

Biblical Counseling Seminar Materials

- Biblical basis for counseling,
- Nouthetic counseling. . . True to the Word of God,
 - A model for counseling,
 - An appendix of many helps



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places of the United States.



Table of Contents

Part one	
Basic Presuppositions and Varying Methodology	pg. 4
Part two	
Basic Theological Presuppositions In Biblical Counseling	pg. 13
Part Three	
Basic For Nouthetic Counseling	pg. 16
Part Four	
The Commitment to Biblical Counseling	pg. 19
Part Five	
Some General Principles and Practices in Counseling	pg. 22
Part Six	
Forming, and Adopting a Biblical Counseling Model	pg. 29
PREACH:	
P hysical Aspects	pg. 29
R esources Available	pg. 29
E motional Factors	pg. 29
A ction or Behavior	pg. 32
C ognitive, or Impact of Thoughts	pg. 40
H omework Assignments	pg. 44
Appendix A	
Nature of Counseling Philosophies	pg. 49
Biblical Basic of God-Honoring Counseling	pg. 53
Varied Approaches to Christian Counseling	pg. 55
Appendix B	
Renewing Our Minds and Identifying False Beliefs	pg. 58
Appendix C; Working With Crisis Problems	pg. 63
Appendix D; Gathering Data	pg. 77
Appendix E; Helping the Counselees Tell Themselves the Truth	pg. 80

Foreword

The need for pastoral counseling in the local church appears to be growing rapidly. Yet, few pastors have received adequate training in the field of counseling. In addition, there is a dearth of Scriptural based materials that a pastor may study and use in order to have the basic tools for counseling. Many of the books written in recent years have little practical value to the average pastor. In fact, some of the proposed methods and techniques are not only inadequate but unbiblical and sometimes dangerous for the counselee.

It is a fact of life today that Christians may be affected with all the sinful practices and maladies to which human flesh is heir and that we will retain this potential until the day we are received into glory. To deny such a reality is to be ignorant of Biblical truth and to deny the obvious around us.

While many books and articles have been written about counseling in recent years, a majority of them do not help the fundamental pastor in a concise and Biblical way. Many of them while professing to be Biblical, actually deny the very theological foundation to which we must adhere.

We will endeavor to base everything squarely on the Word of God, which forever remains the ultimate authority in all we seek to do. It is my intent, in position and in practice, to reject the eclectic approach, which is found in most books and materials written by Christians in this field of truth. (I have over sixty books written by various authors many who are eclectic and some who don't even seem to realize it.)

I will endeavor to outline the value, strategies, and techniques of a Biblical model of counseling as well as deal briefly with some of the basic presuppositions of secular, anti-biblical approaches.

Naturally, this material is not the last word, and always one later wishes he had written a bit differently, or added some things. It is impossible to deal with everything within the framework of counseling or everything in the Word of God which speaks to the subject.

I trust that this material will give insight, direction, and much help to the person who uses these notes and supporting materials. They have been taught a number of times to groups of students or pastor with good results.

Dr. Edward Watke Jr.
- 1992-

Part One

BASIC PRESUPPOSITIONS AND VARYING METHODOLOGY

- * One's methodology, model in counseling, or method of counseling will come from his presuppositions, or what he believes to be true.
- * In counseling, your method to bring about change, or to deal with a person, will grow out of your basic view of man.
- * One's attitude and treatment of people in counseling grows out of what one believes. (Illus.-- Hitler's idea of Jews being inferior race, or the treatment of blacks over the last 150 years.)
Man's basic problem is depravity, hence, the need of regeneration. The Bible must be the final authority in faith and practice. All systems of counseling in the past (or present) must be studied in the light of the Word of God.

Three Approaches to Counseling:

- I. Expert Knowledge -- Proponents: Sigmund Freud and F. J. Skinner
- II. Common Knowledge -- Proponents: Carl Rogers, O. Hobart & Mowrer
- III. Divine Knowledge -- Proponents: Scripture, God's Revelation
(Dr. Jay Adam's terms)

I. Expert Knowledge: These men held that only those possessing expert knowledge are competent to counsel. This view is much like Plato's, who believed that only the wisest among men should rule. In this approach, the expert must do it for the other person.

A. The Basis of Conventional Psychiatry

1. Freud has been the most prominent example of the expert knowledge approach. (He emphasized man's inner drives.)
2. Freud taught that man's main problem is poor socialization. The counselee, according to Freud, may have been--
 - a. kicked around as a child,
 - b. raised in a strict victorian-like home,
 - c. influenced by an overly-dominant mother, etc.
3. He taught that this kind of wrong socialization builds a conscience that is over socialized, or overly sensitive.
4. His approach was that only the expert can solve these perplexing and complicated problems.
5. The Freudian-trained therapist uses two expert techniques that grow out of his expert diagnosis of the problem.

- a. psychoanalysis
 - b. psychotherapy
- (Contemporary psychoanalytic thinking emphasizes the development of the ego and the differentiation and the individualization of the self.)

note:

His teaching was and is considered the first force in psychology! He was an Austrian physician who lived from 1856- 1939. He popularized the study of the unconscious mental processes. He taught that our outward behavior (especially when abnormal) was the product of unconscious mental conflict. He placed a great emphasis on the unconscious process and would employ the use of hypnoses, dream analysis, and free association to ascertain what might be troubling the person. The therapist would try to determine who did **what** to the person!

He took a very dim view of religion, rejecting both the teaching, doctrine, and methods of theology and its conclusions. A religious experience to him was a child's delusion. Freud referred to himself as a godless heathen, and a hopeless Jew. Maybe his teaching came from what he experienced as a child, and he was responding against his rearing and Jewish teaching. He emphasized sex as the basis of most every drive.

- 6. The expert knowledge approach is based squarely upon the premise (or presupposition) that man is NOT responsible for what he does.
- 7. Conventional psychiatry believes that:
 - a. Mental illness exists.
 - b. Probing into the client's past life is always an essential part of treatment. (Who did WHAT to the person?)
 - c. Transference is an important part of the therapy process.

note:

The patient is taught to transfer to the therapist the attitudes he held or still holds toward the people in his past life. The therapist then helps the client to relive his past conflicts and explains to him how he is repeating the same inadequate behavior with the therapist.

- d. Conventional psychotherapy is important in counseling. (The client needs to be made aware of unconscious mental conflicts. This is accomplished through the interpretation of transference, dreams, and free associations.)
- e. All deviate behavior must be overlooked because it is considered a product of the mental illness! Since it is a part of such illness the person is NOT held responsible for it.
- f. In this system it is not primary their purpose to teach people how to behave. The conventional therapist believes the client will behave more responsibly when he comes to better understand what is causing problems on the subconscious level.

Jerome Frank, in the book "Overview of Psychotherapies" wrote the following: *"...Too many people today have too much money and not enough to do, so they turn to psychotherapy to combat the resulting boredom. It supplies novelty, excitement and, as a means of self-improvement, a legitimate way of spending money." "As recently as 30 years ago, no one questioned your right to be unhappy. Happiness was considered a blessing, not a guarantee. You were permitted to suffer pain, or fall into moods, or seek solitude without being analyzed, interpreted and discussed."*

B. Behaviorism -- as represented by B. J. Skinner:

1. The behaviorist claims to be committed only to the use of factual evidence.
2. B. F. Skinner is devoted to the belief that man is a product of evolution -- not a created being.
3. The goal is survival and natural selection is the process (that is, survival of the fittest). (The stimulus is applied after the behavior rather than before.) Skinner taught that mankind is a product of his environment.
4. Both Freud and Skinner saw the counselees as not being responsible, but held others responsible for their actions.

note:

This approach is considered the second force in psychology. They would say... "All behavior is determined directly or indirectly by its consequences." This approach emphasized the outer drives and held that positive reinforcement is the power of behavioral engineering. This approach was formulated by J. B. Watson (1878-1958) who taught at John Hopkins University in Baltimore. He reduced man's behavior to chemical and physical terms, as he was greatly influenced by Pavlov.

note:

Freud saw the problem as poor socialization, that is, "What did society do to the person?" Skinner would say that man is not responsible because a determined animal cannot be held accountable. He taught that the environment was the cause of human behavior. By manipulating one's environment you can change the person's behavior.

note:

Conventional psychiatrists believe that ministers are a problem. They hold to the idea that ministers produce a feeling of guilt and an overly-sensitive conscience in people; therefore, they accuse ministers of being the culprits in the problems that many experience.

Institutional psychology and psychiatry and methodology grew out of the following view (or their basic belief) regarding ministers. Their approach consists of five major tenets:

1. They believe that ministers can do little for a person in a mental institution.
2. All the minister can do is support the patient's right to feel injured by others.
3. The pastor must understand that those admitted, who feel guilt, are no longer to be subjected to those from the outside. The pressure is to be removed so they might quietly lose their guilt and get well.
4. Pastors must consider those in mental institutions as violators of their conscience, but not victims of their conscience.
5. When the erratic behavior of the counselee is examined, it seems to be sin, but it isn't. The patient is not really responsible for his actions. He can't help what he is doing, he is sick. He blames himself for things he cannot help.

