

# **THE BASICS OF BIBLICAL COUNSELING**

A study of the Scriptures to help the Body of Christ to  
grow in all times and seasons of life.

Session 4a of 10

Rev. Rod West, DBS

Christ-Centered Solutions Inc

2021

## REVIEW: Lesson 3

### I. HEALTHY AND PROPER RELATIONSHIPS WITH THOSE WE COUNSEL

- a. Counselees/people in need are not **machines** – don't focus so much on **problems** that you forget the person in front of you.
- b. Compassion is needed but not to the point of **overlooking** sin.
- c. A “Just the facts ma'am” & “This is what the Bible says” approach rarely **builds** a healing relationship. (Prov. 27:6 & 9)
- d. Quote:

*We are most receptive to counsel from those we know are with us and for us. They can speak to us frankly about our faults, and though we may be annoyed temporarily, we soon realize that they are only trying to help us because they are concerned for us. On the other hand, if someone whom we perceive as a stranger or an enemy criticizes us, we tend to react defensively and with suspicion about their motives. ...In counseling, as in any other relationship, we must remember that our impact and influence in people's lives is usually related to their perception of us.<sup>1</sup>*

- e. Developing a helpful relationship comes about when people know that we **genuinely care** about them ...viewed as a friend.
- f. Learn from Christ Jesus and His deep **compassion** for others in need – “**a willingness to suffer together**” (Isa. 9:6; 11:2; Matt. 9:35-38, [36]; Mk. 3:1-5; 10:17-22; Lk. 7:11-15; 19:41; Jn. 11:33-35)

---

<sup>1</sup> MacArthur, John F.; Mack, Wayne A.; Master's College Faculty,. Counseling (MacArthur Pastor's Library) (p. 102). Thomas Nelson. Kindle Edition.

- g. Learn from **Paul** and his compassion for others. (Acts 20:29-32; Rom. 9:1-3; 2 Cor. 2:1-4; 11:27-29; 1 Thess. 2:7-8)
- h. How do I find others who **demonstrate** compassion in the Body?  
Look for those who have the gift of **shepherding**.
- i. A **difference** between a gift and a position.
  - ii. From a Church standpoint, all pastors are shepherds but **not** all shepherds are pastors.
  - iii. How do we help **develop** compassionate shepherds? Look on others as Christ Jesus did. (Matt. 9:36; Lk. 7:13; Heb. 4:15-16)
  - iv. The prior 3-subpoints should cause us to ask some questions.
 

*“What if I and the person I’m counseling switched places and I were the one struggling, what would I desire from them? What might I be feeling if I were them?”*

*What would I be feeling emotionally and spiritually?”*
  - v. Think of the counselee as a member of your family.
 

*“How might you talk to someone close to you who is in need of sound Biblical counsel?”* (1 Tim. 5:1-2)
  - vi. Consider your sinfulness. (Gal. 6:1-2; Jn. 8:1-11)
  - vii. Remember that compassion is more than an emotion, it’s a choice! (Lk. 6:27-28)
  - i. Questions to ask yourself about demonstrating compassion towards a counselee, (this list is from “Counseling: How to Counsel Biblically)

- *Have you told your counselees that you care for them? (Phil. 1:8).*
- *Have you prayed for them and with them? (Col. 4:12–13).*
- *Have you rejoiced and grieved with them? (Rom. 12:15).*
- *Have you dealt with them gently and tenderly? (Matt. 12:20).*
- *Have you been tactful with them? (Prov. 15:23).*
- *Have you spoken graciously to them? (Col. 4:6).*
- *Have you continued to love and accept them even when they have rejected your counsel? (Mark 10:21).*
- *Have you defended them against those who mistreat and accuse them? (Matt. 12:1–7).*
- *Have you forgiven them for any wrong they have done to you? (Matt. 18:21–22).*
- *Have you been willing to meet their physical needs if necessary? (1 John 3:17).<sup>2</sup>*

- j. Genuine compassion requires **respect!** More questions. (Rom. 12:10; Phil. 2:3)
- i. Am I **honoring** this person as Scripture commands?
  - ii. Does my **speech** demonstrate respect? (Prov. 16:21 & 24)
  - iii. Does my body language and my actions demonstrate respect?
- k. Genuine compassion also **requires** that the counselor take problems **seriously**.
- i. Never **minimize** the problems of another, no matter how trivial they may seem to you.
  - ii. **Trust** your counselee until the facts prove otherwise, remember they are seeking help in order to make a **change** in their present life for their betterment and for God's glory.

---

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, (p. 106).

- iii. **Build** your counselee where building can take place. Keep in mind, if he/she belong to the family of God then there is always a positive in their life. Shine the **light** where good is found! (Jn. 10:27; Phil. 1:6; 2:12-13; 2 Cor. 7:13-16)
- iv. When the time has ended, ask for **input**, and receive both positive and negative critics with grace.

***“Where are your thoughts? How do you feel? Has our time together been helpful? Do you want to return and talk more?”***

- v. Above all (in practice), maintain **confidentiality!** Unless...
  1. They are a danger to self.
  2. They are a danger to others.
  3. They are involved in some form of child abuse.
  4. Quotes

***...guard their reputations as much as possible without disobeying God. Unfortunately, confidentiality is not always possible (or desirable) in light of Jesus’ commands. (Matthew 18:16–17)<sup>3</sup>***

***The implication of this biblical requirement to seek additional help in order to reclaim an offender is that Christians must never promise absolute confidentiality to any person. Frequently it is the practice of Bible-believing Christians to give assurances of absolute confidentiality, never realizing that they are following a policy that originated in the Middle Ages and that is unbiblical. . . . Is it right, then, to refuse any confidentiality at all? No, confidentiality is assumed in***

---

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, (p. 109).

*the gradual widening of the sphere of concern to other persons set forth in Matthew 18:15ff. As you read the words of our Lord in that passage, you get the impression that it is only reluctantly, when all else fails, that more and more persons may be called in. The ideal seems to be to keep the matter as narrow as possible. . . .*

*What then does one say when asked to keep a matter in confidence? We ought to say, "I am glad to keep confidence in the way that the Bible instructs me. That means, of course, I shall never involve others unless God requires me to do so." In other words, we must not promise absolute confidentiality, but rather, confidentiality that is consistent with biblical requirements.<sup>4</sup>*

- vi. Be honest about your training or lack there of when counseling another, "***Brothers, we are not professionals.***"<sup>5</sup>
- vii. When the time is right, be honest about your weaknesses (***this doesn't mean to share all the dirt unless led by the Holy Spirit***). (1 Cor. 2:1-3; Rom. 7:21-25)

## II. BARBARA CASE STUDY

---

<sup>4</sup> Jay Adams, *Handbook of Church Discipline* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986), 30–32. See also George Scipione, "The Limits of Confidentiality in Counseling," *Journal of Pastoral Practice* 7, no. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Dr. John Piper