's Word in their life. Employing the 8 I s process in practical ministry will help accomplish the task of ministering Scripture.

Moreover, I shared that the 8 I's of biblical counseling contain elements foundational to ministering to others who suffer in the world, are useful for teaching and edification, and are essential to making disciples. I explained that the 8 I's are a step-by-step process of making disciples that includes involvement, inspiration, inventory, interpretation, instruction, inducement, implementation, and integration.

I ended by thanking the group for sacrificing their time and committing themselves to participate in this research project. I shared how much I appreciated having each of them in the group. I prayed that the classes made a difference in their individual lives and, to some degree, changed and challenged their view of biblical counseling. I reminded them that the project's goal was to help them, as leaders, recognize the benefits of integrating foundational principles of biblical counseling into making disciples and to provide instructions on how to do it. I also challenged them to take what they have learned and share it with their ministry members. I asked each participant, attending class in person and on Zoom, to use the final minutes of class to complete the post-test survey before leaving. I distributed paper copies to those who attended in person. I also created an electronic version of the survey, in the form of a quiz, on Zoom so those attending online could complete the post-survey simultaneously.

In the final implementation stage of this project, I performed a t-test to analyze and compare data results from the pre-test and post-test surveys.

Overview of the Curriculum Content

The following is a brief overview of the six-week teaching curriculum. The

six-week teaching curriculum progresses from one theological theme to the next. The

methodology I used to organize the teaching topics in a particular order was based on

four theological themes: (1) Man's view of God, (2) Man's view of self, (3) Man's view

of relationships, and (4) Man's response to unfavorable situations, circumstances, and

events in life. Many life struggles, among believers and non-believers, stem from at least

one of four categories: a distorted view of God, an inflated view of self, a misunderstanding

of how they are to function in relationships, and an unbiblical response to suffering. Since

how people live their lives is indicative of their view of God, the first session addresses

embracing the attributes of God. As I taught each week, I also spent ten minutes discussing

answers to certain statements on the pre-test survey. I concluded each class by discussing

application questions at the end of each lesson.

**Week 1: "The Nature of Man
and the Attributes of God"**

Making disciples of Christ involves helping believers understand their

instinctive nature and responsibility to God. This lesson aimed to help participants

understand the necessity of recognizing man's condition, the importance of evangelism,

and the significance of embracing God's attributes, which are foundational principles of

biblical counseling essential to practical ministry. Lesson 1 of the teaching curriculum

includes the following main points: (1) Who and What Is Man, (2) What Is Man's

Condition, (3) What Is the Solution to Man's Problem, (4) What Is Man's Purpose in

Life—the World's View versus the Biblical View, and (5) Man's Responsibility to Live

by Faith and Embrace the Attributes of God.

In summary of lesson 1, the foundational principle of all biblical counseling

necessary for practical ministry is to help believers understand their nature and

responsibility to God. What one believes about God directly dictates how he views

himself and lives his life. Teaching converts to embrace God's attributes is essential in

evangelism and making disciples. The lesson for week 1 regarding one's view of God in relation to the nature of man lays the foundation for the following lessons.

**Week 2: "Hope and the Sufficiency
of Scripture Alone"**

This session aims to help participants understand biblical hope and the sufficiency of Scripture, which are essential ingredients for Christian living and foundational principles of biblical counseling in helping others find hope, encouragement, and comfort as they suffer in the world. My goal was to help leaders realize that any hope the world gives is false. Teaching converts to embrace, by faith, biblical hope and the sufficiency of Scripture will impact how they respond to life problems, unfavorable circumstances, situations, and events. Biblical hope and the belief in the sufficiency of Scripture are foundational principles of biblical counseling essential to making disciples of Jesus Christ. Lesson 2 of the teaching curriculum includes the following main points: (1) The Need for Biblical Hope and (2) The Sufficiency of Scripture Alone.

In summary of lesson 2, biblical hope and the sufficiency of Scripture are essential ingredients for Christian living and foundational principles of biblical counseling. The Word of God is the resource for helping others find encouragement and comfort as they suffer in the world. Any hope that the world gives is false hope. As disciples who make disciples, the church must teach and encourage members to embrace (by faith) biblical hope and the sufficiency of Scripture. Doing so will help Christians respond to life problems, unfavorable circumstances, situations, and events with hope while maintaining mental soundness and peace of mind.

**Week 3: "Understanding Your
Identity in Christ"**

Making disciples involves helping believers understand the blessing of their identity in Christ. A foundational principle of biblical counseling is helping disciples glorify God by conforming to the image of his Son. This session aims to help participants

96

understand the blessing of their identity in Christ. Participants will realize that one's choice does not determine identity, as the world says, but identity is based upon what the Scriptures declare them to be. This lesson also aims to help Christians understand that once they profess faith in Christ, they can enjoy the blessings of their new identity in Christ in the community of believers. Understanding the nature of man, embracing the attributes of God, biblical hope, and the sufficiency of Scripture compels one to have a proper of self. Lesson 3 of the teaching curriculum includes the following main points: (1) You Have a New Relationship with God through Christ, (2) You Must Realize the Blessings of Being in Christ, and (3) You Are a New Person in Christ.

In summary of lesson 3, identity in Christ is a foundational principle of biblical counseling. It is essential for helping disciples glorify God by conforming to the image of his Son as they suffer in the world. Once we profess faith in Christ, we can enjoy the blessings of our new identity in Christ in the community of believers.

Week 4: "Relationships: Loving and Serving Others"

This session aims to help participants understand how believers should function in relationships with others. Loving and serving others are foundational biblical counseling principles and essential ingredients for building relationships. Teaching converts how to love their neighbor (including their enemies) will cultivate God-honoring relationships that reflect Christ's image and emulate his relationship with others. Loving others is a foundational principle of biblical counseling essential to practical ministry. With the commandment of loving God, loving and serving others in mind, lesson 4 of the teaching curriculum emphasizes the following main points: (1) You Have Been Chosen to Love Others, (2) You Have Been Chosen to Love Your Enemies, (3) You Have Been Chosen to Exhibit Humility, (4) You Have Been Chosen to Forgive Others, and (5) You Have Been Chosen by God to Serve Others.

In summary of lesson 4, loving and serving others are foundational biblical counseling principles and essential ingredients for building relationships. Teaching members that God has chosen them to love others (including their enemies), walk in humility, grant forgiveness to those who wrong them, and serve one another will cultivate God-honoring relationships that reflect the image of Christ and his church.

Week 5: "How to Endure Suffering?"

This session aims to help participants understand how to respond to suffering. Many people come to Christ or seek counseling because they are experiencing unfavorable situations, circumstances, or events. No one is exempt from suffering. Teaching converts how to respond to and endure suffering is a foundational principle of biblical counseling and an essential ingredient for making disciples. Believers can experience hope and learn to rejoice as they suffer. With this in mind, lesson 5 on how to endure suffering focuses on the following main points: (1) God Does Not Take Pleasure in Our Suffering, (2) The Reason for Suffering, (3) Suffering Is a Common Reality, but God Is Faithful, (4) The Purpose of Suffering, and (5) What Should Be Our Response to Suffering. In summary of lesson 5, teaching converts how to respond to and endure suffering is a foundational biblical counseling principle. Disciples of Christ can experience hope and learn to rejoice as they suffer in the world. We can learn to celebrate in our suffering because salvation and deliverance are the gospel's good news.

**Week 6: "Discipling Others by Employing
the 8 I's of Biblical Counseling"**

This session aims to teach participants how to disciple others using the 8 I's method of biblical counseling. This counseling method consists of eight elements that church leaders and members can utilize to promote biblical change. The 8 I's capture the foundational biblical counseling principles that can be used to make disciples because they cultivate interpersonal relationships. This method facilitates discipleship because true discipleship occurs through interpersonal relationships as we engage in one another's

lives. In essence, the 8 I's method involves the foundational biblical counseling principles essential to practical ministry. This final lesson of the teaching curriculum focuses on eight foundation principles that can be integrated into practical ministry, which include:

1. Involvement—lovingly connecting with the person and showing that you care what they are going through.

2. Inspiration—offering words of encouragement and hope.

3. Inventory—data gathering: asking questions to gain an understanding of the person's life context.

4. Interpretation—accurately identifying the root of the problem.

5. Instruction—show the person that God's Word provides answers to their problem.

6. Inducement—gaining a commitment from the person to do what pleases the Lord.

7. Implementation—offer biblical resources and instructions that the person can put into practice to overcome their problem.

8. Integration—the person has made changes and is ready to be restored to their rightful place in serving others in the kingdom of God.

In summary of lesson 6, the 8 I's capture the foundational biblical counseling principles that can be used to make disciples because they cultivate interpersonal relationships. This method facilitates discipleship because true discipleship occurs through interpersonal relationships as we engage in one another's lives.

Overview of Sermon Outlines

The following is an overview of six sermon outlines I created to emphasize most of the fundamental principles of the six-week teaching curriculum. The sermons are a mixture of expository and topical. I did not include a sermon on the nature of man because a seventh sermon would go beyond this project's scope. The nature of man and his need for a savior are essential to sharing the gospel and evangelizing unbelievers. Although I did not preach these sermons during the project's implementation, I thought it would be helpful to include them in this work as a tangible resource for pastors who desire to implement this ministry project in their respective church contexts. The following is a

brief description of each sermon and an explanation of how each sermon aligns with the content of the teaching curriculum.

Sermon 1: "What You Believe about God Matters"

Sermon 1 is an expository message based on Hebrews 11:6. Sermon 1 emphasizes that, without faith, it is impossible to please God. The sermon aims to help believers realize that what they believe about God matters. The sermon's main points include: (1) You Must Come to God Believing Who He is, and (2) You Must Believe God Will Bless You When You Seek Him. This sermon aligns with the main point of lesson 1 of the teaching curriculum because they both emphasize the importance of embracing the attributes of God, which is the foundational principle of biblical counseling in the practical ministry of making disciples.

Sermon 2: "Finding Hope in a Hopeless Situation"

Sermon 2 is a topical sermon based on Romans 15:4 and 2 Timothy 3:16. Sermon 2 emphasizes that hope is a basic human need and God's Word is the source of hope. This sermon aims to teach believers that the Word of God is sufficient no matter what they are going through. Furthermore, Scripture was written for their instruction so that they may have hope through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures. The main points of sermon 2 include the following: (1) The Need for Hope, (2) You Must Realize that God's Word Is Your Hope, and (3) You Must Realize that God's Word Alone Is Sufficient. Sermon 2 aligns with the main point of lesson 2 of the teaching curriculum because they both emphasize that true hope comes from the Word of God, and his Word alone is sufficient for our lives.

Sermon 3: "Understanding Your Identity"

Sermon 3 is a topical sermon based on Romans 5:1–2, Ephesians 1:1–14, and 2 Corinthians 5:17. Sermon 3 emphasizes the significance of one's identity in Christ. The

sermon aims to help believers understand the blessing of their identity in Christ, which is a foundational biblical counseling principle. The main points of sermon 3 include the following: (1) You Have a New Relationship with God through Christ, (2) You Must Realize the Blessings of Being in Christ, and (3) You Are a New Person in Christ. Sermon 3 aligns with the main points of lesson 3 of the teaching curriculum because both emphasize that one's identity in Christ is essential for helping disciples glorify God by conforming to the image of his Son as they suffer in the world. When we embrace the attributes of God and the sufficiency of Scripture, it compels us to have a proper view of self.

Sermon 4: "Relationships: Loving and Serving Others"

Sermon 4 is a topical sermon based on Colossians 3:12–14, Philippians 2:3–4, Luke 17:3–10, and 1 Peter 4:10. Sermon 4 emphasizes the need to cultivate relationships by loving and serving others. This sermon aims to help participants understand how believers should function in relationships with others. The main points of sermon 4 include the following: (1) You Have Been Chosen by God to Love Others, (2) You Have Been Chosen by God to Exhibit Humility, (3) You Have Been Chosen by God to Forgive others, and (4) You Have Been Chosen by God to Serve Others. Sermon 4 aligns with the main points of lesson 4 of the teaching curriculum because both emphasize the need for believers to love and serve others, a foundational biblical counseling principle that should be integrated into the practical ministry of making disciples. Teaching converts how to love their neighbor (including their enemies) will cultivate God-honoring relationships that reflect Christ's image and emulate his relationship with others.

Sermon 5: "How to Endure Suffering"

Sermon 5 is a topical sermon based on Ecclesiastes 7:13–14, Lamentations 3:32–33, Romans 8:28–29, and 1 Corinthians 10:13, 15:21. Sermon 5 emphasizes how believers should respond to and endure suffering. The main points of sermon 5 include

the following: (1) God Does Not Take Pleasure in Our Suffering, (2) The Reason for Suffering, (3) Suffering Is a Common Reality, but God Is Faithful, (4) The Purpose of Suffering, and (5) What Should Be Our Response to Suffering. Sermon 5 aligns with the main points of lesson 5 of the teaching curriculum because both emphasize the need to teach believers how to respond to and endure suffering. Teaching believers how to respond to suffering biblically is a foundational principle of biblical counseling and is helpful in making disciples. Many people come to Christ or seek counseling because they are experiencing unfavorable situations, circumstances, or events. The good news is that disciples of Christ can experience hope and learn to rejoice as they suffer in the world. Salvation and deliverance are the good news of the gospel.

Sermon 6: "Discipling Others through Practical Ministry by Utilizing the 8 I's of Biblical Counseling"

Sermon 6 is a topical sermon based on several passages, including Colossians 3:16 and 1 Thessalonians 5:14. This sermon aims to teach participants how to disciple others using the 8 I's method of biblical counseling. This counseling method consists of eight elements that church leaders and members can utilize to promote biblical change. The main points of sermon 5 include the following: (1) Connecting with the Person—Involvement and Inspiration, (2) Understanding the Person's Problem—Inventory and Interpretation, (3) Gaining a Commitment to Obey God's Word—Instructions and Inducement, and (4) Restoring the Person to the Work of Service within the Body of Christ—Integration and Implementation. Sermon 6 aligns with lesson 6 of the teaching curriculum because both emphasize the need to make disciples by cultivating interpersonal relationships in fulfilling the "one another" commandments in the Bible. The 8 I's capture eight foundational biblical counseling principles to integrate into the practical ministry of making disciples. This method facilitates discipleship because true discipleship occurs through interpersonal relationships as we engage in one another's lives.