Why such teaching is wrong:

1. Most problems stem from a faulty relationship with God. Therefore, the pastor is the best prepared to help, not the most poorly prepared.
2. The pastor should never support the patient's right to feel injured by others. (Significance and security are not the paramount needs in the person's life.) The counselee is always responsible for his own actions, for resentment and bitterness are never justified. Two wrongs never make a right.
3. All of us have a moral responsibility to clear the conscience concerning whomever we have sinned against. The patient or counselee's guilt may diminish when he is not confronted by the person on the outside, (or by the counselor) but all guilt is real.
4. People in mental institutions are not only victims, but also violators of their consciences. The pastor can play a tremendous role in helping the patient alleviate his guilt by confessing his sin and wrongs and by being reconciled with the offended person.
5. Any and all behavior not consistent with Scripture should be viewed as sinful behavior, and such behavior must be dealt with.

note: Why Skinner's approach is wrong:

1. Man is not a higher form of animal but rather a creation of God.
2. Environment doesn't totally determine man's actions, and man's decisions.
3. Experiments with rats do not tell us everything about man.
4. According to the Scriptures man is responsible for his behavior.
5. A changed environment is not man's primary need.
6. Man cannot provide the model, the power, or the environment for the change that he so desperately needs.
7. Man needs to be transformed. You may modify a person's behavior by a controlled environment, but it takes the Spirit of God to bring inward change.
8. In behaviorism there is no value, no standard, but everything is relative. By this means they seek to recondition the sinner.

While conventional psychiatry has fallen into quite a bit of disfavor, behaviorism has an impact on many modern approaches (even some who consider themselves Biblical) in counseling. Not all the tenets are embraced, but some aspects are held to or have influence.

II. Common Knowledge:

A. Non-Directive Counseling -- Carl Rogers

1. Carl Rogers believed that there is no need for an expert at all. He believed that all men have adequate knowledge and resources to handle their own problems. He played down the depravity of man (Cf. Romans 3:9-18; Jeremiah 17:9; Isaiah 1; 64:6)
2. His basic assumption was that people with unresolved problems were not living up to their own potential.

3. He taught that every person has the potential to do right. Deep within man lies the solutions to all of his problems. He believed that man at his core was good, not evil. (Norman Vincent Peale, Shuler, etc., lean in this direction.) He says that man has a spark of divinity in him; the task is to plug these in and to release the power inherent within.
4. Rogers taught that no authoritative standard from the outside should be imposed upon the counselee. No authoritative word may be spoken by the counselor to the counselee. Roger's approach was totally non-directive .."that you should not superimpose your convictions on someone else."
5. The counselor is a listener, a sounding board, and then one who reflects back to the counselee the ideas shared. He does not attempt to give advice, but to help the person see his inner potential to solve his own problems. The counselor merely seeks to rephrase the counselee's words and repeat them back to him to help him clarify his own thoughts.

note:

This is often called the third force in humanistic psychology. It was suppose to be a rebuttal to the first and second force (Freud and Skinner).

6. Rogers maintained that the study of animals and mental illness is not enough, that one must understand mental health. He taught that a study of the internal and external behavioral aspects was not enough.
7. Rogers felt that one's hopes, desires, feelings, emotions, etc., must be studied to understand the person. And he did not feel that the professional was the only one qualified to solve human problems.

note: Why Roger's approach is wrong.

1. Man does not have adequate resources within.
2. Man's basic problem is more serious than merely not living up to his or her potential.
3. Mankind at the core is sinful, inherently evil.
4. The counselor is not a mirror to merely help the person with the understanding of his own inner thoughts, etc.
5. The Biblical counselor does impose his moral standards on the counselee and they must be the standards of the Word of God, for it is the authoritative WORD.
6. God is sovereign, and His will and purpose are to be impressed upon the counselee. Human personality is not violated by the will, purpose and plan of God for the life.
7. The counselor must not adopt an accepting attitude toward sin.

B. O. Hobart Mower--(noted research psychologist)

1. Mowrer used words like religion-- sin-- and guilt, but drained them of any real Biblical meaning.
2. He saw man's problems as stemming from bad behavior and that the bad behavior leads to feelings of guilt.
3. He taught that guilt can be removed by confession and restitution. (This was strictly on a horizontal level.)
4. He taught also that guilt is the result of violating one's conscience. One's conscience is

usually violated by wronging another person.

5. Mowrer offers only a psychological lift-- a good feeling from owning up to one's own sins. Confession is only on a horizontal level and cannot bring about the change the Bible calls the new birth.
6. In his methodology he stressed group involvement, and that answers could be found within the group. He did stress the need of honesty and openness.

He challenged the entire field of psychiatry. His teaching had a profound impact on conventional psychology and its view of religion. He challenged evangelical Christianity about selling its birthright for a mess of psychological pottage.

note: Mowrer's method was wrong, because...

Sin is against God, and neither man nor the group can atone for man's sin. Resources are in God alone, and confession must begin with God. Mowrer does not meet the need, but does touch upon truth. His main emphasis is upon bad behavior which man needs to confess. His basic idea is that one's problem stems from poor relationships with others and that through group therapy he can get back where he belongs.

note:

We need a framework in which we can properly function in counseling. Unfortunately psychology has not been that framework, either in the past or the more recent schools of thought.

Clinical psychology is one of the most unscientific sciences known to man. There are at present over 200 different schools of therapy, having roughly about 10,000 different techniques. This is proof that they do not have the answers. Which is right?

NEWER PSYCHOTHERAPIES ON THE SCENE: We will examine one of the newer approaches to counseling that have had an impact on Christians.

Some seem to be Christian in doctrine and principle, but on closer examination they contain only the ideas of men. Because they resemble Christianity on the surface, Christians fall for them, and their tenets are incorporated into the methodology of some well known counselors of today.

Here is the example of...

Reality Therapy-- William Glasser

1. He taught the core of Reality Therapy as found in the three R's - reality, responsibility, and right-and-wrong.
2. He stressed that the person must see and deal with life as it really is--and that a distorted view of the actions of other people, of the events affecting the person's life, and one's actions can lead to emotional problems and hinder that person from behaving in appropriate ways.
3. He encouraged the patient to develop behavior that is realistic in terms of both the present and the future.
4. In the area of responsibility he stated, "It is not enough to help a person face reality; he must also learn to fulfill his needs in a responsible way."

5. He worked almost totally with outward behavior and taught that responsible behavior shapes positive thoughts and emotions.
6. He taught that every person has two basic needs--- "The need to love and to be loved and the need to feel that we are worthwhile to ourselves and to others." Hence-- significance and security, and self-worth or self-esteem.
7. His standards are all worldly standards and the methodology is totally self-effort to bring about change.

note: The study of the history of psychotherapy reveals the rise and decline of one psychotherapy after another with none seeming to disappear because a newer model, new version or newer idea comes along.

The Christian psychologists of recent years include all the following. Dr. Clyde Narramore, Henry Brandt, William Hulme, Wayne Oates, Carroll Wise, John S. Bonnell, Frank Minirth, James Dobson, Charles Solomon, Lawrence Crabb, Gary Collins, William Backus, Rollo May, Jay Adams, and many others.

Many of them are eclectic in their approach and they seek to amalgamate many of the methods of the world's psychologists into a workable system with some Biblical overtones.

The above list are professionals, and besides them are the many who are evangelical popularizers. These people are not embraced by the former group for the most part and are considered to be "overly simplistic" and in danger of doing harm by their "self-help" formulas for psychological stability and principles for spiritual growth. This group also includes a great cross section of theological bents and positions. They include such people as: Charlie Shedd, Norman Wright, Bruce Larson, Tim LaHaye, Bill Gothard, J. Allan Peterson, and many others.

Is Christian counseling simply a Rogerian, Freudian, or behavioristic approach with occasional prayer and reading of Bible verses tacked on? Or is counseling based on biblical assumptions that are in some way unique?

To baptize counseling systems like Skinnerian Behaviorism and Berne/Harris/Steiner views of Transactional Analysis into the Christian fold unconverted by adding on God's Holy Name and sprinkling in a few assorted scriptural proof texts, ultimately amounts to taking His Name in vain. Yet this is what many seek to accomplish in their methodology of counseling.

The following books would help the student to understand many of the unbiblical approaches to counseling that are popular today:

Psycho-heresy by the Bobgans, and *The Psychological Way/ the Spiritual Way* by Martin and Deidre Bobgan.

Helping People Grow by Gary Collins; *Your Place in the Counseling Revolution* by Dr. Jay Adams

III. Divine Knowledge:

A Christian must start with a Biblical foundation and build from it a Christian methodology of counseling which rests upon and is consistent with the foundation -

- Statement made by Dr. Jay E. Adams

- A. **We must begin with the Scriptures** (II Timothy 3:16,17; Romans 15:4; 15:14; I Corinthians 10:11).
- B. **Too often in the past counselors have begun with external data.** They have begun with the findings of B.F. Skinner, Sigmund Freud, Carl Rogers, and others. Christian counseling must have a methodology that is Christian or Biblical in order to be Christian Counseling.
- C. **Too often in the past the Christian has been guilty** of building upon the sinking sand of psychology. Many have tried to find Scripture texts to support the foundation already laid from the teachings of the world.
- D. **Instead of beginning with psychology, we must begin with the Scriptures.** If the Bible is the Word of God, and if it is the final word for faith and practice, then it should reign paramount.
- E. **We should know the Word of God** so well that we can properly evaluate teachings of psychology in the light of the "thus saith the Lord." We should know the Scriptures thoroughly and comprehensively.

note: This is a tremendous contrast to the idea that everything is relative--what is good today may be bad tomorrow, what is good for you may be bad for me; every person is entitled to his own value system.

F. The Bible is the book on Behavior.

1. It instructs us how to live and not live.
2. It shows us what is acceptable behavior and unacceptable behavior. It shows us step-by-step how we can bring about behavior and personality change.
3. The Bible lays the framework for interpersonal relationships. It gives practical advice on solving family, marital, and personal conflicts.

G. Biblical Foundation

Jesus Christ is the center of all Christian counseling. He is the chief Corner Stone. If this statement is true, then who should know more about the human mind, personality, and behavioral change than the Lord? If Jesus Christ is at the center, then He, as Psalm 139 indicates specifically and intricately designed every single person. He is the master designer of every life.

