

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL COUNSELING PART 1

Introduction and Review

A. Psychology and Christian counseling.

1. Harmful errors of modern psychology.

2. Christian approaches to counseling.

B. The biblical (nouthetic) counseling movement.

C. Some fundamental assumptions.

1. The Bible is sufficient as our textbook for counseling. *2 Pet 1:3; 2 Tim 3:16-17; Ps 19:7-14; Heb 4:12*

2. The goal of counseling is change in conformity with God's revealed will, not necessarily the (selfish) desires of the counselee. *Col 1:28*

3. Change according to God's standard can only take place by the power of the Holy Spirit. *Phil 4:13; Gal 5:16ff*

4. The counselor is qualified through personal holiness and a knowledge of the Word of God. *Gal 6:1; 1 Tim 4:16-17, 7-8, 13; 3:1-7*

Key Elements in Biblical Counseling

A. Involvement. *Gal 6:1*

1. Avoid “professionalism” - proud, aloof, distant, mechanical. *2 Cor 2:4*

2. Instead, be humble and brotherly, treating your counselee with respect. *Mark 6:34; Matt 9:35-36; Heb 2:14-18; 4:15; John 11:33-35; Acts 20:31; 2 Cor 2:4; 4:28-29; 1 Thess 2:7-8; 1 Cor 13:7; Rom 12:10; Phil 2:3-4*

3. Be careful not to fall into their sin! *Gal 6:1b; Prov 1:10ff*
 - Why might this happen?

 - What precautions should we take? *Titus 2:3-5*

 - Why shouldn't women counsel men? *1Tim 2:12*

4. Don't become an emotional crutch - make them dependent upon God, not you! *2 Chr 24:2*

5. Pray with and for your counselee. *Phil 1:3-4*

6. Hope must be built from the earliest stages of counseling. *1 Cor 10:13; Rom 15:4-5, 13; Phil 1:6; 2 Cor 5:17; Prov 12:25; 15:13; 17:22; 18:14; Matt 11:28-30*

- What is our basis of hope? *1Tim 1:1*

- What is the nature of our hope? *Heb 11:1*

- What can be done to build hope?

- Give manageable homework assignments to build hope.

B. Investigation. *Prov 18:15*

1. Begin with a plan. *Prov 21:5*

2. Don't jump to conclusions. *Prov 18:13; 14:15*

3. Learn to ask good questions and to listen. *Prov 20:5*

4. Characteristics of good questions (see Mack p. 223ff).
 - Thoughtful and gracious.

- Relevant.

- Produce facts.

- Open-ended.

5. The PREACH principle for investigating.

- Physical: sleep, diet, exercise, drugs, alcohol, medications (many psychotropic), caffeine, etc.

2 Cor 4:6; Eccl 5:12

- Resources: what help is available: church, family, friends: accountability?

- Emotional: fear, worry, anxiety, bitterness, loneliness, depression, anger.

- Action. *Ps 32; Gen 4:5-8; Jas 1:22, 25*

- Conceptual. *Mark 7:19-23; Eph 4:23; Rom 12:2; Heb 4:12*

- Historical

Key Elements in Biblical Counseling “Letter B. Investigation” will continue in Part 2 **CDC 5** 



Books

Mack, Wayne, *Counseling: How to Counsel Biblically* (Macarthur’s Pastor Library).



Supplemental Resources

Newheiser, Jim. “The Tenderness Trap.”