Conclusion

This chapter provided an overview of the implementation of this ministry project at Good Hope Missionary Church in Houston, Texas. It details the steps I took in preparation, the weekly class discussions, an overview of what took place during class each, brief descriptions of the content of the teaching curriculum, and the corresponding sermon outlines designed to reemphasize key points of the teaching curriculum. Chapter 5 will provide an evaluation of this research ministry project and provide statistical data that shows how it impacted Good Hope church leaders and enriched the spiritual journey of its participants.

CHAPTER 5

EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

This chapter aims to determine the project's success by evaluating its goals, strengths, and weaknesses, possible changes for future attempts to implement the project, theological and personal reflections, and a conclusion about the project as a whole. The evaluation provided in this chapter can benefit the future success of all churches that desire to teach leaders within their specific church context to integrate foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry.

Evaluation of Project's Purpose

The purpose of this project was to train pastors and church leaders at Good Hope Baptist Church in Houston, Texas, to integrate foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry by developing and teaching a six-week class on how to incorporate methodologies of biblical counseling with making disciples. Since 2021, Good Hope has intentionally tried to change the church's culture by emphasizing the need to make disciples of Jesus Christ the primary focus. Good Hope has implemented small groups to create cultural change, using curriculums such as *Rooted: Connecting with God: The Church with Purpose* by the Mariners Church, *Experiencing God* by Henry and Richard Blackaby, and *Purpose Driven Life* by Rick Warren. Moreover, all Good Hope staff, leaders, members, and nonmembers were strongly encouraged to participate in the church's discipleship efforts and join a small group, underscoring the church's commitment to inclusivity. Good Hope also adopted the phrase, "Making the main thing the only thing," as the church motto for making disciples. Against the backdrop of making disciples, the purpose of this project of training pastors and church

leaders at Good Hope to integrate foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry was successful.

Evaluation of the Project's Goals

The project had four goals to fulfill its purpose of training pastors and church leaders at Good Hope Baptist Church to integrate foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry. The goals of this project included assessing leaders' understanding of biblical counseling, developing a six-week training curriculum on integrating biblical counseling principles into practical ministry, teaching the curriculum to increase understanding, and developing a six-week sermon series that corresponded to the fundamental principles of the six-week teaching curriculum. The following is an evaluation of the four goals that directed the course of this project through its completion.

The first goal was to assess what leaders currently understand about biblical counseling (including the effectiveness, relevancy, and authority of Scripture) and disciple-making. This goal was measured by administering the BDIS as a pre-test. The first goal was successful because twenty leaders of Good Hope, including sixteen participants and four staff members (directors), completed the BDIS. Two of the sixteen participants are co-leaders of the Good Hope small group ministry, comprising thirty-two active small groups and sixty-nine small group facilitators, some of whom have led or are currently leading a small group. Although the four staff members did not participate in the six-week classes, their responses on the BDIS were helpful in assessing Good Hope leaders' understanding of biblical counseling and discipleship. The results of the BDIS were collected, analyzed, and interpreted. The BDIS pre-test results were collected and analyzed by comparing the average scores of the participants and staff members. The average score comparisons between participants and staff are significant; they prove that the beliefs of ministry leaders and church members often replicate the beliefs held by core leadership, pastors, and staff. For instance, section 3 of the BDIS contains four

statements (11–14) related to biblical counseling, the sufficiency of Scripture, and psychology. Each participant could answer based on the following scale: SD = Strongly disagree, D = Disagree, DS = Disagree somewhat, AS = Agree somewhat, A = Agree, or SA = Strongly Agree. Statement 11 reads, "I understand the meaning of biblical counseling." The average response for statement 11 was 3.8, suggesting the participants agreed with this statement. Statement 12 said, "The Word of God is sufficient for addressing all of life's problems." The average score for this statement was 4.8, suggesting that the participant strongly agreed. However, the average scores for statements 13 and 14 on the BDIS were quite different than the score results for 11 and 12. Statement 13 said, "Some people with severe problems need to be referred to an expert psychologist." The most favorable score for this statement was "strongly disagree," which had a score value of 5. The average score for statement 13 was 1.5, suggesting that the average participant either agreed or strongly agreed that people with severe problems need to be referred to an expert psychologist, even though they previously agreed to statement 12 that the Word of God is sufficient. Finally, statement 14 of the BDIS said, "We need psychology and the Bible." The average score for statement 14 was 1.5, indicating that the average participant agreed or strongly agreed that we must integrate the Bible with psychology. The pre-test survey results from section 3 of the BDIS provide evidence of the success of the assessment.

The second goal was to develop a six-week training curriculum of integrating biblical counseling principles into practical ministry. An expert panel was assigned to evaluate each lesson's content to ensure its theological accuracy and relevance. This goal was measured by an expert panel that utilized a rubric to evaluate the biblical accuracy of the curriculum's content, methodology, progressive structure, and comprehensiveness.[1] This goal was successfully met because 90 percent of the rubric results exceeded a

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[1] See appendix 3.

106

cumulative score of sufficient or greater than the average score of 3. The panel consisted of three people, including an associate minister who holds a Master of Divinity from Southwestern Theological Seminary, a ministry leader who has a master's in Pastoral Counseling from Liberty University, and a deacon who serves as an active member of our counseling ministry. They evaluated the curriculum and gave the content a combined average score of 3.91 in each category.[2] The second goal was successful because 90 percent of the rubric evaluations met or exceeded the sufficiency level. One expert panel member commented that *the curriculum was very well put together. It provides clear definitions and profound Scripture references, enabling one to develop an insightful understanding and ample knowledge of each topic*.

The third goal was to teach the curriculum to increase understanding. For this goal, the BDIS was re-administered as a post-test survey to measure their increased understanding of incorporating foundational principles of biblical counseling with practical ministry. A *t*-test was performed to determine if the project made a significant statistical difference. According to the *t*-test, there was a statistically significant difference between pre-survey and post-survey results.[3] The third goal was accomplished because a t-test for dependent samples demonstrated a positive statistical difference between pre and post-training survey scores: $t_{(15)} = -4.937$, $p < .0001$. The *t*-test confirms that the project produced significant change because the "mean" value increased between the pre-test and post-test. The absolute value of the *t*-statistic is larger than the *t*-critical one-tail. The *p*-value is less than 0.05. In comparing the differences between the post-test and pre-test survey scores, 88 percent of the answers increased in value, 9 percent decreased, and 3 percent of the answers provided remained the same. The 88 percent increase also demonstrates that the project produced significant change.

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[2] See appendix 3.

[3] See appendix 4.

The fourth goal was to develop a six-week sermon series on the significance of integrating foundational principles of biblical counseling (including the effectiveness, relevancy, and authority of Scripture) with discipleship to educate and edify the church.[4] Each sermon was derived from and corresponded with the fundamental principles taught in the six-week training curriculum. An expert panel of four individuals used a rubric to evaluate the theological accuracy, sermon purpose, content points, clarity, relevancy, and practical application of each sermon. The fourth goal was successfully met because 90 percent of all rubric evaluations met or exceeded the sufficiency level 3.0.[5] Although the sermon series was developed and included in this project, they were not preached during the implementation of this research project. In fact, sermons 1 through 5 were preached a few years prior to the project. Nonetheless each sermon was meticulously modified to correspond to the objective of each lesson contained in the 6-week teaching curriculum. Moreover, the six-week sermon series was included in the project to aid church leaders who have a desire to implement this project into their respect church context.

Strengths of the Project

There are four primary strengths of this project worth mentioning. First, the BDIS exposed the ideologies of psychology that have infiltrated the thinking of Good Hope members. Interestingly, many leaders and members are unaware and surprised by the magnitude in which culture has influenced their thinking. The BDIS was an eye-opener for most of the participants. The survey helped participants examine their beliefs about God and what they believe to be the source and most effective solution to life's problems. The survey also helped participants evaluate why they believe what they think and whether their beliefs align with Scripture.

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[4] See appendix 5.

[5] See appendix 6.

Second, the teaching curriculum challenged the leaders' beliefs by helping them understand the foundational principles of biblical counseling and why integrating these principles with practical ministry is helpful for making disciples. Participants were able to realize that there is a clear distinction between secular counseling, Christian counseling, and biblical counseling. Before taking the classes, many participants had a blurred understanding of biblical counseling and its usefulness in making disciples.

The third strength of this project was that the teaching material was taught with such relevance that some leaders shared, during class, how much it encouraged them and how they have begun to implement and share some of the key principles they learned with their respective ministries. As a result of the lessons, most participants realized that believers and nonbelievers struggle in common areas. We all struggle at times with our view of God, ourselves, relationships, and our view of and response to suffering. Participants were convinced that how they live directly relates to their view of God. The leaders were also reminded that we all need hope, whether a person is a disciple or disciple-maker, a believer or an unbeliever. God and his Word are our hope. They learned from the lessons how to minister to others by showing them how to have a biblical and proper view of God, themselves, relationships, and suffering. These foundational principles of biblical counseling are useful for the practical ministry of making disciples.

The final strength of the project is that its implementation was perfectly timed for Good Hope and aligned with the church's mission and vision. Since 2020, the Good Hope core leadership team has sought to change the church's culture from inward-focused to outward-focused as they encourage members to get involved and make deliberate efforts to make disciples and reach the lost through service projects in the community.

Weaknesses of the Project

There were four primary weaknesses of this project that should be acknowledged. The first weakness of the project is that only sixteen participants completed

the six-week training instead of the projected twenty. A few factors contributed to the limited number of leadership participants. One factor contributing to low attendance was Hurricane Berly, an uncontrollable event that was more of an impediment to the project as we approached the implementation start date of July 21, 2024. On July 8, the hurricane made landfall on the Texas Gulf Coast, leaving three million Texas residents without power. Some were without power for several days. Another factor that could have contributed to the limited number of participants was the timing of the project. In addition to the storm, the timing for the project was challenging because members had just completed a churchwide ten-week series on Rooted and Grounded Purpose Driven Life Small Groups on June 9. Some leaders were already exhausted.

A second weakness was the anticipated start date. In addition to the small group series that ended on June 9, several activities took place in the month of June to celebrate our senior pastor's thirtieth anniversary. Members were a little stretched. Many members wanted to take a break in July. The timing for implementing the project was right in terms of our efforts to make a cultural shift, but it may not have been the best time for leaders who were already overwhelmed with church activities.

A third weakness of the project was regarding statements 9 and 18 on the BDIS itself. Statement 9 on pre- and post-surveys reads, "Discipleship is only for those who are believers." The possible answers were a scale of strongly agreed through strongly disagree. This statement was slightly ambiguous. The distinction between discipleship and making disciples needed to be clarified. Making disciples involves first evangelism and then edification. Discipleship involves edification, which consists of building believers up to spiritual maturity by helping them grow in Christ and equipping them to evangelize and do the same with others. Either answer would be correct, depending on one's vantage point. Another area for improvement with the BDIS was regarding statement 18. The survey score values (on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the most favorable answer and 0 being the least favorable answer) assigned to the anticipated

answer for statement 18 were inaccurate. Incorrect values negatively affected the outcome of the initial scores and produced false results. As such, I omitted statement 9, corrected values assigned to the answers in statement 18, and re-calculated the pre- and post-surveys.

What I Would Do Differently

As I re-evaluate the entire process of implementing this research project from its beginning through completion, I would do three things differently. First, I would condense some of the lesson content for the six-week teaching curriculum. It is impossible to say everything there is to say about a particular subject in one hour, and condensing the material would allow for more class interaction. This is not to say that the class was not engaging. However, there were two occasions when I felt rushed to complete a lesson because we were running out of time and could not finish. As a result of being unable to finish, I had to take up where we left off the following class.

Second, I would encourage and reiterate the need for participants to enter this project with an open mind. An excellent way to hold each person responsible is to have each participant sign a written agreement to be open-minded to the information presented throughout the project from the onset of class. I could have done a better job reminding the group that they could opt out of the class if they felt the lesson material violated their convictions.

Third, I should have done a better job soliciting staff members to participate by giving each a personal invite instead of a general invitation during weekly staff meetings. I would also ask the senior pastor to encourage each staff member to participate. If a staff member could not participate, then that staff member could have assigned a ministry leader representative to attend.

Theological Reflections

A few theological reflections from this project include answering the following three questions: (1) What defines discipleship? (2) What is the process of discipleship?

and (3) Is integrating principles of psychology with the Bible more sufficient for helping those with severe problems or mental health issues than the Scripture alone? As I reflected theologically after the project's implementation, it was confirmed that Good Hope leaders have different views on what defines discipleship, the process of discipleship, and the sufficiency of Scripture alone. On the surface, most leaders appear to hold the same viewpoint regarding discipleship and the sufficiency of Scripture. However, the questions that were asked and answered, evidenced by the survey scores, exposed a diversity of theological belief systems concerning discipleship and the sufficiency of Scripture that are embraced among Good Hope leaders. Although I was aware of the various views held by leaders, I did not know the magnitude of the diversity of beliefs nor the degree of cultural influence on Good Hope leaders.

First, some leaders view discipleship as evangelism. Others equate discipleship with church membership. They view discipleship as an elite religious group membership similar to a social club. A few leaders view discipleship as edification and helping members grow in Christ. My mission is to consistently and intentionally remind Good Hope leaders and members that discipleship involves evangelism and edification to develop disciples who repeat the process with others, leading unbelievers to Christ and helping those who know Christ grow in Christ (Matt 28:18–20). True discipleship does not occur from the preached Word on Sunday mornings but through cultivating interpersonal relationships.

A second theological reflection of this project is the need for leaders to help others grow in their understanding of God, their identity in Christ, how God expects them to relate to others, and how they should respond to suffering. Every person, believers and unbelievers alike, will, at some point in their lives, struggle in at least one of these four areas. My mission is to remind leaders that their view of God is the most significant of all four because one's view of God affects the other three. Leaders must keep these principles at the forefront of their minds as they seek to minister, disciple others, and teach them to

112

their respective ministry members.