The following general presuppositions are very important:

1. The Bible is the inspired, inherent Word of God, the final authority regarding faith and practice (II Timothy 3:16,17). It thoroughly equips for living.
2. Man's basic problem is a sin problem (Romans 1, Jeremiah 17:9; Isaiah 53:6; Psalm 51). If we begin with any other basis or foundation, we will not truly be able to bring about the behavior and personality change that God requires of man which is possible only through the work of the Holy Spirit. We must believe that the basic problem is sin and therefore the remedy is Jesus Christ.

3. Man is responsible for his actions. God created man to make responsible choices. God does not excuse man's behavior. Each person is responsible for his or her actions. God does not look for reasons or excuses, so called. He judges man squarely on his response to Jesus Christ and the Word of God (James 4:17; II Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 20:12; 21:8).

note:

Freud puts the blame on society. He said that man was not responsible for his actions or conditions and not responsible for getting out of his dilemma. Man is basically mentally ill because we have produced a too strict conscience, or "super ego" into the patient.

4. All problems fall into three categories-- organic, satan, or spiritual. One's emotions are not an entity in themselves, rather they are connected to one's thinking and behavior. Change one's thinking and behavior and one will change the emotions.
5. The Christian counselor should assume the person is suffering from spiritual maladjustment or sin. The spiritual problem will evidence itself in improper thinking or improper behavior, and doubtless both are involved, although the thinking is not as apparent.
6. Biblical counseling is directive in nature. The Bible is a directive book. Counseling is not just acting as a "sounding board", but it is warning, challenging, giving advice, guiding, admonishing and even rebuking.

Part two

BASIC THEOLOGICAL PRESUPPOSITIONS IN PASTORAL COUNSELING

The Bible-believing pastor must make certain that his counseling is either directly based upon Scripture or is in harmony with it. Otherwise he is working in the flesh, and/or is using satanic methods.

One's theological tenets will greatly affect his counseling. The following are foundations to one's work in counseling. Here is the basis for Biblical counseling.

I. The Existence of God, and His Person:

There is a God before whom we live and to whom we must give account of ourselves. It may be said that more consequences for thought and action follow the affirmation or denial of God than from answering any other basic question. (Ideas from Dr. Robert Brien's book- *You Are What You Think*, pgs. 45- 46).

A Bible believing pastor will be careful not to disregard the anti-God sentiments that are either explicit or implicit in many of the modern psychotherapies.

God loves sinners while they are yet morally helpless, sinning, and even indifferent and antagonistic toward Him (Romans 5:8, 10; I Timothy 1:15; Ephesians 2:1-3). It is because of God's undeserved love for sinners that the emotionally distressed person may find the basis for change.

Divine resources are sufficient to meet man's need. God has the ability to enlighten, to convict of sin, to regenerate and to transform lives. Where willpower fails, God 's power succeeds in changing the ingrained habit patterns of many years. A man becomes a new creature in Christ (II Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:10; note- John 6:37; I John 3:1; II Cor. 2:9).

II. Theological Truths Concerning Man:

A. Man was created by God:

He is a creature designed by a personal God. Man was created with both a material and a non-material nature. He is from both dust and God.

Theologians, physiologists and psychologists often find themselves in serious disagreement on this issue.

B. Man was created for God's pleasure, as a morally responsible being.

According to the Word of God man was created to glorify God (I Corinthians 10:31; Revelation 4:11). He is worthy to receive glory, honor, and power, for he not only created all things but they are for His pleasure. Only when a man is fulfilling the divine purpose for his existence will he find a deep sense of meaning in his life.

Man by nature, by God's creation, has a conscience that either accuses or excuses him for his actions (Romans 2:14, 15). He is responsible for what he thinks and does.

C. Man was created in a state of innocence, in God's image.

When man came from the hand of God he was very good (Genesis 1:31). Man's present imperfect and sinful condition is not due to God's poor workmanship but due to human sinfulness.

We were created in God's image, after His likeness (Genesis 1:26). This is seen primarily in man's intellectual ability, his moral and social nature, and especially in his spiritual capacity-- a capacity for communication with God. As the counselee begins to see how God originally planned His creation, he can also begin to see, in spite of his sinfulness, the great importance of God in his life.

D. Man became depraved.

By depravity I mean that there is nothing in fallen man that pleases God. Even though men may see good in a person, God sees a heart that is basically antagonistic toward Himself and His law. *Man's spiritual state is such that no effort of his will can bring about a radical change in his heart. Unless God intervenes by grace, man remains in a condition of antagonism toward a holy God (Romans 3: 9-23).*

There is a great deal of agreement among thinking men that something is wrong with human nature. Einstein stated after World War II that something is wrong with the hearts and minds of men. The following are Scriptural indications of human depravity:

1. *Self-centeredness:* The Scripture indicates that men normally "live unto themselves" (II Corinthians 5:15). When Adam and Eve first doubted God, self rather than God became the center of their lives. In pride they sought to be equal with God. Pride is the foundation of all sin, and every sin flows out of pride. Pride is the foundation of all selfishness, which is the basis of all other sin. It is basic to every mental distress, and especially to the deep-seated anxiety that is the lot of many human beings. A selfish, prideful looking out for self, instead of loving and trusting God, cannot help but result in anxiety, for man has no sure confidence that he can take care of himself. Man cannot be at peace with himself until he becomes God centered.
2. *A will that is antagonistic toward God:* (Romans 8:7). The carnal mind is enmity against God, and not subject to God. Since Adam, men have not been seeking God, but rather have been running away from Him. Adam and Eve hide from God, and in that process also hide from one another. Because of sin this has been a natural reaction ever since that time. Even when men know what God desires, they turn to their own way (Isaiah 53:6).
3. *A life that is dead toward God:* (Ephesians 2:1). When a person is dead in sin he is dead toward God and has no disposition to love, honor, obey, or fellowship with God. His religious works are also "dead works" and cannot please God.
4. *A heart that is deceitful:* (Jeremiah 17:9; Psalm 58:3). One of man's most basic problems is untruthfulness, which results in all kinds of evil. Man has a distinct ability to distort truth. Man tends to distort the reality of the outside world and also the truth about his own inner thoughts.

note: In most every situation where counseling is needed it is due to the fact that there has been a distortion in the way the person sees himself, events, circumstances, and other people. He tells himself lies and believes them, and then acts upon them as though they were true. Basil Jackson stated in a lecture, "All psychotherapy (or counseling) is an exercise in telling the truth." Some people are stubbornly unwilling to admit that they are wrong or have done wrong because they have falsely convinced themselves of their innocence.

5. *A darkened understanding:* (I Corinthians 2:14; II Cor. 4:3,4; Ephesians 4:18). Because the understanding is darkened, man cannot see that his way of thinking is futile. Neither can he see his spiritual needs.

6. *An evil imagination:* (Genesis 6:5). The Hebrew word for "imagination" means "the thing framed." The things fallen man frames in his mind are evil-- his imaginations, his intentions, his thoughts, and his plans. The mind is the source of the problem (Proverbs 23:7).
7. *A defective conscience:* Conscience is "the light which lighteth every man" (John 1:9). It is the moral nature with which every man is born. Because of the fall of Adam, the conscience of every one of his descendants has been dulled so that it does not respond adequately when sin is contemplated or committed. In some, the conscience has been seared (I Timothy 4:12) so that it is "past feeling" (Ephesians 4:19). Early childhood experiences are also a factor in the molding of the conscience.

note: The conscience can be so badly abused over a long period of time that it becomes calloused and no longer gives trustworthy moral guidance. In order for it to function at its best, a man's conscience must be informed by both the Spirit of God and the Word of God. The Freudian view was that conscience is merely the internalized voice of one's parents, and his method involved the quieting or changing of the conscience in order to get rid of guilt.

8. *A sin nature that is the basic cause of emotional distress and sinful behavior or action:* (Romans 1, 2, 3). Man's basic sinful nature is the basis of sinful attitudes and self-deceit (Proverbs 28:13). Some mental, emotional and spiritual distress is caused by genetic or physiological factors but people make most of their own problems.

note: If so called mental illness is a disease, then why do we put people in a jail? If it is a disease the ill need a hospital and not a psychiatrist. No one has ever talked someone out of a disease. Counselees need instruction, regeneration, repentance, and restoration as a Christian because they are emotionally ill and probably not physically ill.

III. Theological Truths Concerning Guilt:

Guilt is a very beneficial thing when it is "true guilt". While some psychologists believe that guilt feelings are one of the major culprits in mental distress, others *see guilt as God's alarm within the mind of man telling him that something needs to be changed.*

In his book, *Guilt and Grace*, Paul Tournier makes a distinction between false, unnecessary or functional guilt and a true or value guilt. He states:

"A feeling of 'functional guilt' is one which results from social suggestion, fear of taboos or of losing the love of others. A feeling of "value guilt" is the genuine consciousness of having betrayed an authentic standard; it is a free judgment of the self by the self while 'false guilt' comes as a result of judgments and suggestions of men. True guilt is that which results from divine judgment... therefore real guilt is often something quite different from what weighs some down because of fear of social judgment and the disapproval of men. We become independent of them in proportion as we depend on God."

In Psalms 32 and 51 we read of David's account of his repentance and guilt concerning Bathsheba and Uriah. It is evident that God used a sense of intensive guilt to bring David to repentance. There is a godly guilt that leads on to repentance.

Note: These are some of the theological presuppositions with which a Biblically-oriented pastor-counselor must work and which will have a great influence upon his choices of goals, methods and biblical therapeutic approaches to counseling.

Part Three

BASIS FOR NOUTHETIC COUNSELING:

I. Bringing About Restoration:

What is counseling? The answer is simple and yet very profound. While the work of counseling is not necessarily easy, is very much needed. It is that process by which one Christian restores another to a place of usefulness to Christ in His Church. The command in the Word of God is very clear that we "restore" any brothers or sisters whom God providentially places in our pathway day by day.

Galatians 6:1 gives us the command to restore another. This original word in the Greek was used by fishermen and physicians when they described the mending of fishnets and the setting of fractures. They both called their work "restoration". A torn net is of little or no value; the fish easily slip through and are lost. Likewise broken bones in the arm make it useless until they are set. Both nets and arms need to be restored to their former use.

God has given a heavy burden, and a broader authority that corresponds with it, to those who are official church counselors. They must search out problems among the members of the church in order to care for them immediately. As shepherds they are required not only to handle the problems that they come upon in life's road, but to keep watch over the souls of every member (Hebrews 13:17). The pastor-counselor is commanded to "keep watch" or to "remain awake and to be alert" to problems that may arise.

The ultimate goal of all restoration is to glorify God. When we counsel another we must ask, "How has his usefulness to Christ been diminished by His problem?" The goal ought to guide one's method, attitudes and activities in helping the counselee. We counsel not to punish, to gloat over the persons or to know their sin. We will desire to bring them to usefulness and victory in the Lord (I Corinthians 10:31,32; Colossians 3:23).

II. Giving "Nouthetic" Counseling:

A. Christ is at the center of all true counseling:

1. All things were created by Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:16,17).
2. It was God through Christ who formed man out of the dust of the ground (Genesis 2:7).
3. The Lord specifically and intricately designed every single body differently (Psalm 139:13-16).

B. Nouthetic Counseling is the work of every Christian: (Romans 15:14; 15:1; Galatians 6:1; Colossians 3:16).

1. Paul counseled nouthetically on a one-to-one basis (Acts 20:31).
2. Every Christian, who is spiritual, who is Spirit-filled should be involved in the work of counseling.

C. Nouthetic Counseling includes at least three elements:

The word, nouthetic, comes from the Greek word *-nouthesia*. This is the word from which the name nouthetic counseling comes. It is simply a designation for Biblical counseling. It is a comprehensive term which denotes a use of the Scriptures foremost in the counseling process. The Greek word "nouthesia" has often been translated "admonish, warn, and teach." A. T. Robertson, a Greek authority, has translated it "to put sense into" also translated "counsel." Jay Adams transliterates it "nouthetic" because no one English word in itself defines it.

Jay Adams gives the following: "It contains the three elements: ***change through confrontation out of concern***. It presupposes,

- * that there are sinful patterns and activities in the life of the counselee that God wants ***changed***.
- * that this change will be brought about through a verbal ***confrontation*** of the counselee with the Scriptures as the counselor ministers them in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- * this confrontation is done in a loving, ***caring***, familial manner for the benefit of the counselee. There is deep ***concern***."

note: Ready to Restore---What Is Counseling?" -- Pg 9

III. Some Basic Elements in Nouthetic Counseling:

Nouthetic counseling suggests that there is something wrong with the person who is to be confronted nouthetically, or Biblically. It arises out of the fact that there is a condition which God desires changed. The fundamental purpose of nouthetic confrontation then is to effect personality and behavioral change-- conformity to the image of Christ. *God wants change*. All counseling aims at change. Without this element whatever we might be doing, it is not counseling. In the word, "restore" we had a term which required change. Usefulness was lost. The change must take place because of the Christian who is caught in sin (Galatians 6:1). The change that is contemplated in the restoration to usefulness is a change in life patterns in which sinful beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors are replaced by righteous ones (see Ephesians 4:22-24).

- A. **All counseling has to do with changes in beliefs, judgments, values, relationships, thoughts, behavior, and other such moral elements of life.** Sin in human life has led to distortions of life in each of these categories. There is the resulting sinful thought and action that is the object of change in Christian counseling. The counselor "aims" at straightening out the individual by changing his patterns of behavior to conform to Biblical standards. The sinful responses are to be replaced with righteous ones.
- B. **Also in Biblical counseling there ought to be the aim of preventive counseling.** If we would labor in this area both in teaching and preaching, maybe many of the problems people face could be alleviated in the first place.
- C. **Problems are solved by verbal means, that is, there must be some Biblical confrontation of the problem at hand.** This implies personal, verbal contact in which the Word of God is applied to the counselee. There is no idea here of nastiness, or harshness, or a know-it-all-attitude, in the concept of ***confrontation***. We will deal with this further a bit later. There is training by the mouth, that is, it is a person-to-person verbal use of Scripture-- sometimes by encouragement and sometimes by reproof. There must be a "speaking the truth in love" a truth telling which pleases God (Ephesians 4:15, 25).

D. There must be the element of concern or otherwise confrontation will be sterile, lifeless, cold, professional, harsh, and probably out of a critical spirit. In this care for another there ought to be strong desire and untiring effort to relieve the person of the misery that sinful life patterns have brought upon him. This is true biblical counseling.

note: The counselor seeks to minister the Scriptures, to help the person interpret and apply the principles and practices of the Word of God in an attempt to help bring about the changes that will relieve him of his miseries. Such a ministry is conducted prayerfully, in the power of the Holy Spirit. The counselor will seek wisdom to minister the Scriptures with the goal to bring change which will lead to restoration unto usefulness.

The counselor in the contact or personal conference and discussion (counseling) will direct toward change in the direction of greater conformity to Biblical principles and practices. The goal must be to meet the obstacles or sin problems as the Holy Spirit directs, helping the person to understand the problem. The purpose is God's glory in the life.

E. Nouthetic counseling may be defined in short as ... 1) meeting the person where he is.... 2) pointing out what is wrong.... 3) and helping him obtain the desirable personality and behavioral change -- based upon Scripture.
This will also necessitate helping him to understand his sinful thinking behind the actions.

F. Nouthetic Counseling is always Biblical counseling: In II Timothy 3:16,17 we find the ultimate purpose of the Word of God in the life of every Christian. Not only is the Word of God given to make us wise unto salvation and to be the instrument God uses to bring this about (I Peter 2:23; Titus 3:5), but also He would use it to bring about sanctification in daily life.

As we use the Word of God it becomes to the counselee (II Timothy 3:15- 17) ---

1. **Doctrine--** by which we know truth. And the truth shall set you free (John 8:32, 36).
2. **Reproof--** by which we compare our lives with the biblical standard, and become aware of our sinful condition through conviction. Without conviction there never will be change. This is a convicting activity which must be pursued when the counselee is unaware of his sin or is still unrepentant. The Holy Spirit must work the conviction in the life as the counselor presents the Word of God (James 1: 19-25).
3. **Correction--** by which we recognize the change needed and begin to bring about that change. Repentance leads to a change in behavior as a change of mind and will take place through correction by the Word of God. This activity is "to set straight" in which we show the counselee how to break sinful habits and how to overcome failures and weaknesses. This includes reconciliation, restitution and putting on new patterns.
4. **Instruction--** for the Scriptures would bring instruction in righteousness. By the Word of God we recognize how far short we are of God's plan and how sin brings much misery. There will be instruction concerning putting off the old ways and putting on the new ones and about staying out of sin in the future.
5. **Discipline-- in righteousness.** This structuring activity would involve laying out a personal biblical pattern of living for the counselee to replace the unbiblical one. **This will involve regular Bible study, and the ministry of the Word of God.**

Part Four

THE COMMITMENT TO BIBLICAL COUNSELING:

I. The Case For Pastoral Counseling:

We have seen that the Scriptures were given to us... for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness (II Timothy 3:16,17). The Bible is the book God has provided to guide us in counseling and it includes all that is needed to bring about the change required to live a life pleasing to God. Surely that very fact would cause us to realize the importance of the pastor's being involved in a counseling ministry.

A. The Definition of Pastoral Counseling:

The pastor is a *poimen* (shepherd), a *presbuteros* (elder) and *anepiskopos* (overseer). He is a mature Christian whom God has placed over his people. His appointment and ordination is a recognition of the divine call upon his life. His responsibilities include evangelizing (II Timothy 4:5), leading by example (Peter 5:3), teaching, admonishing, rebuking, warning, training, edifying, and restoring. His primary ministry is the preaching and teaching of the Word of God (II Timothy 4:2). But in the midst of all of this is the very important ministry of counseling.

The designation "pastoral counseling" is limited primarily to the pastoral use of the Word of God in restoring sick or distressed members of the flock of God. Such counseling involves a decision to deal with an individual to alleviate his distress in a particular way. It is to help the person think differently, biblically and feel differently about a whole area or several areas of his life. It is the use of the Word of God to bring about change in the person's thinking, feeling, and actions, and to help him realize in his own experience the abundant life that Christ promised (John 10:10).

B. The Lack of Pastoral Counseling:

While many biblical pastors know there is a great need for counseling many excuse themselves for not taking the responsibility.

Some are troubled with thoughts of incompetence when they face the strange theories and vocabulary of psychology and the great variety of psychotherapies. (the world's approach) They wonder whether or not they could master the subject of counseling sufficiently to be any practical use. There is the greater problem of understanding how to counsel without the involvement of man's methods. Primarily one must be an expert in the use of the Word of God, for it is the greatest of therapeutic agents.

C. Arguments for Pastoral counseling:

1. *The Word of God is very clear about the great needs that people face which affect them mentally, emotionally, and physically.* We cannot get away from the fact that there is a biblical Psychology which is a legitimate study. (Note Psalm 42, 43.) Throughout the history of Christianity, pastors and spiritual leaders have sought to understand the workings of troubled minds in order to more skillfully apply the Word of God as a means of relief.