A final theological reflection of the project involves the belief that integrating principles of psychology with Scripture is the best remedy for a person with severe problems and mental health issues. It appeared that 50 percent of leaders believe that the Scripture alone is sufficient for addressing severe problems, specifically mental health issues. Some leaders firmly believe that integrating psychology with the Bible is the best remedy for addressing the source and solution to life's problems. Leaders who advocate integration are examples of how some ideologies of psychology have influenced the mindset of Good Hope. Nonetheless, Good Hope leaders must be reminded that although psychology is helpful, the Word of God is more than sufficient, and one's relationship and fellowship with Christ are much more satisfying than what psychology has to offer. As I stated during the six-week training curriculum, "While it is true that the Bible does not speak to specific labels assigned by psychologists/DSM-V to those who struggle with mental health issues, the Bible does address many of the common defining features associated with mental health issues, such as anxiety, fear, worry, anger, loneliness, isolation, and symptoms that are descriptive of someone battling depression."

Personal Reflections

A significant personal reflection in implementing this project is that when teaching and preaching to others, I must forever be mindful of apostle Paul's words to young Timothy when he wrote, "The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, skillful in teaching, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim 2:22–26). I realized that not all Good Hope leaders are willing to embrace what I taught. By the time I completed the six-week teaching curriculum, most, if not all, leaders welcomed the teaching I provided on the need to integrate foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry in making disciples.

Approximately half of the leaders believe that psychology is helpful but not necessary. Some were indecisive concerning the need for psychology and the Bible. Others somewhat insisted on integrating the principles of psychology and the Bible when addressing particular human problems. One leader refused to budge from his beliefs. Although he did not verbalize his position in class, his pre- and post-survey scores spoke for themselves. I learned that there may be several reasons why some leaders may be reluctant to embrace some principles I taught related to integrating psychology and Scriptures as they seek to make disciples.

First, some members who work in the health care industry, in the mental field, or have been diagnosed with a mental health issue in the past or have a family member who has been diagnosed with a mental disorder may struggle to embrace the sufficiency of Scripture alone to address man's mental health problems. What is interesting is that seldom did any of them voice their position or opposition during the class discussion. They asked questions, presented scenarios, and asked me for an explanation, but there were no blatant challenges regarding the material content and subject matter discussed each week. Discernment told me that some agreed with, were indecisive, or were somewhat opposed to what I taught. I anticipated the evidence would only be revealed or detectable by comparing the pre- and post-survey results.

Second, surprising as it may seem, those serving in Good Hope's leadership capacities the longest are the hardest to convince of the need to integrate foundational principles of biblical counseling in making disciples and on the sufficiency of Scripture alone. Some leaders who have served in leadership for several years are inclined to reject new paradigms in making disciples. Some leaders who reject new paradigms of doing practical ministry do not like change.

Third, after much thought, there are a few possible reasons why a leader who has completed all six weeks of this project would still be inclined to stand firm on their initial beliefs held before the project.

114

1. They are acquainted with mental illnesses in their personal lives.

2. They believe that people need both psychology and the Bible.

3. They believe that there are mental health challenges that the Bible does not explicitly address.

4. They are prideful and unteachable.

5. My teaching was not arranged in an adequate, convincing way.

I stated several times during the project discussions that while mental illness labels are not in the Bible, the Bible does speak about many of the symptoms/defining features associated with mental illness, particularly anxiety, which is the most common feature related to most mental illnesses. Moreover, in today's culture, the term "mental illness" is being replaced with "mental health." Why? Because of the lack of ability to detect a mental illness with typical medical testing devices such as CRI, CAT scans, X-rays, blood tests, etc.

Finally, in a summary of my personal reflections, I learned that no matter what stance members take regarding their view of discipleship, the sufficiency of Scripture, the value of integrating foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry, or integrating psychology with the Bible, I must employ the principles of 1 Timothy 2:24–26 to my ministry efforts as I teach and preach to others. I must avoid being quarrelsome with those who disagree with me. Only God can open and transform hearts and minds. As such, I must approach differences with respect, humility, and love. I intentionally told the leaders that I value our differences as brothers and sisters in Christ. I appreciate those who sacrificed their time participating in the research project and rejoice over those who were open-minded and whose lives and perspectives were positively influenced by the content of the six-week teaching curriculum, evidenced by the pre- and post-survey results. The comments and feedback I received are praiseworthy. One Good Hope small group discipleship ministry co-leader stated a few weeks after completing the project's implementation, "Minister Rose, I found the class very helpful. We have included some of

your information in our small group facilitator training classes. This information you provided was extremely helpful." To God be the glory.

Conclusion

This research project was a successful and inspiring experience. This project accomplished its purpose of training pastors and church leaders at Good Hope Baptist Church in Houston, Texas, to integrate foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry. The project purpose was accomplished by developing and teaching a six-week class on how to incorporate methodologies of biblical counseling with making disciples. All four goals of the project were successfully accomplished, and the instruments for measuring the success of each goal were completely satisfied, supported by the data and statistical results provided in this final chapter.

This project challenged and changed the mindset of Good Hope leaders about making disciples, the sufficiency of Scripture, their understanding of the foundational principles, and the value of integrating these principles into practical ministry. I aim to continuously teach others about the need to incorporate foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry as Good Hope leaders and ministry members seek to fulfill the mission of the church, evangelize the loss, and help those who know Christ grow in Christ as they suffer in the world. I will be forever grateful to God for allowing me the opportunity to teach Good Hope leaders to integrate principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry. I pray that God uses the principles and purpose of this research project to better equip and edify Good Hope leaders for the work of service as they integrate biblical counseling principles into practical ministry in making a difference in people's lives as the church seeks to serve and edify his kingdom. To God be the glory, and may his name remain magnified at Good Hope for years to come

APPENDIX 1

BIBLICAL DISCIPLESHIP INVENTORY SURVEY

The following Biblical Discipleship Inventory Survey (BDIS) was administered to participants as a pre- and post-test. This survey was the measurement for the first goal of this project. The BDIS assessed what leaders understand about biblical counseling (including the effectiveness, relevancy, and authority of Scripture) and disciple-making.

BIBLICAL DISCIPLESHIP INVENTORY SURVEY (BDIS)

Agreement to Participate

The pastoral leadership of Good Hope Missionary Baptist is always striving to discover creative ways to fulfill the mission and vision of our church. The primary goal of our church is to fulfill the great commission of making disciples in our surrounding community and the world. The following is an assessment of your understanding of the foundational principles of biblical and the process of discipleship at Good Hope Missionary Baptist Church. The participants for this survey will be randomly selected from our list of active members of Good Hope who are currently serving in various levels of leadership.

This research is being conducted by Darrell Rose as part of a project requirement for his doctoral studies at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. By completing this survey, you consent to use your responses to this project. The names of each participant will remain confidential, and your name will not, at any time, be disclosed in any way that will associate your identity with your responses. Your participation is 100% voluntary, and you have the liberty to withdraw at any time.

Name: _____   Date: _____

Please complete the following survey.

Directions: Answer the following statements of questions by selecting T for true or F for false, checking the best answer to the multiple-choice questions, or by providing a short answer on the line provided. For statements asking whether you agree or disagree, circle your answer based on the following scale.

SD = Strongly disagree, D = Disagree, DS = Disagree somewhat, AS = Agree somewhat,
A = Agree, or SA = Strongly Agree

Section I: Demographic Information

1. What is your age? (Please check one)
   a. _____ 18-24
   b. _____ 25-35
   c. _____ 36-45
   d. _____ 46-55
   e. _____ 56-65
   f. _____ 66-75

2. How long have you been a member of Good Hope?
   a. _____ 0 – 5 years
   b. _____ 6 – 10 years
   c. _____ 11 – 15 years
   d. _____ 16 – 20 years
   e. _____ Over 21 years

3. To what capacity are you currently serving at Good Hope (Please check one)
   a. ____ Pastor
   b. ____ Preacher/Ministry
   c. ____ Lead servant on a ministry
   d. ____ Assistant Lead Servant
   e. ____ Teacher
   f. ____ Small Group Leader
   g. ____ Ministry member

Section II: View of Man – Anthropology

1. Even though God forgives us, we must learn to forgive ourselves.

   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

2. Man is born naturally good, but his environment determines whether he grows up to be good or bad.

   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

3. Anger is not a sin. What matters is how you handle it.

   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

4. The Bible is irrelevant to some of life's problems

   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

5. The wrong that others do to you can cause you to sin

   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

6. You can forgive a person even though you want nothing to do with him/her

   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

7. Some bad people are victims of their circumstances and, therefore, cannot be held responsible for their actions.

   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

Section III: Discipleship

8. Evangelism is a foundational part of making disciples.

   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

9. We must disciple members of our church before those in the community.

   SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

10. Knowledge of the Bible produces spiritual maturity.

    SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

Section IV: Biblical Counseling

11. I understand the meaning of biblical counseling.

    SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

12. The Word of God offers a sufficient solution for anxiety.

    SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

13. In some instances, a psychologist can be more effective in addressing the heart of man's problem than Scripture.

      SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

14. We need secular psychology in order to address the soul's problems.

      SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

Section V: Worldview

17. You must learn to love yourself before you can love others.

      SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

18. The truth derived from scientific research claims is as reliable as the truth claims of Scripture.

      SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

19. The Bible is insufficient for helping people with a mental illness

      SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

20. Medication is the best solution for people with depression

      SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

21. A person can be born a homosexual.

      SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

22. Drunkenness can be genetically hereditary.

      SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

23. Psychologists are better equipped than biblical counselors to help people who struggle with anxiety

      SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

24. Some people do bad things because they have a mental illness; therefore, they are not responsible for their actions.

      SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

25. Addictions are merely diseases.

      SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

Section VI: Scriptures

26. The Word of God is all we need to have a sound mind.

        SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

27. I wonder how a good God can allow such terrible things to happen.

        SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

28. The Bible contains errors because it was written by man.

        SD   D   DS   AS   A   SA

Section VII: Multiple Choice:

29. What ultimately determines how a person lives:

A. How he was raised
B. His environment
C. Life circumstances
D. What he believes about God

30. My purpose in life is to:

A. Live the American dream
B. Glorify God
C. Live a good life
D. Health, wealth & success

31. The best way to please God is to (select the best answer):

a. Pray
b. Obey His word
c. Reflect the Image of Christ
d. Serve others

32. What keeps us from loving others

a. The sin that they commit against us
b. The hurtful words they have said to us
c. Nothing. Love is a choice
d. Pride
e. Some people are unlovable

33. What is the root cause of sin

a.	Chemical Imbalance in the brain & body
b.	The influence of the world
c.	Other people
d.	The heart
e.	One's thoughts

34. What is the best way you can help a person grieving the loss of a loved one?

a.	Words of encouragement
b.	Praying with them
c.	Just being present without a word
d.	Offering to meet a need

35. What is the evidence of a person's love for God?

Their knowledge of the Bible
Their level of giving of tithes and offerings
The amount of time they spend serving in ministry
Their love for others

APPENDIX 2

PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL COUNSELING AND
DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING CURRICULUM

This appendix contains the six-week small group training curriculum used to
teach Good Hope MBC ministry leaders the foundational principles of biblical counseling.
These principles are useful for practical ministry as Good Hope aims to make disciples of
Jesus Christ.

Overview of Curriculum

Week 1: The Nature of Man and the Attributes of God
Week 2: Hope and the Sufficiency of Scripture Alone
Week 3: Understanding Your Identity in Christ
Week 4: Relationships: Loving and Serving Others
Week 5: How to Endure Suffering?
Week 6: Discipling Others through Practical Ministry by Employing the 8 I's of Biblical Counseling

INTRODUCTION

Definitions:

       Biblical Counseling: The foundational principles of biblical counseling are rooted in practical theology, which involves the interpretation and practical application of God's Word to life and living.

       Practical Theology: Jesus personified practical theology by how he lived his life on earth. He taught the disciples that their purpose in life is to glorify the Father. He taught the disciples how to relate to God, walk in humility, relate to others (especially those in need), and endure suffering. As such, the believer's purpose in life is to glorify the Father by reflecting the image of Christ (Rom. 8:28-29; 2 Cor.5:9).

       With our purpose in life in mind, biblical counseling aims to help believers to understand and embrace , (1) The attributes of God and his Will, (2) Themselves and God's Will, (3) Relationships and God's Will, and (4) Suffering and God's Will. For these reasons, biblical counseling stands firm on the authority and sufficiency of Scripture as the inspired Word of God.

Week 1: The Nature of Man and the Attributes of God

Objective: This session aims to help participants understand man's nature and responsibility to God. As a result of this lesson, participants will understand the necessity of recognizing man's condition, the importance of evangelism, and the significance of embracing God's attributes, which are foundational principles of biblical counseling essential to practical ministry.

> **Text:** For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. [21] For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. (**Romans 1:20-21**)

I. Who and What is Man?

    a. Made in the Image of God (Gen. 1:26-27)

    b. Two-Part Being: Material and Immaterial

    c. Social Being—God enables man to satisfy the goal of social relationships through his vertical relationship with God and his horizontal relationship in marriage, with family members and friends (Ps. 18:22, 127:3; John 15:14-15; Col. 3).

    d. Working Being (Gen. 1:26-31; Mk. 13:34; Eph. 4:12; 1 Tim. 3:1)

e. Dependent Worshipper - the name of God alone provides substantial evidence that man was created a dependent worshipper. The Hebrew word "Elohim" is translated in our English Bibles as "God" and appears thirty-one times in Genesis chapter 1.