2. *Pastors are the major source of counseling.* The pastor is often the first, and sometimes the only, professional person to whom people go for comfort and counsel. Surveys prove that 42% of the people with problems would prefer to seek out a pastor. The pastor has the kind of ready made atmosphere for counseling that most others do not have.
3. *We must have emotionally well people who are mature if we are to also have evangelism.* Christian maturity is basic to service. Emotionally ill saints do not win many souls. Depressed and defeated Christians are likely to provoke the unconverted to turn away from Christ or Christianity. We must edify the saints if we are to help them qualify for service and outreach.
4. *Tremendous needs do exist among the saints of God. **Probably every failure and/or sin experienced by the unconverted is also experienced by God's people.*** The Word of God has much counsel about such things as anxiety, depression, fear, jealousy, anger, sexual sins, marriage failures, frustration and resentment, etc. **In almost every instance these problems involve sinful behavior and irrational thinking.**
 - a. There is the **worried, anxious and fearful person** who walks in unbelief. (Or he is his way due to other sinful practices.)
 - b. There is the **depressed believer** who feels rejected, unloved, inadequate, and worthless. (Potential source-- anger, bitterness.)
 - c. The **jealous person** is usually troubled with selfish sinful attitudes. (Potential source-- pride, personality weakness & sin.)
 - d. Many believers are **angry** because they selfishly and irrationally believe that everything ought to go the way they wish. **When their wills are crossed or their plans are thwarted, they become angry.** Research reveals that much anger is related to a *perceived* attack upon one's self.
 - e. Many emotional factors are involved in many sins that believers commit. (Some are highly emotionally motivated.)

D. **World conditions have brought a profound impact toward the need of pastoral counseling.** This is a list of things which bring pressure, stress and emotional problems to mankind:

- * Materialistic outlook of modern Americans
- * Our infatuation with self
- * TV, and the new morality
- * The urbanization of society
- * A rootless society
- * Competition in an open economy
- * Working wives and mothers
- * Religious apostasy
- * Moral relativism has increased the incidence of sin and guilt
- * Mankind becoming just a number in many instances
- * A very transient population
- * Pastors who abdicate their responsibility

note: Pastors have a God-given responsibility to teach, warn, rebuke and admonish the sheep of their flocks (Colossians 3:16; II Timothy 4: 2). The word, "admonition," or *nouthesia*, upon which Dr. Jay Adams bases his Nouthetic counseling, signifies "putting people in mind" of the truths they specifically need at a particular time.

Emotional and sinful distress cannot help but influence one's worship, spiritual outlook, and Christian walk. The need for victory over sin and effectiveness in service and witness

make it imperative that the pastor be involved when his people have problems. It would seem obligatory for pastors to help their people avoid the dangers of walking "in the counsel of the ungodly" (Psalm 1:1).

note: Even though the secular psychologist does not seek to contradict or destroy the counselee's religious faith, he still could do much spiritual harm to a believer and certainly would be at a handicap in dealing with the believer's problems. The pastor, working with the person in a biblical context, can do what the secularist can never do.

II. The Commitment To Pastoral Counseling:

- A. The pastor will be committed because he is burdened** about the disturbed person, the perplexed person, the potential divorcee, those in financial bondage, the quarreling church member, the aged, the rebellious youth, the newly married, and soon to be married, etc. (See *Caring And Counseling* book for further thoughts.)
- B. He is committed toward bringing change.** Good counseling is communication between two or more people by which one person endeavors to effect change for one or more persons through the power of the Holy Spirit by the means of the Word of God. The task of the Christian counselor is to call for repentance, which is a call for a change of mind leading to a change of life. The one who needs to repent may not be the counselee. Jay Adams writes, "*Counseling has to do with living. It has to do with how you evaluate and meet life situations. It has to do with how people live at home with other people and how they live with God. That's what counseling is all about-- attitudes, values, beliefs, and behavior.*"
- C. He is committed to Christian growth.** Richard Gantz says, "*Biblical counseling is teaching people to live the Christian life.*" It is assisting Christians in growth or progressive sanctification (Romans 8:29; II Corinthians 3:18; I John 3:2). The pastor must be committed to the task of counseling. He must comprehend the biblical explanations for Christian growth, not men's proposals, ideas, and methodology.
- D. He will be committed regardless of the past.** Tim LaHaye said, "*During the past 30 to 40 years western civilization has become increasingly obsessed with the idea that whenever a person becomes upset, he needs to see a secular, professional counselor.*" It was the liberal ministers who started a movement called "Clinical Pastoral Education" in America some 50 to 60 years ago.

In the past, conservative Bible believing pastors were either too busy with evangelism and rebuilding ministries lost to the liberals, or they were overreacting to the point of believing that counseling is wrong since liberals and secularist were doing it. And because the average pastor did not feel prepared to counsel his people he would refer those in need to the world's psychologists. This was and is a great error.

The lack of training and lack of a balanced ministry caused many pastors to neglect the Divine call to minister to those in need (see John 21). With the Bible school movement there was an emphasis on evangelism to the loss of a balanced edification ministry. Also, there was a suspicion of higher education because of the liberals who were educated "out of" their adherence to the Bible. As a result many ministers did not receive a seminary education which could have given them the tools for an edification ministry among their own, that would include counseling.

PREPARATION TOWARD CARING AND COUNSELING

(At this point I would also encourage you to study the materials in the book, "Caring and Counseling"... Introduction and pages 1-3) It would be good to bring up the book and copy all of it.)

Part Five

SOME GENERAL PRINCIPLES & PRACTICES IN COUNSELING

I. The Ministry of Counseling in the Local Church:

(note materials on Pg 3-5 of the book -- *Caring and Counseling*. --study these pages).

- A. Calling people to remembrance-
- B. A ministry of exhortation-
- C. A ministry of modeling-
- D. A ministry of encouragement-

II. The Qualities and Characteristics We Must Have:

It is as the shepherd, and not the psychiatrist, that God has assigned the task. The Holy Spirit with the Word of God will bring change in personality and character. The Bible is the textbook for counseling (II Peter 1:3) for it tells the believer how to relate to God and man.

(Notes in *Caring and Counseling* Study these pages -- Pgs. 5, 6)

- A. We must possess knowledge-
- B. We must have adaptability-
- C. We must have genuine concern-
- D. We need insight-
- E. We must have "goodness, knowledge, wisdom" (Romans 15:14).

Since all Christians need counseling at some time or the other and since all saints need to grow so they can counsel others, all of us must work at having the Biblical qualifications fulfilled in our daily lives.

1. *Goodness embraces both the involvement and the empathetic loving concern about which something already has been said or shared by the counselee.* We love people because we are concerned for them. This should be a kind of spontaneous response to others in need. We are also to provoke others to love and to stimulate them to good works. (See Hebrews 10:24.)
2. *We need knowledge, the understanding of the truths of the Word of God.* We must so saturate our lives with the principles of the Word of God that we can meet needs. It involves adapting the Word of God to human situations without compromising it. We need the spiritual gift of discernment.
The counselor will "exegete" the Word of God and thus apply the Scriptures in a practical fashion. He will labor to exalt Christ and meet human needs, and not just give verses like "pills."

If the pastor-counselor does not have the answer he will admit it, and search the Scriptures to discover the answer.

3. *The wisdom the Word of God gives is paramount.* Knowledge is not enough. We must know these books and chapters well: Proverbs chapters 1-8; Romans 6, 8, 12; Galatians 5, 6; Ephesians 4, 5, 6; Philippians 4; Colossians 3; James; I Peter 3; I John 1, 2, etc.)

The counselor will have a humble confidence in the "thus saith the Lord" and will acknowledge that any benefit accruing from his counseling is ultimately attributable to the work of God.

note: The pastoral counselor will desire to lead the counselee into the "will of God" for the life so that God might be glorified in the life. The counselor will desire to-- heal rather than hurt-- build up rather than tear down-- unite rather than divide and drive further away-- bring about repentance rather than provoke to wrath.

F. We must instill "hope"-

1. *The need of hope.* The counselee often feels that all hope is gone. Life is meaningless when there is no hope. When meaning and purpose in life goes, so does the desire to live. I have often found that if I instilled hope the counselees would begin to listen, desirous to find Biblical answers to their problem (s). Hope to the troubled person is like a life raft to the drowning person.
2. *How to instill hope.* By speaking a kind word, like, "I'm sincerely praying for you." By sharing God's concern for them and showing them God can meet their need. He is concerned. He cares for He made us and is aware of every need. Hope is tremendously needed in their lives. Christ is touched with the feelings of our infirmities. There is nothing we could experience, but what He has also experienced it (Hebrews 4:14-16; 12:1-4; 13: 5, 6; I Peter 5:7; Psalm 55:22; I Corinthians 1:3-5)..

We instill hope by personal testimony of what God has done in our lives or the lives of others with whom we have labored and who have been recovered from sin and failure. The restored counselees can have tremendous impact by their testimony.

We give homework assignments partly for the purpose of instilling hope toward change as they see there are specific things they can do, as well.

note:

As we reach out to them, sharing the hope of what God can and will do, that genuine hope becomes a bridge to their future. In this we must establish involvement (Acts 20:21) as we manifest compassion, empathy, feeling, reaching out in Christ's Name to the needy person.

The person is not just a number. Strangers are only friends whom we have never met before. We must be willing to show emotion and yet be careful that we are not too intimately involved. Showing discretion, and yet being compassionate, is very important. Christ had tears. Going to the extreme of no compassion or tears is wrong.

No one can successfully be an island to himself. In one sense each person needs at least one other person. We must convince the counselee that he is someone who is loved. There is a degree of professionalism that must be maintained, and yet we contend that every person is a friend.

G. We must receive talk of personal failure seriously and calmly.

1. *Don't act surprised.* If the counselee says he is worthless, don't act surprised, or if he tells some sordid, immoral story or of some involvement, don't be shocked or show dismay, etc.
2. *The counselee may have failed.* Often the person is experiencing great amounts of guilt because in many instances he is simply guilty. Don't minimize his guilt, for he will feel all the more guilty. And to minimize his problem is to minimize his story and show disinterest toward the seriousness of what he is saying.
3. *Take him at his word.* But also realize that this is probably not the total story. Often only the symptoms are being shared and the root problems are still buried or hidden. You must get to the real problem for it may be hidden behind the presented problem.

H. We must give authoritative instruction.

1. *Christian, Biblical counseling involves authoritative instruction, both in content and in loving attitude on the part of the counselor.* (See Proverbs 2:1-4, 8; 2:5-15; 1:8; 3:1, 4; 6:20-23.) We must use the the Word of God in an authoritative manner as Solomon in the book of Proverbs gave authoritative instruction.
2. *Focus upon Scriptural living.* Love will blossom as counselors focus their attention upon purification of the heart, cleansing of the conscience, and building of genuine trust. The trust must be toward God, His Word, and toward the counselor.

I. We must be a good listener.

1. *Don't interrupt! Hear them out* (Proverbs 18:13; James 1:19).
2. *Listen with the ears.* Don't gaze elsewhere or arrange the desk, etc. Interrupt only if necessary.
3. *Listen for feelings, facts, overtones, undertones, hidden meanings.* Listen selectively (relative to needs), listen responsively, empathetically, not proposing a solution until you have understood the problem. Don't be involved in planning a reply.

J. We must rely on the power of God.

1. *Really rely on the working of the Holy Spirit and the power of God* through you and through the Word of God. Don't just give "lip service" to this, but expect God to be at work in the counseling session. Anticipate God being at work in the life and be watching for it by faith (Hebrews 11:1, 6). Walk with the Holy Spirit.
2. *Begin and close every session with prayer.* Let them know that you are praying for them (Proverbs 2:6,7; 3:5,6; James 1:5). And really do pray for them in earnest, fervent supplication (Ephesians 6:18).

K. We must give advice carefully, prayerfully, not hastily.

1. It is easy to think that we must always have a quick answer for everything and that we always ought to have an answer.

2. Don't be afraid to tell the person that you need to pray about a certain problem and give it more study.
3. It is better to say nothing than to say the wrong thing.
4. Constantly check your advice with the Word of God. It should be your primary source book at all times. Memorizing and meditating on the Word of God will help prepare you for times of need.

III. The Change That Comes Through Love and Forgiveness:

A. Love is the goal, and the paramount need. (John 15: 9, 12,17; I Timothy 1:5;). Twelve times God says "Love one another."

1. Love for God and love for one's neighbor constitute the sum of God's requirements for the Christian.
2. Love is the ultimate answer to all the problems of living with which the Christian counselor deals (I John 4:17,18).
3. A primary principle of Biblical counseling is this: As a person moves closer to God *through His love--* which includes both mercy and truth expressed through His Word and through His Holy Spirit-- he will change in the areas of thoughts, emotions and actions.
4. God's love can touch a person's spirit, and one consistent result of a deepened spiritual life is an improved mental-emotional-behavioral life. *The change occurs through love, not through psychological techniques and training.*
5. Only God's love can **transform** a life. God's love is infinitely more intense than human love. God's love is a powerful, consistent, dependable force that, when received, transforms the individual and enables him to walk by faith, to hope in God, and to love God and others according to the Great Commandment (Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18; Matt. 22:36-40).
6. As one reads about how Jesus ministered to each individual, one learns to depend upon God to lead and he learns God's way of **ministering truth in LOVE** and in power. Paul prayed for the Ephesians that they would know the love of God in daily life (Eph. 3:16-20; 4:2; 5: 1,2, 25, 29, 31).
7. In life there is either the manifestation of self-love or of God's love.
Does the counselee understand the basis of God's love? Does he understand the demonstration of God's love through the cross? Does he respond to God's love? Does he love God and others? Is he preoccupied with self? Does he walk in self-love and self-will? Does he manifest submission or rebellion?
8. God's love is the primary motivation for growth and change. Receiving God's love and following the "great commandment" of Matthew 22:36 are major goals in Biblical counseling. (See I Jh 4.)

note:

In teaching the love of God the counselor will stress those aspects of God's character that the counselee needs to hear, namely--

- > That God's love under girds, amplifies, and modifies every quality of His character.
- < Teaching about His love will include teaching about His sovereignty, power, truth, holiness, faithfulness, wisdom, justice, righteousness, grace, mercy, forgiveness, patience, and tenderness, etc.
- > The counselee needs to know, believe and receive the love of God. He will need to understand that this is ours NOT by merit or works, but totally of grace. And that God's love is manifested even in the difficult things, for everything comes through His hand of love. (See Rom. 8:28,29.)
- > Some equate love with having their own way, which is another form of self-love, and making self as god. God's love flows to us from the Cross, which is a vivid picture of self-abasement for our sakes (Heb. 12:1-4).

B. Receiving Forgiveness is also a Paramount Need.

1. Forgiveness provides freedom from guilt and enables a person to walk in right relationship with God and man. It is the means for restoring a relationship that has been clouded with sin. Forgiveness is one of the essential considerations in counseling. So often people find it difficult to truly forgive and the problems continue because of its lack (Ps. 32:5; Eph. 4: 32; Col. 3:12-14).
2. The only way there can be true healing and restoration is by repentance. There can be the joy of full forgiveness through confession. Psalms 32 and 51 would be very important for the counselee to study. God wants each one of us to know forgiveness and restoration with the burden of sin completely lifted. The counselee must also be led to forgive others.
3. The study of Luke 15 shows God's heart. He forgives, receives us back, and withholds condemnation even though we deserve nothing. Many of the saved are trapped in self-condemnation. It becomes a habit of thinking and responding to self as perhaps they have been thinking and responding to others--with criticism.
4. When a person does not confess to God, repent, and believe God's forgiveness, he falls prey to self-condemnation. Self-condemnation is a dangerous activity of pride, for it comes from self playing the role of god. When self plays god, he condemns, punishes, rewards, and excuses himself for behavior, depending upon whether he is a strict god (perfectionist) or a lenient god who tends to pamper and excuse self. God wants to be GOD in every area of our lives including the areas of judgment and mercy. He has the standard of behavior and He is the One who grants pardon. We need to live by His standard and not ours.
5. We need to discern right and wrong, but leave all judgment to God alone, lest we fall into both self-condemnation and into criticism of others as well. When God forgives us, the matter is finished, signed, sealed, guaranteed, and forgotten. Therefore, when we confess sin, we must also accept the truth of His forgiveness (Psa. 103: 3, 8-14; Isa. 44: 22; I John 1:7-2:2).
6. Has the counselee truly and fully repented? Has the person accepted God's forgiveness? Does the counselee practice self-condemnation?

note:

- Verbal confession strengthens the one who may doubt that he can be forgiven and gives him the opportunity to seal the confession and repentance through the prayer time with the counselor.
- A Biblical counselor is quick to promote confession and repentance, and to help the person accept God's forgiveness (James 5:19,20).
- The counselor will want to help the counselee to begin to respond to God's love in faith, responsibility and submission.

C. Forgiving Others Is Imperative.

Many people live under condemnation and guilt because they have refused to forgive others (Matthew 6:14,15). The choice to forgive activates the work of the Holy Spirit in a person's life.

1. Forgiveness places trust in God to deal with both the offender and the results of the offense. God only has the right to avenge, (bring revenge) in the event of the wrongdoing.
2. Forgiveness releases both the forgiver and the forgiven from a relationship of blame, retaliation, bitterness, and resentment. The choice to forgive releases the flow of God's love through the forgiving one.
3. The counselee who finds it difficult to forgive must be helped to move away from a feeling-oriented life. He must learn to readily apply Biblical principles and commands toward forgiveness (Ephesians 4:32, 5:1,2; Colossians 3:12-14).

note: The counselor might desire to outline the following steps for the counselee to help him toward forgiveness:

- Tell God about the situation, confess sins, and ask God to bring healing, forgiveness and the ability to forgive (Ephesians 4:32; Ps. 32:5).
- Choose to forgive and not to hold the offense against the offender.
- Consider the greatness of the forgiveness of God and the great cost of our forgiveness made available through Christ's death on the cross (Romans 5:8; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14; Revelation 1:4, 5).
- If you have sinned against the offender, go to him and confess your sin and ask forgiveness without casting blame or even expecting him to ask forgiveness of you (Colossians 3:10-14).
- Maintain the attitude of forgiveness and resist the temptation to nurse past wounds.
- Actively do good toward those who have sinned against you, and labor to love them (Matthew 5: 43,44).

- If the unforgiving attitudes and bitterness recur because of reminders of the offense, or because of the offense repeated, maintain the choice to forgive. There must be the "will" to forgive even if the feelings are slow to catch up.

(A thorough study of the book *How To Counsel From Scripture* by Dr. Martin and Deidre Bobgan would be a great help to the counselor.) Much of the foregoing was ideas, and condensation from chapters of this book.

note: At this point please read pages... 6-10 in the book, *Caring and Counseling*, dealing with techniques, motives, involvement, confidentiality, and over-involvement. (important assignment.)

Part Six

FORMING, AND ADOPTING A BIBLICAL COUNSELING MODEL

First, I will set forth the premise from which I am going to present this section: From my observation from working with various people over the years in a counseling ministry, I think that people are motivated by **three** basic dynamics or controlling factors in their lives. There are those who basically are 1) **behaviorally motivated.** 2) **For most people their thought life, (beliefs and misbeliefs)** is the controlling dynamic which brings about their behavior. (I think that the greater number of people are found in this grouping.) Still others are 3) **motivated predominately by their emotions** as they react emotionally and then think about their sinful behavior later.