II. What is Man's Condition?

a. Sin versus Sickness
    i. Sin – Actions by which humans rebel against God, miss His purpose for their life, and surrender to the power of evil rather than to God.[1]
    Sin is Universal – We all sin (Ps. 51:5; Rom. 3:23).
    Sin - Evildoing that is not only against humanity, society, others, or oneself but against God.[2]
    Sin is inherited – (Romans 5:14-18)

b. Sickness – a disease that is defined as "disturbed or abnormal structure or physiological action in the living organisms as a whole or any of its parts."

c. Secular perspective of man:
    i. He is an animal.
    ii. Man is a one-part being - once he dies, he ceases to exist.
    iii. Man is a victim of his environment.
    iv. Man is neutral.
    v. Man's problem due to a chemical imbalance in his brain and body

d. Enemy of God - Colossians 1:21-22

e. Depraved – the natural man is totally depraved (Romans 1 & 3). He is instinctively in bondage to unrighteousness and wickedness and is incapable of rescuing himself (Romans 5 & 6).

f. **His "heart"** (thoughts, passions, affections, and desires) is naturally corrupt, desperately sick, deceitful, and wicked (Jeremiah 17:9; Matthew 12:34, 15:15-20; Mark 7:20-23).

g. Independent Worshipper – Romans 1:18-21

h. Under God's Wrath – Romans

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[1] Billy E. Simmons, "Sin," in *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, ed. Chad Brand, Charles Draper, and Archie England (Nashville: Holman, 2003), 1505.

[2] Walter A. Elwell and Philip Wesley Comfort, *Tyndale Bible Dictionary* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 2001), 1203.

III. What is the Solution to Man's Problem?

      a.   According to Secular Counselors/Psychology.
The Solution – Talk Therapy, Medication, Learn to love oneself, group therapy, coping skills, Cognitive Behavior Therapy, Thought-stopping techniques.

      b. According to Scripture – Jesus Christ

      What are the ingredients of the Gospel?

The Gospel: I Corinthians 15:1-4.

> Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you **received**, in which also you stand, **by which also you are saved**, *if* you **hold** fast **the word** which I preached to you, unless you **believed** in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that **Christ died for our sins** according to the Scriptures, and that *He was buried*, and that *He was raised on the third day* according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.

    i.   He must be regenerated. Regeneration means *"to impart life."* It is the act by which God imparts life to the believer, which means to be born again.

    ii. He must believe by faith that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (John 3:16; Romans 10:9). "Faith" means to trust and believe something has happened, is happening, or will happen and is not contingent upon tangible or visible evidence (Hebrews 11:1).

    iii. Through Christ, he is justified. Justification means declaring righteous the one who has faith in Jesus Christ. "*It involves the pardon and removal of all sins and the end of separation from God.*" [3]

    iv. Through Christ, he is sanctified - "Sanctification" means to be "set apart" by God for a specific purpose. Since we have been justified, our purpose now in life is to please God by being Christ-like (Rom. 8:29; 1 Cor. 6:11-12). The indwelling presence and power of the Holy Spirit enables him to understand and obey God's Word. (1 Cor. 2:12-13)

    v. Through Christ, he has received the gift of everlasting Life (Romans 6:23).

IV. Man's Purpose in Life

According to the World –

      a.   The American Dream or Infinite Survival

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[3] Paul P. Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology* (Chicago: Moody, 1989), 233.

  b. To Exercise Freedom of Self:
    Autonomous
    Self-Knowledge/Taught
    Self-Sufficiency

According to Scripture

Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him. (2 Cor. 5:9)

  a. How can we glorify the Father (Matt. 3:16-17)?

  b. We Glorify the Father by Conformity to the Image of Christ (Rom. 8:28-29).
    i. What kind of person is Christ?
    ii. How did he respond to the Father (Luke 22:42; 1 Pet. 2:21-23)?
    iii. How did he relate to people (Matt. 22:37-39, 25:35-40)?
    iv. How did he relate to his enemies (Lk. 6:35-38)?
    v. How did he respond to suffering (1 Pet. 2:21-22)

  c. Positional Righteousness (Rom. 8:1-3; 1 Cor. 6:9-11).

  d. Practical Righteousness (Gal. 5:22-25; James 3:13-21).

  e. Our purpose is to reflect the image of God as seen in the person/character of Jesus Christ.

V. Man's Responsibility to Live by Faith and Embrace the Attributes of God

And without faith it is impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and *that* He is a rewarder of those who seek Him. (Heb. 11:6)

  a. God's nature cannot be divorced from his character. His nature in terms of who he is and his character in what he does are synonymous.
    i. What is faith?
    ii. How does man please God?

Faith is complete confidence in the righteous character of God that fosters trust and hope in situations and circumstances that foster distress and despair. - Anonymous

  b. He who comes to God must believe that he is what? Here are just a few:
    i. Sovereign – God is in control of all things (Eccl. 7:13-14)
    ii. Supreme Authority – He is the ruler of all. He is first and foremost before all things. We exist for his glory (1 Chron. 29:11-12; Rom. 11:36; Col. 1:15-19)

  iii. Loving – God's love is unconditional. "It is not simply that God loves, but he is love itself."[4] Love is God's attribute and nature.

  iv. Forgiving – God pardons the iniquities, cancels the debt owed by sin, and casts them into the depths of the sea (Ps. 103:1-14; Mic. 7:19; 1 Jn. 1:8-9)

  v. Goodness - This speaks to the perfection of God's nature. God is good, and he does good. All of humanity and creatures of the earth are recipients of God's goodness (Ps. 52:1; 1 Jn. 1:5)

  vi. Longsuffering – God is not quick to retaliate or punish. He puts up with and tolerates the imperfections of his children (Num. 14:18; Ps. 86:15)

  vii. Gracious – Grace is God's eternal and absolute free favor, manifested in the "giving and granting" of spiritual and eternal blessings to the guilty and the unworthy.[5] (Eph. 2:8-9; 2 Cor. 12:9)

  viii. Merciful – God does not always give people the punishment that they deserve (2 Sam. 24:14-25)

  ix. Faithful – He is true to his word. God keeps his promises no matter what (Ps. 36:5; Lam. 3:22-23)

  x. Sufficient – God alone is enough and doing enough in our lives. He supplies all our needs. Therefore, we can find complete satisfaction in God alone (Ps. 145:17-21; Matt. 6:32-33; Phil. 4:18; 2 Cor. 12:9-10)

 c. Knowledge of God is insufficient without embracing what we know (Jas. 1:14-19).

 d. God is a rewarder of those who seek him –
  i. The reward is God Himself (Gen. 15:1)
  ii. The Fruit of Spirit (Gal. 5:22-24)
  iii. Blessings (Ps. 128:1-4)
  iv. Mercy and Goodness (Ps. 23:6)
  v. Abundant life

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 e. But how does one seek God?
  i. To seek God Habitually (Ps. 1:2-3)
  ii. Search and study his Word (Ps. 119:15))
  iii. Bible Studies (2 Tim. 2:15)
  iv. Prayer (Pr. 1:23; 1 Thess. 5:16-18)
  v. Sermons (Romans 10:14-15)
   vi. Corporate Worship (Col. 3:14-15)

Conclusion: A foundational principle of biblical counseling necessary for practical ministry is helping believers understand their nature and responsibility to God. What one

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[4] Arthur W. Pink, *The Attributes of God* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1975), 98.

[5] Pink, *Attributes of God*, 84.

believes about God directly dictates how he views himself and lives his life. Teaching converts to embrace God's attributes is important in evangelism and making disciples.

Application Questions:

1. Who or what is man according to the world, and how does the world's definition of man compare to what the Bible says?

2. What is the world's perspective of the source and solution to man's problem versus what God says in his word?

3. How does one's view of God affect how he views himself and his life?

4. What is our purpose in life according to the culture?

Objective: This session aims to help participants understand Biblical Hope and the sufficiency of Scripture, which are essential ingredients for Christian living and foundational principles of biblical counseling in helping others find encouragement and comfort as they suffer in the world. Participants will realize that any hope that the world gives is false hope. Teaching converts to embrace, by faith, biblical hope and the sufficiency of Scripture will impact how they respond to life problems, unfavorable circumstances, situations, and events.

> **Text:** For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. **(Romans 15:4)**

BIBLICAL HOPE

1. The Need for Hope

"Now faith is the assurance of things **hoped** for, the conviction of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1)

  a. What is Biblical Hope**?**

  i. **HOPE** – An expectation or belief in the fulfillment of something desired. Present hurts and uncertainty over the future create the constant need for hope.[6]
  ii. Hope is a "confident expectation, ranging in degree from an ordinary desire felt with eager anticipation to a defining characteristic of those who seek God and experience his grace."[7]
  iii. Biblical Hope is complete confidence in God's mercy, wisdom, grace, Omnipresence, Omnipotence, goodness, faithfulness, lovingkindness, Justice, righteousness, and sovereignty.

  b. How Can One Have Hope?

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in *hope* of the glory of God. And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, *hope*; and *hope* does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. (Rom. 5:1-5)

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[6] Elwell and Comfort, *Tyndale Bible Dictionary*, 611.

[7] Allen C. Myers, *The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 500.

i.   The Bible is our instruction manual for life. It helps us to endure suffering and provides encouragement so we can have hope (Rom. 15:4)

ii.   The only way to obtain genuine Hope is through Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit.

iii.   Biblical hope is inseparable, therefore, from faith in God.[8]

iv.   A Christian's hope is not contingent upon the unfavorable events, trials, and circumstances he experiences.

v.   Biblical scholar Paul Achtemeier stated, "The fact that hope appears as part of the triadic formula 'faith, love, and hope' not only in 1 Thessalonians but also in 1 Corinthians 13:13, and somewhat more loosely in Galatians 5:5–6, suggests that it (hope) belongs to that process of new life in Christ that begins with faith and is fulfilled at the consummated salvation event of the last day (2 Cor. 5:5)." [9]

c. How Can One Lose Hope?

i.   One cannot lose salvation because he is sealed until the day of redemption.

ii.   A person loses Hope when he allows trials, tragedies, tribulations, and circumstances to drain his Hope.

iii.   A person who loses hope no longer has complete confidence in God's mercy, wisdom, grace, Omnipresence, Omnipotence, goodness, faithfulness, lovingkindness, Justice, righteousness, and sovereignty.

iv.   It is a failure to yield oneself to trust in the promises of God.

v.   He has allowed himself to be controlled by living a feel-oriented life of sin.

d. How Can One Regain It?

i.   Confess one's lack of faith and hopelessness as sin before God.

ii.   Counting on God's forgiveness (1 Jn. 1;8-9).

iii.   Trusting in the attributes and promises of God will help us to regain Hope even in the most challenging circumstances (Ps. 37:5, 46:1; Pr. 3:5-8; Isa. 26:3)

e. What Is the Difference Between Biblical Hope and Worldly Hope?

i.   Biblical hope, more specifically, *is the confidence that what God has done for us in the past guarantees our participation in what*

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[8] R. V. G. Tasker, "Hope," in *New Bible Dictionary*, ed. D. R. W. Wood, J. D. Douglas, and N. Hillyer (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1996), 480.

[9] Paul J. Achtemeier, *Harper's Bible Dictionary* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985), 403.

> *God will do in the future. Biblical hope contrasts with the world's definition of hope as "a feeling that what is wanted will happen."*[10]

    ii.   Hope distinguishes the Christian from the unbeliever, who has no hope (Eph. 2:12; 1 Thess. 4:13).[11]

    iii.   Any hope the world gives is false (Pr. 13:12; Rom. 8:24-25).

    iv.   Worldly Hope focuses on worldliness and the pleasures of life (lust of the flesh), material possessions (the lust of eyes), and how one is viewed by others (the pride of life).

    v.   Man's natural tendency is to search for hope in things that provide a temporary sense of hope, including drugs, alcohol, food, sex, caffeine, cigarettes, masturbation, the love of others, exercise, losing weight, and all sorts of sensualities.

    vi.   The pleasures of life are temporary.

    vii.   One who places hope in what feels good may end up serving the very things he once used to serve himself.[12]

    viii.   A man who seeks hope in material things ends up miserable.

For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. (Romans 15:4)

No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it. (Cor. 10:13)

2. The Sufficiency of Scripture Alone

    a.   Secular View of the Sufficiency of Scripture –

        i.   The theories and presuppositions of modern psychology were developed by men such as Sigmund Freud, Burrhus Skinner, and Carl Rogers. These men believed that Scripture was altogether irrelevant to reality and man. Freud and Skinner were atheists who rejected the existence of God, and Rogers was an agnostic who believed that if there is a God, then it is impossible to know him.

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[10] Burt Dominy, "Hope," in Brand, Draper, and England, *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, 1505.

[11] Ronald F. Youngblood, F. F. Bruce, and R. K. Harrison, eds., *Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995), s.v. "Hope."

[12] Edward T. Welch, *Addictions: A Banquet in the Grave* (Phillipsburg, NJ: 2001), 51.

        ii.   Some secular counselors hold to the presupposition that Scripture alone is insufficient for identifying where man is in terms of his reality, who man is in terms of purpose, understanding man's problems, and determining what man needs.

        iii.   Most Christian counselors are Christian psychologists who believe we should integrate methodologies of psychology with the Bible.

   b. Biblical View of the Sufficiency of Scripture

        i.   Scripture is Sufficient – The Apostle Paul underscores the complete sufficiency of Scripture in 2 Tim. 3:16-17, identifying four ways God says that His word is sufficient for man's every spiritual need.[13].

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. 3:16-17)

        ii.   All Scripture – All that is written in the canon of Scripture, every passage of Scripture.

        iii.   Inspired by God – God-breathed.

        iv.   In Profitable – advantageous, beneficial, and useful
For doctrine – teaching the *ignorant dogmatic* truths they cannot otherwise know.[14]
For reproof – Refutation; convicting those in error.
For correction – To correct faults and make improvements.
For training in righteousness – instruction and disciples that lead to conformity to Christ.
For what purpose – so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

   c. Scripture is Superior to the Human Counsel (Ps. 1:1-3)

   d. Scripture is Sufficient for Life Change (Ps. 19:7-8)

   e. Scripture is Sufficient and has Great Value (Ps. 19:9-11)

   f. Scripture is Sufficient for Mental Soundness (Isa. 26:3; Phil. 4:6-7)

   g. Bible examples of people who experienced mental soundness during unfavorable circumstances, situations, and events:

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[13] John MacArthur, *Our Sufficiency in Christ* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1998), 123.

[14] Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos, 1997), 2:427.

       i.   Job – after losing everything (Job 2:7-10)
      ii.   Habakkuk – after being disappointed with God, gained mental soundness (Hab. 3:17-19)
    iii.   Joseph – after being mistreated by his brothers, experienced mental soundness (Gen. 50:20-21)
     iv.   Ruth – after losing her husband, clings to God with mental soundness

h. Scripture is Sufficient for Addressing Man's Problem – the Heart

       i.   Scripture recognizes the condition of man's heart (Jer, 17:9)
      ii.   Scripture exposes the thoughts and intentions of man's heart (Heb. 4:12)
    iii.   Scripture transforms the heart of man, which equates to a transformed life (Ps. 51:10; Ezek. 36:26; Eph. 4:22:24)

Conclusion: Biblical Hope and the sufficiency of Scripture are essential ingredients for Christian living and foundational principles of biblical counseling. They help others find encouragement and comfort as they suffer in the world. Any hope that the world gives is false hope. As disciples who make disciples, the church must teach and encourage members to embrace faith, biblical hope, and the sufficiency of Scripture. Doing so will help Christians respond to life problems, unfavorable circumstances, situations, and events with hope while maintaining mental soundness.

Application Questions:

1. In what ways is the hope that the world gives, in reality, false hope?

2. Is God's Word alone sufficient for life's problems, or should we integrate psychology and the Bible? Why or why not?

3. Are the precepts of popular psychology and the Bible equally important in seeking comfort/relief in human suffering? Why or why not?

4. According to secular counseling, what is the source of mental soundness versus what Scripture teaches?

Week 3: Understanding Your Identity in Christ

Objective: This session aims to help participants understand the blessing of our identity in Christ, a foundational principle of biblical counseling is helping disciples glorify God by conforming to the image of his son. Participants will realize that one's identity is not determined by one's choice, as the world says, but our identity is based upon what the Scriptures declare us to be. Once we profess faith in Christ, we can enjoy the blessings of our new identity in Christ in the community of believers. Understanding the nature of man, embracing the attributes of God, biblical hope, and the sufficiency of Scripture compels one to have a proper of self.

> **Text:** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. **(Eph. 1:1)**

1. **You have a new Relationship with God, through Christ.**

   Romans 5:1-2: Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, **2** through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.

   a. You are Justified by faith (v. 5:1a).

   b. You have Peace with God (v. 5:1b).

   c. You are a Recipient of God's Grace through Christ (v. 5:2a).

   d. You have Hope of the Glory of God through Christ (v. 5:2b).

2. **You Must Realize the Blessings of Being in Christ** (Eph. 1:3-14).

   A writer with Thomas Nelson Publishers stated that Paul's important phrase "in Christ" (or its equivalent) appears about thirty-five times more than in any other New Testament book.[15]

   a. Blessed (v. 3) – shown us distinguished favor; to meet our needs; act kindly towards; to speak well of.

   b. Chosen (v. 4) – to select, elect, pick out, or choose.

   c. Predestined (v. 5) – to decide beforehand; foreordained.

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[15] *Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps & Charts: Old and New Testaments*, rev. and upd. ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1996), Eph 1:3–14, Logos.

d. Adopted (v. 5) – to relationally accept one as a biological son or daughter with the same privileges as an heir.

e. Accepted (v. 6) – to greatly favor; to show favor, and grace; to show honor; approve of; to endorse, welcome, and confirm.

f. Redeemed (v. 7) – to set free by a ransom, the calling of captives from captivity by payment.

g. Forgiven (v. 7) – to pardon or cancel a debt owed; show mercy towards one who deserves punishment.

h. Enlightened (vv. 8, 9) – wisdom, understanding, judgment, discernment.

i. Given an Inheritance (v. 11) – Heirs of God; recipients of a father's estate; Birthright.

j. Sealed (v. 13) – secured; lock proof; airtight; fixed; sealed by the Holy Spirit

k. Assured (v. 14) – Guaranteed: The Holy Spirit is a downpayment that has been satisfied, settled, and sure.

*Our identity in Christ is positional sanctification.

3. **You are a New Person in Christ**

2 Cor. 5:17 (NKJV) – Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

a. Being a new person is conditional to being in Christ (conversion)

b. Before Christ, you had a sinful nature, but in Christ, you have the propensity to sin and the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.

c. *Old things have passed away* – Constable stated that the apostle Paul was stressing the elements of discontinuity ("old things passed away") perspectives, prejudices, misconceptions, enslavements, etc. (cf. Gal. 2:20).[16]

d. *All things have become new* – progressive sanctification begins.

e. Progressive Sanctification –

f. In Christ, you have a new view of:
   i. God and His Word

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[16] Tom Constable, *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible* (Garland, TX: Galaxie, 2003), 2 Cor 5:17.

        ii.   Self
      iii.   Relationships with others
      iv.   Suffering

Conclusion: Our identity in Christ is a foundational principle of biblical counseling and is essential for helping disciples glorify God by conforming to the image of his son as they suffer in the world. Once we profess faith in Christ, we can enjoy the blessings of our new identity in Christ in the community of believers. Understanding the nature of man, embracing the attributes of God, relying on biblical hope, and having the sufficiency of Scripture compels one to have a proper self.

Application Questions:

1. How does your view of God affect your view of self?

2. How does your view of God affect how you relate to others?

3. How does your view of God affect how you respond to unfavorable circumstances, situations, and events?

4. What is the world's view of one's identity?

5. How does the world's view regarding one's identity differ from what Scripture teaches?

6. Can a person be born a homosexual? Why or why not?

7. Can a person inherit drunkenness from his great-grandfather because it is in his DNA?

8. Why is the foundational principle of our identity in Christ so crucial in practical ministry in making disciples?

Week 4: Relationships: Loving and Serving Others

Objective: This session aims to help participants understand how believers should function in relationships with others. Loving and serving others are foundational principles of biblical counseling and essential ingredients for building relationships. Teaching converts how to love their neighbor (including their enemies) will cultivate God-honoring relationships that reflect Christ's image and emulate his relationship with others.

> **Text:** So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on 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. Beyond all these things, *put on* love, which is the perfect bond of unity. **(Col. 3:12-14)**

1. **You Have Been Chosen by God to Love Others** (Col. 3:12-14).

    a. You Have Been Chosen by God (Col. 3:12a)

        i.   Chosen – Elected by God.
        ii. Holy – Set apart by God.
        iii. Beloved – Recipients of God's love.

    b. You Have an Obligation to Love Others (Col. 3:12-13)

    c. Put on a heart of:

        i.   Compassion – showing sensitivity to those in need; to be merciful.
        ii.   Kindness – nice; thoughtful of others; pleasant attitude
        iii. Humility – thinking lowly of oneself.
        iv.   Gentleness – not behaving harshly or arrogantly but being considerate of others.
        v.   Patience – self-restraint under provocation.
        vi.   Bearing With One Another – putting up with the imperfections and faults of others
        vii. Forgiving Each Other – involves not holding a grudge or grievance but letting go of it immediately.[17]
        viii. Beyond All *Put On* Love – Unconditional love, agape love; always seeking to do what is in the best interest of others.
        ix.   Love is the Perfect Bond Of Unity – the adhesive that holds relationships together.

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[17] Richard Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. John's Revelation* (1943; repr., Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1963), 172.

John 15:12-13: "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends"

2. You Have Been Chosen by God to Love Your Enemies (Lk. 6:35-36).

But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil *men*. **36** Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. **(Luke 6:35-36)**

    a. Love – Unconditional Love

    b. Do Good - means to do what is right, honorable, commendable, and well for the benefit of another.

    c. Lend – To give to meet a need.

    d. Love, Do Good, and Give – expecting nothing in return.

    e. Be Merciful – Withhold punishment that is due.

    f. Imitate the Father – who is merciful to evil and ungrateful men such as we were.

3. You Have Been Chosen by God to Exhibit Humility (Phil. 2:3-4).

Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind, regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. (Phil. 2:3-4)

    a. Do nothing from Selfishness or empty conceit.

        i. Selfishness or Contention: The word contention refers to any acts or antagonizing behaviors driven by self-interest, selfish ambition, or personal gain.
        ii. Empty conceit or Vainglory - prideful, arrogant, boastful, and having an inflated view of one's importance, gifts, abilities, intellect, and seeks the praise, acknowledgment, recognition, or honor of others.

    b. With Humility of Mind—This term means having a lowly mind, viewing oneself from God's perspective, and thinking of oneself as insignificant compared to God's greatness.

c. Humility is the lowliness of spirit and mind: "For a sinner, Humility involves the confession of his sin and a deep realization of his unworthiness to receive God's marvelous grace."[18]

d. How Should Humility look in practice in terms of how You Relate to Others?

    i. Viewing others as more important means considering another person more valuable than yourself; you should see others as worthy of more consideration than you already give yourself.

    ii. Avoid Being Only Concerned about yourself—your wants, needs, ideas, opinions, or things that you desire or deem important.

    iii. Be Concerned about the interest of Others – Their wants, needs, ideas, opinions, or things that they desire or deem important.

4. You Have Been Chosen by God to Forgive others (Lk. 17:3-10).

3 Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. **4** And if he sins against you seven times a day, and returns to you seven times, saying, 'I repent,' forgive him." **5** The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" **6** And the Lord said, "If you had faith like a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and be planted in the sea'; and it would obey you. **7** "Which of you, having a slave plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come immediately and sit down to eat'? **8** But will he not say to him, 'Prepare something for me to eat, and *properly* clothe yourself and serve me while I eat and drink; and afterward you may eat and drink'? **9** He does not thank the slave because he did the things which were commanded, does he? **10** So you too, when you do all the things which are commanded you, say, 'We are unworthy slaves; we have done *only* that which we ought to have done.'" (Luke 17:3-10)

a. Your Forgiveness of Others Should be Unlimited, especially towards those Who are Repentant (vv. 3-4)

b. Your Ability to Forgive is not contingent Upon an amount of Faith (vv. 5-6).

c. Your Forgiveness of Others in an Act of Obedience to Christ (vv. 7-9).

d. You Must Forgive Others as a Result of Recognizing Your Own Unworthiness of God's Forgiveness towards you (v. 10)

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[18] Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG, 2000), s.v. "Humility."

e. Four Promises of Forgiveness (Matt. 6:12; 1 Cor. 13:5; Eph. 4:32):[19]
    i. I will not dwell on this incident.
    ii. I will not bring this incident up and use it against you.
    iii. I will not talk to others about this incident.
    iv. I will not allow this incident to stand between us or hinder our personal relationship.

Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. **(Gal. 6:1-3)**

5. **You Have Been Chosen by God to Serve Others (1 Pet. 4:10).**

   a. "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. (**1 Peter 4:10**)

   b. Gift – God has bestowed upon every believer, by grace, at least one gift.
   c. List of Some Spiritual Gifts (Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12:28-30; Eph. 4:11).

      i. Prophecy
      ii. Serving
      iii. Teaching
      iv. Exhortation
      v. Leading
      vi. Showing Mercy
      vii. Helps
      viii. Administration
      ix. Pastor
      x. Evangelism

   d. What is God's reason for bestowing us with spiritual gifts?

Answer: So we can serve others – "serve" means to minister.

"The greatest among you shall be your servant." **(Matthew 23:11)**
Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality. (Rom. 12:10-13)

Conclusion: Loving and serving others are foundational principles of biblical counseling and essential ingredients for building relationships. Teaching members that we have been

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[19] Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, Strong's Greek 5012.

chosen by God to love others (including our enemies), to walk in humility, grant forgiveness to those who wrong us, and serve one another will cultivate God-honoring relationships that reflect the image of Christ and his church.

Application Questions:

1. Some believe "you cannot love others until you learn to love yourself first." What are your thoughts about this statement?

2. What makes it difficult for us to love our enemies?

3. According to First John 4:19-21, what is the evidence of one's love for God?

4. What would you say to someone who says, "I can forgive, but I cannot forget?"

5. What do you believe is the most common sin problem in broken relationships?

6. What keeps some people from serving others?

Week 5: How to Endure Suffering?

Objective: This session aims to help participants understand how to respond to suffering. Many people come to Christ or seek counseling because they are experiencing unfavorable situations, circumstances, or events. No one is exempt from suffering. Teaching converts how to respond to and endure suffering are foundational principles of biblical counseling and essential ingredients for making disciples. Believers can experience hope and learn to rejoice as they suffer in the world.

> **Text:** And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast [c]about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with [d]insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong. **(2 Cor. 12:9-10)**

1. God Does Not Take Pleasure in Our Suffering

For if He causes grief, Then He will have compassion According to His abundant lovingkindness. For He does not afflict willingly Or grieve the sons of men. **(Lam. 3:32-33**)

    a. What is the cause and effect in Lamentations 3:32?

    b. The writer says that God will have compassion according to what?

    c. In verse, what is God's reason for having compassion for those who are grieving? (cf. Ezek. 33:11)

2. The Reason for Suffering

    a. We live in a fallen world because of inherited sin (Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 15:21).

    b. Jesus said we would suffer (Jn. 16:33).

    c. The Apostle Paul suffered (2 Cor. 11:24-29).

    d. Followers of Jesus will encounter suffering (2 Tim. 3:12).

    e. Sometimes, God uses Suffering as a Form of Disciple (Heb. 12:10).

3. Suffering is a Common Reality, but God is Faithful

No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with

the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it. (**1 Cor. 10:13**)

    a. A Temptation is "a trial, temptation, or putting to the test and is spoken of by persons only."[20]

        i.   Internal temptations are prompting to do right or wrong. Give an example.
        ii. External temptations are things that happen to you that are out of your control (Jas. 1:2-3). Give an example.
        iii. Whether temptations are internal or external, they are common to man.

    b. What does it mean, "but God is faithful?"

    c. What is the proof of God's faithfulness in 1 Corinthians 10:13?

4. The Purpose of Suffering:

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to become* conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren. **(Rom. 8:28-29)**

    a. According to Romans 8:28-29, God causes all things together for what purpose?

    b. What is God's Desired Outcome?

For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth; and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting *Himself* to Him who judges righteously. **(1 Pet. 2:21-23)**

    c. Peter says, *for you have been called for this purpose*. What is the purpose that Peter is referring to in this text?