It is my intent to set forth counseling models based to some extent on these three dynamics or controlling factors which seemingly motivate people whom we counsel. WE WILL ALSO INCLUDE SOME LESSER ASPECTS OF COUNSELING. We will use the acrostic-

P R E A C H.

P HYSICAL ASPECTS INVOLVED.

As part of the thorough preparation for the counseling session the counselor must consider that there could be physical contributing factors in the life of the counselee. You will want to know if they are on medicine, etc.

As part of the P.I.D. (Personal Inventory Data) it is wise to have a questionnaire that would uncover potential problems in this area. The person may be adversely affected by medications which are taken. This could greatly influence their attitudes, conduct, etc., so this must be taken into consideration. Or they may have problems with hypoglycemia.

R ESOURCES AVAILABLE--*Family, Friends, Church.*

As you work with the counsees you may find it necessary to work out a support team for their ongoing problems. If the person is a drunkard, on drugs, having difficulty with a sinful life-style of whatever kind, he may need to be helped with constant oversight. Some churches have families who are willing to give this kind of support or ongoing aid to a person or family who must have constant oversight. This may need to continue until they are set free from the problem, and during all the time they are in extensive counseling. This kind of help can be indispensable.

E MOTIONAL FACTOR--*Depression, Anger, Bitterness, etc.*

Many who will come to us are distraught and overcome by emotional factors which seem to dominate their lives moment by moment. The Word of God speaks much to these sinful life patterns which are manifested in thought life, in emotional responses, and in actions.

Some people are emotionally controlled in many ways. They may be high-strung, anxious, fretful, worrying-type people. Most often because of pride the person is controlled by his feelings. The predominate reaction may be manifested in angry outbursts, bitterness, holding grudges, and unforgiving attitudes.

These sinful life-style patterns do not "stand by themselves," but generally are brought about by what we have done about our past PROGRAMMING AND PRESENT EVENTS or CIRCUMSTANCES. In SINFUL SELF-TALK (or personal conversational evaluations) we are considering those events and past programming which God has allowed and the programming the persons have built into their own lives. This is clearly seen in such Biblical stories as Joseph's life, Elijah's life, Israel's experience in travel from Egypt, etc.

Many people think that they cannot control their emotional responses and that emotions or feelings cause their behavior and therefore, they are not accountable for their actions. (See materials on *Why Do I Feel The Way I Do and Do What I do?*) Read the book available in our counseling section.

The counselee will never change the sinful emotional responses until he calls sin--sin, and sees the source as found in his own sinful, self-talk evaluation. The sinful self-talk is usually manifested in unbelief and the embracing of lies which have been rehearsed mentally over and over again. Emotions are not usually the causes, but the results, of thoughts.

note:

- Erroneous thinking and related feelings often gets a person into deep misery and complicated conflicts.
- One of the primary concerns of a Biblical counselor is truth itself. He will watch for error or distortion in the counselee's thinking, speaking and feelings.
- A Biblical counselor will attempt to help the person to recognize wrong feelings and the resultant submission to those feelings.
- The counselor will encourage the counselee to believe what God has said over and above his feelings. Because feelings are deep and they are usually very close to the very heart of man, they appear difficult to change. God can bring change by the renewing of the mind (Romans 12:2).
- Emotions or feelings may range from the sublime to the sinful. When feelings and desires agree with the Word of God and the indwelling Holy Spirit they are beautiful and even holy (See Galatians 5:22,23; 5:15-17.).
- When emotions and desires originate in the flesh, they become focused on self and grieve the Holy Spirit. The counselor will want to be sure that the counselee does not deny the existence of feelings and desires.
- The counselee's feelings or emotions are formed by his natural environment, circumstances, past experiences, patterns or habits of life and by his perception of these factors.
- Because of hurts and distortions of perception, feelings are often unreliable indicators of truth. Certain feelings may be just the opposite of what is true.
- The counselee can change emotional responses by "putting on Christ" and being renewed daily by the Word of God (Romans 13:14; Ephesians 4:23).

A. Dealing With Anger and Hurts.

1. The single greatest force to change a person emotional responses in sinful ways is the power of the love of God.

2. God's "perfect love" casts out fear, heals personal hurts, replaces wrong anger and changes rejection to acceptance (I John 4:17-19).
3. Hurt and anger often need to be dealt with in counseling. These basic sinful responses to situations in life can be broken as habits of reaction. God's method is clearly given in Ephesians 4:22-24. These responses can become strongholds of sin from which the counselee can and must be set free (Romans 6: 6-14).
4. Emotions are related to thinking. Knowing and acting according to the Word of God will enable the individual to overcome explosive and internally prolonged anger which may lead to wrath, bitterness, and depression. It is changed thinking that will greatly help those who have problems with anger, hurt, and bitterness.
5. Thinking influences emotions. Emotions are not independent. They have been nursed, expressed, and encouraged to remain by thinking the kind of thoughts that will prolong them.

B. The Problem of Fears.

1. Fear as an emotion manifests itself in many debilitating ways and prevents rational responses to life's situations and problems.
2. Fear never comes from God (II Timothy 1:7). While there is a wholesome fear that keeps us from danger, or accident and a "fear of the Lord" which is good, much fear stems from unbelief and doubt.
3. A person can overcome fleshly fear by drawing close to God, remembering His caring nature and His power to keep us (Psalm 27:1, 14). The counselor must develop a faith walk and be able to teach the counselee how to walk by faith and in sweet submission. The living words of the Bible are given to enable us to over the feelings of fear and dread (Isaiah 41:10; 40:28-31).

C. The Emotion of Rejection.

1. Rejection is a common emotional response seen in the lives of many with whom we may counsel.
2. A feeling of rejection often includes loneliness, self-pity, rebellion, depression and even suicide.
3. Everyone experiences rejection at sometime in life and to some degree. It may be real or just perceived.
4. Those who have a pattern of rejection may respond in one of the following ways-- try to gain acceptance through performance, retreat from others to prevent further rejection, or they may become very hard and indifferent.
5. God's remedy for rejection is truth. The truth of His love, our position in Christ, and all that we have in Him should set the person free from the feelings of rejection, IF those things are accepted and applied to his life. (See Ephesians 1:1-12; I Corinthians 6: 9-11.)
6. Only Divine Love can heal the deep wounds of rejection.

ACTION OR BEHAVIOR--Directive Counseling--Adams' approach- Based on Behavior As The Basic Motivating Dynamic.

Dr. Jay Adams would not rule out beliefs or attitudes as dynamics which affect people. But if I understand his writings correctly I think his premise is that behavioral change comes largely by getting the person to directly, persistently work on actions as the source of the problems. Therefore, he puts great importance upon the "put off and put on" dynamic which is so clearly set forth in the Word of God.

We have stated that nouthetic counseling is Biblical counseling which is directive and confrontational. It consists of verbal counseling in which behavior and also attitudes and beliefs are changed. This is the whole process of counseling.

I. The Activity in Directive Counseling.

- A. Judging activity, not of motives, but of the actions of the person.** We are to teach or set forth the norms of faith and practice (John 7:24).
- B. Convicting activity.** This is a ministry of reproofing the person who is not aware of his sin or is still unrepentant. Conviction of sin comes when the Holy Spirit uses the Word of God shared by the counselor and studied by the counselee (Hebrews 4:12).
- C. Changing activity,** which means to set straight again. This consists of breaking harmful, sinful habits and seeking to overcome failures and weaknesses. This includes reconciliation, restitution, and putting on new patterns of living (Colossians 3:8-14).
- D. Structuring activity** is also needed, wherein there is structuring or training in righteousness. This involves laying out a personal Biblical pattern of living for the counselee to replace the unbiblical one.

II. The Nature of Directive Counseling.

- A. Authoritative** -- because the Word of God is authoritative.
- B. Assertive**-- The counselor should assert Biblical principles and not use questions as a habit or as a softening technique in the presentation of truth. One cannot have a true discussion (or dialogue) of the "Thus saith the Lord."
- C. Confrontative** -- for it indicates a personal face to face involvement that refuses to avoid the often unpleasant but necessary task of assisting a person who has a problem.

See J. Adam's book... *Manual on counseling*, pg 103-111.

- D. Flexible**-- The Christian counselor will range throughout the Word of God and be as flexible as the Scriptures. He will not approach problems from preconceived notions of what is wrong and what to do.
- E. Adaptable**-- The Biblical counselor adapts his Biblical principles of counseling to changing and unpredictable circumstances. He has order and structure to his approach, but is willing to bend his schedule for the good of the counselee. His agenda will fit the need of the person and will work out agreements when there are differing ideas.

- F. **Non-manipulative**-- Biblical counselors do not manipulate and control others. They prayerfully analyze the believer's problem according to Scriptural categories and truth and then point them to God's solutions. They will exhort, encourage, warn, persuade, and use rewards also when helpful. God's Word becomes the motivation and love for God the controlling factor, and not control of the counselee or counselor.
- G. **Godly accurate language**-- The counselor will help the counselee to relate his language to reality. (Here we see the cognitive aspects.) Exaggerations and generalities should be examined for what they are and what they are to convey. The counselor will stop and correct crude and vulgar words.

III. Procedure of Directive Counseling.

A. Steps Toward Counseling Interview.

1. Make the appointment-- your time is valuable. It might be best if they must sacrifice to make it possible. Since the counsel is free, possibly it is best if they "pay some price" to make the appointment, as people often do in getting to their medical doctor.
2. Gather the data to diagnose the problem. This may necessitate getting data over a number of sessions. Use a P.D.I sheet, (Personal Data Inventory) and possibly some other forms for this.
3. Arrive at a Biblical diagnosis and present that diagnosis to the counselee. If a sin problem is apparent the counselee should be encouraged to repent of that sin to all who are involved.
4. The counselee should agree to a program of dehabitation and rehabilitation if needed.
5. There must be homework assignments between sessions for the practice of the new patterns to be implemented in the life.
6. As time progresses and needs are being met, you can then set an approximate termination time.