5. What Should Be Our Response to Suffering?

    a. Remember Jesus Can Sympathize with Your Suffering (Heb. 4:114-16)

    b. God is in Control of Our Lives, and We Must Accept What He Allows

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[20] Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary*, s.v. "Temptation."

Eccl. 7:13-14: Consider the work of God, For who is able to straighten what He has bent? **14** In the day of prosperity be happy, But in the day of adversity consider— God has made the one as well as the other So that man will not discover anything *that will be* after him.

    c.   Cast all You Cares Upon Him

1 Pet. 5:7, 10: 6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, **7** casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you. **10** After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen *and* establish you. **11** To Him *be* dominion forever and ever. Amen.

    d.   Be Mindful of the Blessings of Suffering

James 1:2-4: Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

    e.   Remember that you are Alone in Your Suffering.

Psalms 34:17-19: *The righteous* cry, and the Lord hears And delivers them out of all their troubles. The Lord is near to the brokenhearted And saves those who are crushed in spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, But the Lord delivers him out of them all.

Psalms 46:1 – God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble.

    f.   Rejoice, Don't Worry, Pray, and Be Thankful (Phil. 4:4-8)

Phil. 4:4-7: Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentle *spirit* be known to all men. The Lord is near. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

    g.   Remember that God's Grace is Sufficient in Your Suffering (2 Cor. 12:9-10).

2 Cor. 12:9-10: And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. **10** Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

h. Model Jesus' example of how to respond to suffering by, ongoingly, entrusting oneself to God (1 Pet. 2:22-23)

i. Always Remember, You Can Find Comfort in the Community of Believers (1 Thess. 5:11-15)

Conclusion: Many people come to Christ or seek counseling because they are experiencing unfavorable situations, circumstances, or events. No one is exempt from suffering. Teaching converts how to respond to and endure suffering is a foundational principle of biblical counseling. Disciples of Christ can experience hope and learn to rejoice as they suffer in the world. Salvation and deliverance are the good news of the gospel.

Application Questions:

1. What are some things that the world offers to relieve those who are suffering?

2. How does the world's remedy for suffering differ from the Bible?

3. Does a person's environment or difficult life experiences determine his behavior? Why or why not?

Example: "An abused person abuses others," or a person says, "I behave the way that I do because I have been dealt a bad hand in life, and I am a victim of life circumstances."

4. What are some ways (including attitudes/emotions/behaviors) that people respond to suffering?

5. What is the world's view regarding common negative responses to suffering, and how does the world's view compare with the biblical view?

Week 6: Discipling Others through Practical Ministry by Utilizing the 8 I's of Biblical Counseling

Objective: This session aims to teach participants how to disciple others using the 8 I's method of biblical counseling. This counseling method consists of eight elements that church leaders and members can utilize to promote true biblical change. The 8 I's capture the foundational principles of biblical counseling that can be used to make disciples because they cultivate interpersonal relationships. This method facilitates discipleship because true discipleship occurs through interpersonal relationships as we engage in one another's lives.

Note: Who is called to counsel? Every Christian is called to counsel one another to some degree.

> **Col. 3:16** – 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 [d]with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

> **Text:** We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone. **(1 Thess. 5:14)**

> A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." **(Jn. 13:34-34)**

1. **Involvement – Connecting with and Caring about the person's struggle** (1 Pet. 3:8).

   To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit (1 Pet. 3:8)

   a. Involvement is accomplished by creating an atmosphere of a loving, caring, and honest relationship with the counselee (Rom. 15:1-2)

   b. Relate the counselee's pain and struggles to your own life experiences.

   c. Involvement requires you to become involved (connected) with the counselee as a person and their feelings, desires, heartaches, situation, circumstances, pain, and suffering (Col. 3:12).

   d. The Involvement element requires weeping with those who weep and mourning with those who mourn (Rom. 12:15-16).

Practical example:

I am saddened to hear about what you are going through. My heart goes out to you. I can never say that I know how you feel, but I have had similar experiences in my own life. It is quite a difficult and painful time for you right now. I am here to help you.

2. Inspiration – Offer Hope and Encouragement

Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing. (1 Thess. 5:11)

a. Inspiration is a key element of biblical counseling. It refers to aspiring to and encouraging the counselee to have an attitude and feeling of biblical hope in order to produce biblical change.

b. When people reach out for help, it is usually because they have lost hope because they have lost focus.

c. The inspiration element of counseling focuses on helping the counselee realize that there is hope and that they are not defeated. (Ps. 73, Pr. 10:28, Rom. 5:2, 8:28-39, 15:12, 2 Cor. 4:8-18, Heb. 6:19-20, 1 John 3:2, 1 Thess. 1:3)

Practical Example:

I realize that what you are experiencing is very difficult. But I want you to know that there is hope for you. You can make it through this. Why? Because God loves you. He knows and cares about what you are going through, and so do I. You are not alone. So, I want to lock arms with you and walk you through the process of healing and restoration. I want to weep with you, but I am also going to rejoice with you. I am here for you.

3. Inventory – Data Gathering: Gaining an Understanding of the Person Life Context (Pr. 18:13, 20:5)

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

Pr. 20:5 – A plan in the heart of a man is *like* deep water, But a man of understanding draws it out.

Acronym for data gathering – PREACHD.

a. **P**hysical – How would the person describe his physical health? How much exercise does she get? How are they sleeping? What is the loss of appetite? What is the weight gain or loss?

b. **R**esources/**R**elationships – how often do they read their Bible? What are some of their favorite TV shows? How would they describe their relationships with others, including a father and mother, spouse, in dating, with siblings, family, and others?

c. **E**motions – how are they feeling emotionally and spiritually? How do they feel about what is happening in their life?

d. **A**ctions – what have they done or doing about the problem? How are they responding to the issue?

e. **C**ognitive – What do they think about the problem? What do they believe about the issue? What are their thoughts about what is going on?

f. **H**istorical – how were they raised by both parents or single parents? Describe their childhood. Ask the person to provide the Readers Digest version of their life.

g. **D**esires – what are their desires? What is it that they need or want? If they could make a wish, what would it be?

Point: The Inventory element of biblical counseling is important because it assures the other person that you are interested in and cares about them as a person. It is essential to seek to understand the person's life story/context. More damage is done by Christians who have good intentions and offer help to those who are hurting but make assumptions and judgments prematurely before gathering all the facts. This approach can damage the credibility of the Word of God and the church's ability to provide adequate help to those in need.

4. **Interpretation – Accurately Identifying the Root of Problem(s)**

    Pr. 20:5 – A plan in the heart of a man is *like* deep water, But a man of understanding draws it out.

    a. The Interpretation element involves evaluating the data gathered on the Inventory level to accurately identify the root cause of the problem from a biblical perspective.

    b. Proper Instructions to promote biblical change can only be given if proper Interpretation has taken place.

    c. Proper interpretation requires that the counselor take the information acquired during the Inventory level and make biblical comparisons.

d. The counselor should compare the counselee's behavior, responses, desires, thoughts, attitudes, theology, feelings, and words with God's standards or the life of Christ. (Ps. 119:25, Pr. 20:5, Isa. 32:4, Jn. 7:51, 1 Cor. 2:11)

Practical Example:

Thank you so much for sharing your heart with me. I have carefully evaluated the information that you provided, and based on what you have said, it appears that you are with _____ (fill in the blank: depression, anger, grief, hopelessness, unforgiveness, anxiety, fear, worry). Always ask the person if they agree with your assessment. Discerning a potential problem is insufficient without affirmation.

5. **Instruction** – Giving instructions to help the counselee view their issues through the lens of Scripture and use biblical applications to overcome their problems.

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

a. This element of counseling involves discipleship.

b. Instruction for application must be based solely on the Word of God. Anything else is simply giving your advice.

c. Effective Instructions can only be given if the counselor has a correct biblical interpretation of the problems. (Ps. 18:1-2, 13, 19:7-11, 119:105, Pr. 1:2-5, 2 Tim. 3:16-17, 2 Pet. 1:3)

Practical Example:

*The good news is that God's Word addresses and has answers for your _____ (*fill in the blank: depression, anger, grief, hopelessness, unforgiveness, anxiety, fear, and worry). *You can overcome this issue because God's Word is our instruction manual about life and living so that we can endure and find encouragement in the Scripture to experience victory (*Rom. 15:4).

6. **Inducement –** Gaining a Commitment from the Person to Do what God Would Have Him to Do.

Eph. 4:1 – Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,

a. The Inducement element of counseling focuses on biblical change by motivating the counselee to repent of unloving thoughts, desires, words, and actions.

b. The counselee is also encouraged to commit to becoming obedient to God's Word and to make the Bible applicable to their lives.

c. True biblical change starts with confession and true repentance (Rom. 6:12-14, 8:1-5; 1 Cor. 6:9).

Practical Example:

Do you really want peace? Do you want to experience freedom and victory over this issue? Are you committed to doing what God would have you to do? God has given you the power to change. The apostle Paul wrote,

for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure (Phil. 2:13).

7. **Implementation** – Assigning Relevant Homework to Promote Biblical Change.

Matt. 7:24-27: "Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. **25** And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and *yet* it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. **26** Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. **27** The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell—and great was its fall."

a. The Implementation element is to help the counselee practice biblical principles relevant to their problems.

b. This element helps a person become a doer of the word and not just a hearer. It answers the "HOW" question.

c. This element is the "On-the-job training" segment of counseling. (Matt. 7:21-23, Lk. 11:28, Js. 1:21-25, 2:14-26, 4:17, 1 Jn. 2:3-4, 3:7, 24)

Practical Examples:

Six areas of homework could be assigned based on the Interpretation stage of the counseling process:

    i.   Hope Homework – for Hopelessness (Romans 15:4, 13)
    ii.   Theological Homework – those who have a distorted view of God that consequently leads to a distorted view of life situations, circumstances, and events (Romans 1:18-26)
    iii. Self-Awareness Homework – Correct /proper view of self (Romans 12:3)

     iv.   Embracing God Homework – instead of idols/ desires, pleasures, affections, passions. (Romans 1:18-26; 2 Tim. 3:1-5)
     v.   Action Oriented Homework – Habit patterns (Eph. 2:1-10)
     vi.   Relationship Homework – Repairing, reconciliation, and restoration (Romans 12:14-21; Eph. 4:1-6; Col. 3:16).

8. Integration is the point when a person has successfully overcome their problem and is ready to be restored to serving others in the church.

    a.   The Integration element of effective counseling focuses on promoting biblical change through coaching until the counselee has abandoned the old way of life and adopted the new way of life in the likeness of Christ.

    b.   Integration occurs when he/she begins to exhibit evidence that there is no longer any need for further counseling and that he/she has been restored to usefulness within the body of Christ.

    c.   This segment of effective counseling is where the counselee is exhibiting the fruit of genuine biblical change. (Rom. 6:1-4, 8:2-4, 12:4-16, Eph. 4:1-16, 1 Tim. 4:7, 2 Tim. 3:16, Heb. 5:14).

Conclusion: The 8 I's capture the foundational principles of biblical counseling that can be used to make disciples because they cultivate interpersonal relationships. This method facilitates discipleship because true discipleship occurs through interpersonal relationships as we engage in one another's lives

IMPORTANT NOTE: Those who are trained in biblical counselors use all 8 I's in the counseling process, particularly 6, 7 and 8. Although those who are skilled in biblical counseling employ all 8 I's, every ministry leader should, at least, be able to use Involvement, Inspiration, Inventory, Interpretation, and Instruction in practical ministry of making disciples. Ministry leaders should teach these principles to those who serve under their leadership. Doing so will increase the effectiveness of your ministry to serve those, (including members of your team), who need help, hope and encouragement as they suffer in the world.

Summary of the 6-Week Curriculum

Week 1: The Nature of Man and the Attributes of God – Making disciples of Christ involves helping believers understand their instinctive nature and their responsibility to God. As a result of this lesson, participants will understand the necessity of recognizing man's condition, the importance of evangelism, and the significance of embracing God's attributes, which are foundational principles of biblical counseling essential to practical ministry.

Week 2: Hope and the Sufficiency of Scripture Alone – Making disciples of Christ involves teaching converts to embrace, by faith, biblical hope and the sufficiency of Scripture will impact how they respond to life problems, unfavorable circumstances, situations, and events. Biblical hope and the belief in the sufficiency of Scripture are foundational principles of biblical counseling essential to practical ministry

Week 3: Understanding Your Identity in Christ – Making disciples involves helping believers understand the blessing of their identity in Christ, a foundational principle of biblical counseling is helping disciples glorify God by conforming to the image of his son.

Week 4: Relationships: Loving and Serving Others – Making disciples of Christ involves teaching believers how to love their neighbor (including their enemies) as themselves. Open expressions of agape love will cultivate God-honoring relationships that reflect Christ's image and emulate his relationship with others. Loving others is a foundational principle of biblical counseling essential to practical ministry

Week 5: How to Endure Suffering – Teaching converts how to respond to and endure suffering are foundational principles of biblical counseling and essential ingredients for making disciples.

Week 6: Discipling Others through Practical Ministry by Employing the 8 I's of Biblical Counseling – teach participants how to disciple others using the 8 I's method of biblical counseling. This counseling method consists of eight elements that church leaders and members can utilize to promote true biblical change which is the foundational principle of biblical counseling essential to practical ministry

APPENDIX 3

CURRICULUM RUBRIC AND EVALUATION RESULTS

      The following curriculum evaluation rubric was used by an expert panel of at least three certified biblical counselors who have completed Good Hope's 2.5-year biblical counseling training curriculum and are certified by Good Hope as biblical counselors. The panel was asked to evaluate the course material to ensure it was biblically and theologically accurate, comprehensive, and practical.

Name of evaluator: _____ Date: _____

How many sessions did you attend (maximum = 8): _____

BIBLICAL COUNSELING DISCIPLESHIP CURRICULUM EVALUATION					
1 = POOR: 2 = NEEDS IMPROVEMENT; 3= SUFFICIENT; 4 = EXEMPLARY					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
Biblical Hermeneutics					
The interpretation of the passages used in the curriculum are clear and accurate to the text. The biblical content of the curriculum is theological sound and concise.					
Curriculum Purpose					
The purpose of the curriculum is clearly articulated. The curriculum specifically addresses and challenges the knowledge, the attitude, or the behavior of the participants.					
Content Points					
The curriculum outline with title, major points, minor points, Scripture references flows well from beginning to the end.					
The curriculum sufficiently covers the foundational principles of biblical counseling and discipleship.					
The curriculum sufficiently differentiates psychology from biblical counseling. It clearly explains the difference between a secular worldview and a biblical worldview.					
Methodology					
The curriculum sufficiently addresses the methodology of biblical counseling and discipleship.					
The curriculum consists of a variety of teaching methods including, lecturing, illustrations, storytelling, visual aids, and Q & As.					
Practical Application					
The curriculum presents the big idea of the training in ways that motivates the audience to integrate foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry and discipleship.					

Other Comments:

The data displayed in table A1 reflect the expert panel curriculum evaluation results. Rubric values are based on a scale of 1 to 4 with, 1 = Poor; 2 = Needs improvement; 3 = Sufficient; 4 = Exemplary.

Table A1. Results of the expert panel rubric evaluations of the teaching curriculum

Expert Panelist	Biblical Hermeneutics	Curriculum Purpose	Content Points	Methodology	Practical Application
1	4	4	4	4	4
2	4	4	3	4	4
3	4	4	4	4	4

APPENDIX 4

PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST SURVEY RESULTS

This appendix contains comparisons of pre- and post-test scores and the *t*-test data analysis. The pre-and post-test scores, as well as the t-test analysis, were essential to measuring the success of the third goal of this research project to increase understanding.

The data tables A2 and A3 display the pre-test and post-test survey score comparisons and the *t*-test analysis results.

Table A2. Pre-test and post-test survey score comparisons

Participants	Pre-test Scores	Post-test Scores
1	90	128
2	82	127
3	114	139
4	99	114
5	114	115
6	116	115
7	81	101
8	76	111
9	120	133
10	99	165
11	140	165
12	86	136
13	112	145
14	123	122
15	111	113
16	126	147
Totals	1689	2076

Table A3. T-test data results

T-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means		
	Pre-Test Results	Post-test Results
Mean	105.5625	129.75
Variance	345.4625	357.5333333
Observations	16	16
Pearson Correlation	0.45284327	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	15	
t Stat	–4.932785519	
P(T<=t) one-tail	9.02241E-05	
t Critical one-tail	1.753050356	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.000180448	
t Critical two-tail	2.131449546	

APPENDIX 5

SERMON SERIES OUTLINES ON INTEGRATING
PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL COUNSELING
INTO PRACTICAL MINISTRY

This appendix contains the six sermon outlines that can be preached at Good Hope MBC. They emphasize the foundational principles of biblical counseling contained in the six-week teaching curriculum. These sermons would help the congregation understand these principles and encourage leaders and ministry members to integrate them into practical ministry as Good Hope aims to make disciples of Jesus Christ.

Sermon Outline One

Title: Why Faith in God Matters?

Text: Hebrews 11:6

Purpose: This sermon aims to help the congregation understand the significance of embracing God by faith as they seek to fulfill their purpose in life, which is to glorify God. Glorying God is a foundational principle of biblical counseling essential to the practical ministry of making disciples.

1. **You Must Realize You Cannot Glorify God apart from Faith** (v. 11:6a).

   Heb. 11:6 – *And without faith it is impossible to please Him,* for the one who comes to God must believe that He exists, and that He proves to be One who rewards those who seek Him.

       A. Explanation – with genuine belief, complete trust, and confidence in God, you cannot glorify God. You will never be able to please him.
       B. Illustration/Story (optional) – it is impossible to live without food, water, oxygen
       C. Application – your purpose in life is to glorify God (2 Cor.5:9). No matter what you face in life, it is impossible to please God apart from faith

2. **You Must Come to God Believing Who He is** (v. 11:6b).

   Heb. 11:6 – And without faith it is impossible to please Him, *for the one who comes to God must believe that He exists,* and that He proves to be One who rewards those who seek Him.

       A. Explanation – when you come to God, you must embrace his attributes
       B. Illustration/Story (optional)
       C. Application – what about God that you must believe and embrace as truth?

       Attributes of God you must embrace. God is:
         i. His Sovereign – God is in control of all things (Eccl. 7:13-14)
         ii. Supreme Authority – He is the ruler of all.
         iii. Loving – God's love is unconditional.
         iv. Forgiving – God pardons the iniquities and cancels the debt owed by sin.
         v. Goodness – He is good, and He does good.
         vi. Longsuffering – God is not quick to retaliate or punish.
         vii. Gracious – Grace is God's eternal and absolute free favor.

       viii.   Merciful – God does not always give people the punishment they deserve.

       ix.   Faithful – He is true to his Word. God keeps his promises.

       x.   Sufficient – God alone is enough and doing enough in our lives.

3. You Must Believe God Will Bless You When You Seek Him (v. 11:6c).

Heb. 11:6 – And without faith it is impossible to please Him*,* for the one who comes to God must believe that He exists, and *that He proves to be One who rewards those who seek Him.*

    A. Explanation: the Seek – to seek diligently or earnestly search for God with the anticipation of receiving a blessing or favor from God.

    B. Illustration/Story (optional) – Have you ever lost something precious and searched for it relentlessly until you found it? How did you feel once you found it? The blessing was in finding what you longed for and needed.

    C. Application – God promises to reward you if you seek him in faith. How can you who seek God?

       i.   Prayer, supplication, and fasting

       ii.   Meditating on His Word

       iii.   Searching the Scriptures

Application Questions

1. How does one's view of God affect how he views himself and his life?

2. What is the difference between knowing God exists and embracing God's attributes?

3. Which attribute of God do you struggle to embrace in certain situations? List at least three things you will do to embrace each attribute, ex—prayer, Bible study, small groups, etc.

4. How has God rewarded you when you embraced His attributes during an unfavorable situation, circumstance, or event?

Sermon Outline Two

Title: Finding Hope in the Sufficiency of Scripture

Text: Romans 15:4

Purpose: The congregation will be persuaded to rejoice in the assurance of hope that God promises in His Word and realize that Scripture alone is sufficient for life and living. Biblical hope and the sufficiency of Scripture are foundational principles of biblical counseling essential to the practical ministry of making disciples.

1. **You Must Realize that God's Word is your Hope** (Romans 15:4a).

   Rom. 15:4 – *For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction*, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope

   - A. Explanation –
        - i. In ancient times
        - ii. For instructions – What are the instructions about?

   - B. Illustration/Story (optional) – Marathon Runners, Olympians, and professional athletes need coach instructions, perseverance (stamina), and encouragement. Why are these important?
   - C. Application—God's Word is our instruction manual about how we are to function in life. Only the creator/designer of a product has the authority to provide operational instructions. God is your creator and has the authority to instruct you on how to live.

2. **You Must Realize the benefits of God's Word** (Rom. 15:b).

   Rom. 15:4 – For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, *so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope*

   - A. Explanation –
        - i. Perseverance – to endure or stand up under pressure.
        - ii. Encouragement –
        - iii. Hope – victory/winning/overcoming

   - B. Illustration/Story (optional)
   - C. Application – The Scriptures are your source of hope because they provide instruction, help you to persevere, and provide encouragement so that you can have hope of victory.

3. You Must Realize that God's Word is Sufficient (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

2 Tim. 3:16-17: All Scripture is inspired by God and beneficial for teaching, for rebuke, for correction, for training in righteousness; [17] so that the man *or woman* of God may be fully capable, equipped for every good work.

- A. Explanation –
    - i. Inspired by God – God-breathed
    - ii. Profitable – Valuable, beneficial, advantageous.
    - iii. Profitable for what:
        1. For Teaching
        2. For Rebuke
        3. For Correction
        4. Training in righteousness

- B. Illustration/Story (optional) –
- C. Application – God's Word is sufficient for your life and equips you for every good work. What are some specific examples of "good works" as God defines them?

Application Questions

1. In what ways is the hope that the world gives false hope?

2. What role does the gospel play in one's ability to have hope?

3. Is God's Word alone sufficient for life's problems, or should we integrate psychology and the Bible? Why or why not?

4. Are the precepts of popular psychology and the Bible equally important in seeking comfort/relief from human suffering? Why or why not?

5. How has God's Word equipped you to do good to others? Be specific.

Title: Understanding Your Identity in Christ

Text: Ephesians 1:3-14

Purpose: The audience will be persuaded to rejoice because of their identity in Christ. Church members will realize that one's identity is not determined by one's choice, as the world says, but our identity is based upon what the Scriptures declare us to be. Once we profess faith in Christ, we can enjoy the blessings of our new identity in Christ in the community of believers. Understanding the nature of man, embracing the attributes of God, biblical hope, and the sufficiency of Scripture compels one to have a proper of self.

1. **You Have a New Relationship with God through Christ** (Rom. 5:1-2).

   Romans 5:1-2: Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, **2** through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.

   A. Explanation –
      i. You are Justified by faith (v. 5:1a).
      ii. You have Peace with God (v. 5:1b).
      iii. You are a Recipient of God's Grace through Christ (v. 5:2a).
      iv. You have Hope of the Glory of God through Christ (v. 5:2b).

   B. Illustration/Story (optional) – What is it like to make peace with someone who was once your enemy?
   C. Application – How do you become justified before God? What does it feel like to be at peace with God? How can you show gratitude towards God for his grace? How do you obtain the hope of enjoying the glory of God?

2. **You Must Realize the Blessings of Being in Christ** (Eph. 1:3-14).

   Ephesians 1:3-4: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him.

   A. Explanation –
      i. Blessed (v. 3) – shown us distinguished favor; to meet our needs; act kindly towards; to speak well of.
      ii. Chosen (v. 4) – to select, elect, pick out, or choose.
      iii. Predestined (v. 5) – to decide beforehand; foreordained.
      iv. Adopted (v. 5) – to relationally accept one as a biological son or daughter with the same privileges as an heir.

     v.   Accepted (v. 6) – to greatly favor; to show favor, and grace; to show honor; approve of; to endorse, welcome, and confirm.

     vi.   Redeemed (v. 7) – to set free by a ransom, the calling of captives from captivity by payment.

    vii.   Forgiven (v. 7) – to pardon or cancel a debt owed; show mercy towards one who deserves punishment.

   viii. Enlightened (vv. 8, 9) – wisdom, understanding, judgment, discernment.

     ix.   Given an Inheritance (v. 11) – Heirs of God; recipients of a father's estate; Birthright.

     x.   Sealed (v. 13) – secured; lock proof; airtight; fixed; sealed by the Holy Spirit

     xi.   Assured (v. 14) – Guaranteed: The Holy Spirit is a downpayment that has been satisfied, settled, and sure

B. Illustration/Story (optional) – When a child is adopted, he is an accepted member of the adopting family with the same privileges as a biological heir.

C. Application: Your identity in Christ grants you membership in the family of God, with guaranteed privileges and benefits.

3. You are a New Person in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17).

2 Cor. 5:17 (NKJV) – Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

A. Explanation – *If anyone is*
    i.   In Christ
    ii.   He is a new creation
   iii. Old things have passed away – Constable stated that the apostle Paul was stressing the elements of discontinuity ("old things passed away") perspectives, prejudices, misconceptions, enslavements, etc. (cf. Gal. 2:20).[1]
    iv. All things have become new – progressive sanctification begins.

B. Illustration/Story (optional) – When a computer crashes, you must install a new operating system or purchase a new computer. The operating system is the heart of the computer. The old computer is made new if you install a new operating system.

C. Application –In Christ, we have a new heart. Old ways of living are passed away. All things have become new.

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[1] Tom Constable, *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible* (Garland, TX: Galaxie, 2003), 2 Cor 5:17.

Application Questions

1. What is the world's view on what defines identity?

2. How does the world's view regarding one's identity differ from what Scripture teaches?

3. Why is the foundational principle of our identity in Christ so crucial in practical ministry in making disciples?

Sermon Outline Four

Title: How God Expects You to Relate to Others

Text: Colossians 3:12-14

Purpose: This sermon aims to teach believers how God expects us to function in relationships. The goal is to teach the audience how to express love for others in a spirit of humility through serving and sacrifice. Teaching converts how to love their neighbor (including their enemies) will cultivate God-honoring relationships that reflect Christ's image and emulate his relationship with others. Loving and serving others are foundational biblical counseling principles essential to the practical ministry of making disciples.

1. **You Have Been Chosen by God to Love Others** (Col. 3:12-14).

   Col. 3:12-14: So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on 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. Beyond all these things, *put on* love, which is the perfect bond of unity

   A. You Have Been Chosen by God (Col. 3:12a)

   Explanation –
   - i.   Chosen – Elected by God.
   - ii.   Holy – Set apart by God.
   - iii. Beloved – Recipients of God's love.

   B. You Have an Obligation to Love Others (Col. 3:12-13)

   Explanation – Put on a heart of compassion:

   - i.   Compassion – showing sensitivity to those in need; to be merciful.
   - ii.   Kindness – nice; thoughtful of others; pleasant attitude
   - iii.   Humility – thinking lowly of oneself.
   - iv.   Gentleness – not behaving harshly or arrogantly but being considerate of others.
   - v.   Patience – self-restraint under provocation.
   - vi.   Bearing With One Another – putting up with the imperfections and faults of others
   - vii.   Forgiving Each Other – involves not holding a grudge or grievance but letting go of it immediately.
   - viii. Beyond All *Put on* Love – Unconditional love, agape love; always seeking to do what is in the best interest of others.
   - ix.   Love is *the Perfect Bond of Unity* – the adhesive that holds relationships together

C. Illustration/Story (optional): When I was in elementary school, the neighborhood kids would gather in the park during the summer to play baseball or basketball. Many kids would line up with the anticipation of being chosen. Those who were not chosen were often saddened and felt left out. Once selected, each kid did their very best to fulfill their role as one chosen in obligation to the superior who chose them.

D. Application – Since you have been chosen by God, holy and beloved, how well are you fulfilling your obligation to love others? Are there attributes of compassion that you need to improve?

2. You Have Been Chosen by God to Love Your Enemies (Lk. 6:35-36).

Luke 6:35-36: But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil *men*. **36** Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

A. Explanation –
   i. Love – Unconditional Love
   ii. Do Good - means to do what is right, honorable, commendable, and well for the benefit of another.
   iii. Lend – To give to meet a need.
   iv. Love, Do Good, and Give – expecting nothing in return.
   v. Be Merciful – Withhold punishment that is due.

B. Illustration/Story (optional): Eye surgery and hip and knee replacements can be expensive, especially without insurance. How did Jesus respond to those in need? What did he do to help those with physical deficiencies? How many people paid him for his services? How many people said, "Thank you?" How did Jesus respond to his enemies?

C. Application – How does God expect you to relate to your enemies? Love, do good, and lend; meet the need, expecting nothing in return. Be imitators of the Father, as seen in the person of Christ – who is merciful to evil and ungrateful men such as we were.

3. You Have Been Chosen by God to Exhibit Humility (Phil. 2:3-4).

Phil. 2:3-4: Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind, regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

A. Explanation –
   i. Selfishness or Contention: The word contention refers to any acts of antagonizing behaviors driven by self-interest, selfish ambition, or personal gain.
   ii. Empty conceit or Vainglory
   iii. But with Humility of Mind -

B. Illustration/Story (optional) – In 1667, Puritan Thomas Watson wrote, "A humble soul is emptied of all swollen thoughts of himself."[2]

C. Application – How Should Humility look in practice regarding how God expects you to relate to others?

Quote: "Humility is not belittling self; it is forgetting self." – Anonymous

4. You Have Been Chosen by God to Forgive Others (Lk. 17:3-10).

Luke 17:3-5: Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. **⁴** And if he sins against you seven times a day, and returns to you seven times, saying, 'I repent,' forgive him." **⁵** The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!"

A. Explanation –
   i. Be On Guard
   ii. Sins
   iii. Rebuke
   iv. Repent
   v. Forgive

B. Illustration/Story (optional) – Have you had lunch or dinner at an all-you-can-eat buffet? A buffet is where a restaurant allows its customers to eat all they want for a set price.

C. Application – Your forgiveness of others should be unlimited, especially towards those who are repentant. Your willingness to forgive others should be like an all-you-can-eat buffet; Jesus paid the set price on the cross.

5. You Have Been Chosen by God to Serve Others (1 Pet. 4:10).

1 Peter 4:10 – Be Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.

A. Explanation –
   i. Use
   ii. Gifts
   iii. To Serve Others
   iv. As a faithful Steward

B. Illustration/Story (optional) – Christmas is a time of year when we give and receive gifts from those with whom we have a relationship. The gifts are tokens of unmerited favor.

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[2] Thomas Watson, *The Godly Man's Picture* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1667), 78.

C. Application – What are some of your gifts? What is God's reason for bestowing you with spiritual gifts? How are you using your gifts to serve others?

Application Questions

1. Some believe "you cannot love others until you learn to love yourself first." What are your thoughts about this statement?

2. What makes it difficult for us to love our enemies?

3. According to First John 4:19-21, what is the evidence of one's love for God?

4. What would you say to someone who says, "I can forgive, but I cannot forget?"

5. What do you believe is the most common sin problem in broken relationships?

6. Over the next week, use your gifts to show at least six people one open expression of love through service, sacrifice, or meeting a need.

Sermon Outline Five

Title: How to Respond to Suffering

Text: 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

Purpose: This lesson aims to help the audience understand how to respond to suffering. Teaching believers how to respond to and endure suffering is a foundational principle of biblical counseling essential to making disciples.

1. **You Must Realize the Sufficiency of Grace in Your Struggles** (2 Cor. 12:9a). **2 Cor. 12:9**: And He has said to me, "*My grace is sufficient for you*, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. [10] Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong

   A. Explanation –
      i.   Grace –
      ii. Sufficient –

   B. Illustration/Story (optional): Food and water are sufficient and essential for human life.
   C. Application – Looking back over your life, what has God sufficiently provided? You are alive today because God's grace has been, is, and will always be sufficient.

2. **You Must Realize the Power of Grace in Your Struggles** (2 Cor. 12:9b). **2 Cor. 12:9 –** And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, *for power is perfected in weakness."* Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. [10] Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong

   A. Explanation –
      i.   Power –
      ii. Is perfected –
      iii. In weakness –
      iv. Boast –
      v.   Dwell –

   B. Illustration/Story (optional): Many people are familiar with losing power during thunderstorms. Some people have installed a generator in their homes that automatically and immediately provides electrical power in case of a power outage.
   C. Application – The result of God's grace is strength. The power of Christ in your life is at:

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i.   It's strongest when you are at your weakest.
ii.   It's highest when you are at your lowest.
iii.   It's greatest when you are at your worst
iv.   It stands firm when you are fragile.
v.   It is unbreakable when you are broken.
vi.   God's Grace is Powerful
vii.   God's grace is your power generator during storms of life.

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4. You Must Realize, because of Grace, You Can Be Content in Your Struggles (2 Corinthians 12:10).

2 Cor. 12:10 – Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

A. Explanation –
    i.   Well Content –
    ii.   Insults, distresses, persecutions, and difficulties –
    iii.   Weak –
    iv.   Strong –

B. Illustration/Story (optional)—Jesus experienced weakness, insults, distress, persecution, and difficulties. Yet he was content in suffering. According to 1 Peter 2:23, he entrusted himself to the will of God.
C. Application – Enduring suffering develops strength and character. How have you grown spiritually because of your struggles?

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Application Questions

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1. Nahum 1:7 says, The Lord is good, A stronghold in the day of trouble, And He knows those who take refuge in Him. In the backdrop of Nahum 1:7, what should be your response to suffering?

2. How does embracing God's sovereignty, supreme authority, and goodness provide comfort during suffering?

3. Make a list of current struggles. What will you do to entrust yourself to the will of God? Commit to memory 2 Corinthians 12:9-10 and make it part of your daily devotion.

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175

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Sermon Outline Six

Title: How to Integrate Principles of Biblical Counseling with Making Disciples?

Text: Colossians 1:28

Purpose: This sermon aims to teach the congregation how to disciple others using the 8 I's method of biblical counseling. The 8 I's method includes involvement, inspiration, inventory, interpretation, instructions, inducement, implementation, and integration. This method facilitates discipleship because true discipleship occurs through interpersonal relationships as we engage in one another's lives.

1. **You Must Show those Who are suffering that You Care about them** (1 Pet. 3:8).

   1 Peter 3:8 – To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, loving, compassionate, and humble.

    A. Explanation –
       i. Harmonious –
       ii. Sympathetic –
       iii. Loving –
       iv. Compassionate –
       v. Humble –

    B. Illustration/Story (optional): Once, I attempted to share a personal struggle with a mature Christian whom I deemed a brother. As I talked, the person started reading text messages, looking at and greeting others as they walked by. Then he finally engaged me by saying, "I am sorry. Now, what were you saying?" So, I decided not to share. Why? Because I felt as if he did not care.
    C. Application – The first thing people need to know is that you care about what they are going through. They also need hope and encouragement. The first step in making disciples is to use Involvement and Inspiration.

       #1. Involvement – Sharing their pain. Assure that you care about them.
       #2. Inspiration – Give hope and encouragement.

2. **You Must Seek to Understand the Person's Problem** (Proverbs 18:13).
   Proverbs 18:13 – And One who gives an answer before he hears, It is foolishness and shame to him.

    A. Explanation –
       i. Answers –
       ii. Hears –
       iii. Foolishness –

iv.   Shame –

    B. Illustration/Story (optional): People, especially church members, often make assumptions about others before hearing all the facts.
    C. Application – If you are to make disciples, you must seek to understand the life context of others without being judgmental or critical. Employ numbers three and four of the 8 I's of biblical counseling to understand the person's problem and avoid making assumptions.

        #3. Inventory – ask questions to understand the person's problem.
        #4. Interpretation – identify the problem based on the information that the person shared.

Proverbs 20:5 – A plan in the heart of a person is like deep water, But a person of understanding draws it out.

3. **You Must Search the Scriptures for Answers to the Problem and Gain a Commitment** (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

2 Tim. 3:16-17: All Scripture is inspired by God and beneficial for teaching, for rebuke, for correction, for training in righteousness; [17] so that the man or woman of God may be fully capable, equipped for every good work.

    A. Explanation –
        i.   Inspired –
        ii.   For teaching –
        iii.   For rebuke –
        iv.   For correction –
        v.   For Training in Righteous

    B. Illustration/Story (optional) – Aleve is beneficial for pain. Prescription medications are beneficial for treating illnesses, but a patient must follow the instructions on the medicine bottle.
    C. Application – Show the person that God's Word has answers to their problems. God's Word has answers for worry, fear, anger, and depression. God's talks about relationships, marriage, parenting, and finances. Employ numbers five and six of the 8 I's of biblical counseling to show the person that God's Word provides answers to their problems, but they must be committed to following God's instructions.

        #5. Instructions – Share what God's Word says about their problem.
        #6. Inducement – Ask the person if they are committed to pleasing God.

Romans 15:14 – And concerning you, my brothers *and sisters*, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able also to admonish one another.

4. **You Must Walk the Person through the Process of Healing through the Practical Application of God's Word** (Col. 1:28).

Col. 1:28 – We proclaim Him, admonishing every person and teaching every person with all wisdom, so that we may present every person complete in Christ.

    A. Explanation –
        i. Proclaim him –
        ii. Admonish – to warn, to counsel
        iii. Teaching with all wisdom –
        iv. Present –
        v. Complete in Christ –

    B. Illustration/Story (optional)—Parents teach their young children how to ride a bike by holding on to it and running alongside them while the child paddles and steers the handlebars. Eventually, the parent's task of teaching the child how to ride a bike is complete when the child has learned to ride independently.

    C. Application—Our goal as a church is to proclaim the gospel to present everyone mature in Christ. Employing numbers seven and eight of the 8 I's of biblical counseling, we show the person how to apply God's Word until they no longer need help. This is when the person has overcome their problem biblically and is now ready to serve in the Kingdom of God.
        #7. Implementation – use practical resources to help the person apply God's Word.
        #8. Integration occurs when a person has changed and is ready to serve others in God's kingdom work.

Conclusion

In this final sermon, the 8 I's capture the foundational biblical counseling principles believers can use to make disciples because they cultivate interpersonal relationships. This method facilitates discipleship because true discipleship occurs through interpersonal relationships as we engage in one another's lives.

Those trained in biblical counseling use all 8 I's in the counseling process, particularly six, seven, and eight. Although those skilled in biblical counseling employ all 8 I's, every member should, at least, be able to use Involvement, Inspiration, Inventory, Interpretation, and Instruction in the practical ministry of making disciples. Ministry leaders should teach these principles to those who serve under their leadership. Doing so

will increase the effectiveness of your ministry in reaching the lost and serving those (including members of your team) who need help, hope, and encouragement as they suffer in the world.

NOW GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES

APPENDIX 6

BIBLICAL COUNSELING AND DISCIPLESHIP SERMON
SERIES RUBRIC AND EVALUATION RESULTS

An expert panel consisting of one Good Hope Missionary Baptist Church associate pastor and four licensed preachers used the following sermon evaluation rubric to evaluate each sermon. The panel assessed the six-week sermon series to ensure it was biblically and theologically accurate, comprehensive, and practical. Table A4 is also included in appendix 6 to display the results of the sermon rubric evaluations.

Name of evaluator: _____ Date: _____

BIBLICAL COUNSELING DISCIPLESHIP SERMON SERIES EVALUATION						
1 = POOR: 2 = NEEDS IMPROVEMENT; 3= SUFFICIENT; 4 = EXEMPLARY						
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
Theological Accuracy					
The interpretation of the passages used in the sermon is clear and accurate to the text. The biblical content of the sermon is theological, sound, and concise.					
Sermon Purpose					
The purpose of the sermon is clearly articulated. The sermon explicitly addresses and challenges the audience's knowledge, attitude, or behavior.					
Content Points					
The sermon outline with title, major points, minor points, and Scripture references are cohesive and support the sermon's purpose		.			
Clarity					
The sermon outline is clear and logical, and the progression of thought from one point to the next is easy to follow.					
Relevancy					
The sermon addresses the relevancy and sufficiency of Scriptures for providing hope and instructions regarding life.					
The sermon uses various preaching methods in the outlines, including illustrations, storytelling, or Q&A, to demonstrate the relevance of each point to the audience's life context.					
Practical Application					
The sermon includes points of practical application that motivate the audience to integrate foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry and discipleship. Foundational principles of biblical counseling include teaching disciples how to have a proper view of God, self, relationships, and suffering.					

Other Comments:

Table A4. Sermon outlines rubric evaluation scores

Participants	Theological Accuracy	Sermon Purpose	Content Points	Clarity	Relevancy	Practical Application
1	3	3	2	4	3.5	4
2	4	4	3	4	4	4
3	4	4	4	4	4	4
4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5	3	4	3	3	3.5	4

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ABSTRACT

TRAINING PASTORS AND CHURCH LEADERS AT GOOD
HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH IN HOUSTON, TEXAS, TO
INTEGRATE THE PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL
COUNSELING INTO PRACTICAL MINISTRY

Darrell Dean Rose, DMin
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2025
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Jeremy P. Pierre

This project sought to train pastors and church leaders at Good Hope Baptist Church in Houston, Texas, to integrate the foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry. Chapter 1 provides the historical data, the context, and the discipleship ministry culture at Good Hope, as well as the goals and rationale for integrating foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry. Chapter 2 discusses the biblical basis and theological support for integrating the foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry. Chapter 3 explains the theological and cultural impediments to integrating the foundational principles of biblical counseling into practical ministry. Chapter 4 provides an overview of the implementation and description of the ministry project and the content of the training curriculum. Chapter 5 is an evaluation of the project's goals, objectives, and implementation. This chapter includes a critique of this project to determine whether the goals were achieved, including its strengths and weaknesses, along with strategic recommendations and modifications for improvement.

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