B. Charting the Dehabitation and Rehabilitation Process.

- *Building patterns for a walk in righteous.*
- *A braking of persistent patterns of sin.*
- *A process leading leading to change and a process of change.*

This may take from 8 - 12 weeks of counseling or even more, depending upon the seriousness of the problem (s).

IV. Bringing About Biblical Change in Directive Counseling.

A. Change is the Goal in all Biblical Counseling.

1. We all know and agree that change is difficult. (Going to bed early, getting up early,

overcoming anger, scheduling our time, controlling one's temper, stopping smoking, losing weight, starting new habits-- all these things and many more are not easy.)

2. Eliminating the problem is **not** the goal of counseling. Helping the person to personal happiness is not the goal of counseling. Change that results in conformity to the image of Jesus Christ is the goal.
3. Failing, floundering is the daily occurrence with most Christians. Most Christians are either unwilling or do not know how to make the change that God requires of them. *Learned behavior is often confused with inherited nature.*

B. Changing the Past is not the Goal Either.

1. We need to forget the past, and not attempt to change it (Philippians 3:13, 14). (The past can only be dealt with in the present by forgiveness, rectification, reconciliation and other changes that must be made today.)
2. It is the counselee who needs to be changed, and not his past. We can only deal with the guilt that is involved in the past. Help him to know and thank God for forgiveness and then to reach out to that which is ahead.
3. He can be assured a better future by making behavior and personality changes in the present.

note: Too many counselees do not enjoy abundant living in the present because of past sins. They worry, fret, toss and turn, but the past is the past and they can only deal with the things that rob of joy and victory now.

4. We must call for repentance. The task of the Biblical counselor is to call for repentance -- a change of mind and will leading to a change of the life. True repentance is something that the Holy Spirit always brings about in true change (II Corinthians 7:10).

C. There must be a Changing of Present Patterns from the Past.

1. The past is present with the counselee most plainly in his personality, attitudes and life-style. (We do need to understand many aspects of the past so that we can help them bring change.)
2. We do not see change that sticks because of the repetition of sin that becomes habitual. There is also the repetitive, habitual pattern of sin, confession and forgiveness and then back into the cycle again.

note:

It takes *discipline* to bring about behavioral and personality change. The Scriptures give the needed direction, hope and goals-- the Holy Spirit provides the power-- but Christian discipline is the method. The person without discipline is like a city without walls (Proverbs 25:26,28).

One's personality and behavior traits may become so much a part of him that at times a counselor may confuse it with hereditary traits. That is why we must have a thorough, positive, working knowledge of the Word of God. Most attempts at changing are like New

Year's resolutions--they are ineffective. It is not enough to confess the sin. Counselees must receive help to begin the change, or discouragement and continued failure will bring hopelessness.

D. Dehabituation and Rehabituation Will Effect Change (Ephesians 4:17-29).

1. God calls for change in the manner of life. "Put off and Put on" (Ephesians 4: 22-24; Colossians 3: 5-14).
2. God does not call for a cessation but for a change. Change is a two-faceted process and both must be present for results. (This two-part process is found often in the Word of God.)
3. Change is directed toward a way of life, not just some activities that are involved in such living. The counselee is renewed unto a change of his whole life style.

E. There must be a Breaking and a Making of Habits.

1. A manner of life is a habitual way of living, for we are creatures of habit. Many habits, so to speak, have become second nature.
2. Discipline is the key-- (Note I Timothy 4:7 -- "exercise"). This is the word-- gymnazo-- or gymnastics--or to work out. This is the "key" to victory for the Christian. (See II Peter 2:14; Hebrews 5:14.)

note: We become godly or ungodly by the exercise or the practice of right or wrong. Counselors must help the counselee to break lose from the web of sin, the habit of sin, and help him replace the wrong habits with Christlike habits and Christlike ways.

- Habits work for us or against us. The counselor must continually reckon with habits problems.
- The Biblical way to godliness is not easy or simple, but it is the solid and true way.
- Negative attitudes can be changed, tempers can be controlled, but it takes discipline and proper motivation.
- The Christian life is a life of continual change. The life of the saved is called a "walk" and not a rest (Ephesians 4, 5; II Corinthians 3:18).
- Counselors must recognize that too many Christians (counselees) give up too soon.
- Change is a grace-motivated effort, not the work of the flesh. Liberty comes through the discipline of the Word of God, not apart from it.
- It is prayerful obedience to the Scriptures that produces godly patterns.
- Christians are happiest when they are living within the framework of God's Word.
- One's "**feelings**" are perhaps the biggest problem of all. We must live according to the Word of God regardless of how we may feel.
- It is not enough to put off one way of life; new habits of the new way of life must be put in place of the old.
- It is not enough to just go to church, pray, and read the Bible. There must be more than that to draw from in the counselees repertoire. It takes effort--literally "being exercised" unto godliness, unto change.

V. Basic Elements Involved in Biblical Change.

A. Becoming Aware of the Practice of Habits.

1. A habit is a "behavior pattern" established by frequent repetition that reveals itself by constant performance. It may be either consciously or unconsciously acquired.
2. It is said that Williams James stated: (do not have the source) "Habit simplifies the movements required to achieve a given result, makes them more accurate and diminishes fatigue."

note: In most of us, by the age of thirty, the character has set like plaster, and change is not easy. We must make automatic and habitual, as early as possible, the right kind of useful actions. In the acquisition of a new habit, or the leaving off of an old one, we must take care to launch ourselves with as strong and decided an initiative as possible. Never suffer an exception to occur until the new habit is securely rooted in the life. New habits take from three to five weeks to cement into the life.

The person must seize the very first possible opportunity to act on every resolution made, and on every emotional prompting in the direction of the habit he aspires to be gained.

B. Understanding the Dynamics of Habitual Practices.

1. Very quickly the individual feels comfortable while performing the habit.
2. He responds without thinking to certain stimuli or given situations in a habitual way. This is gained from birth onward.
3. The counselee engages in the practice of the habit (or at least may begin to do so without conscious thought or decision.

C. Becoming Aware of the Occasion of the Practice of the Habit.

1. The person must become aware of the nature, the frequency, and the occasion of any practice or habit. Habits do not stand alone, usually they are related to something else. The person *who blows up* may be doing so because they are triggered by jealousy.
2. What exactly is the person doing? Why are they doing it? What exactly is the habit? Unless the person is aware of what they are doing and why, they will not know how to correct the problem or practice.

(What is it associated with, or linked to, and what possibly triggers the practice?)

D. Discovering the Biblical Alternative.

1. What is the proper practice, pattern or habit to replace every improper one?
2. Notice the many portions of Scripture which bring together the necessity of putting off and putting on, or where the opposites are set forth for us to see. (See James 5:12; Ephesians 4:17-32; Colossians 3:8-14.)

E. Working at Bringing Motivation into the Scene.

1. A willingness to change is needed. Without a desire it will not likely take place. Godly sorrow works repentance (II Corinthians 7:10).
2. All motivation must be based upon the Word of God. If it is not Scriptural it will not last. The Word should be used properly as the best motivation (II Corinthians 5:11, 14).

note:

- Help the person see his position in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 1:3-12).
- Help him see what Christ desires of him (II Peter 1:3-12).
- Help him by a punishment/reward system that will give him impetus to change. (See Malachi 3:9-13; Deuteronomy 11:18-25.)

F. Helping Them Structure Things toward Change.

1. All **structuring** is very important, for it sets the stage for change.
2. Every Christian has a **battle** between the old nature and the new nature, and this naturally brings inward conflict. The flesh is filled with sinful, often very wicked, desires.
3. The counselee's activities, surroundings, and associations should be consistent with and aid his avowed desire to put off a sinful practice (Romans 13:14). Every **Christian has lust within his members.**
4. Structure facilitates change as the counselee puts himself into a new environment to bring change.
5. One must rearrange his environment, schedules, activities, etc., to become **facilitators** rather than impediments to change.
6. The person must do what God desires him to do. There is personal responsibility toward godliness which must be faced.

G. We Must Help the Person "Break the Links" in the Chain of Sin.

1. We must help him trace the problem back to its origin and stop the problem at its outset.

note: This may also necessitate understanding the programming-- sinful self-talk practices-- attitudes-- emotions-- and finally the behavioral aspects. This may mean we will need to understand much of their past which has led to their viewpoints, habitual sinful practices, etc.

2. Chaining is a proven learning theory as well as a Biblical concept. It asserts that by manipulating the various components in the chain of sin you can prevent the final behavior from occurring.

note: Many counselors and counsees think of change only in terms of changing the full-blown problem. It is important to break the problem down into all of its component parts. The failure to work out our problems daily will bring frustration-- and the person will probably "blow up" or become very depressed.

3. To break the chain of sin requires ability to stop an action. This could take place at the point of **resistance** or at a point of **restraint**.

note: Resistance is the God-given ability that makes it possible for the person to delay his responses. We are not as animals who live by reflex only. We do have brains that enable us to resist and reject a sinful course of action. When we do not practice such rejection it is probably because we would rather enjoy the sinful action, thought, etc. Or we just did not work at catching ourselves in the sinful practice.

The goal is Biblical "action" not sinful "reaction." We are to be controlled by the Scriptures and not by the situation. Breaking the destructive patterns that "accelerate sin" involves the structuring and development of new responses. *Resistance is to work at preventing the practice.*

Illus: Instead of screaming, the mother works at developing the habit of speaking softly. (Note Proverbs 15:1; 16:32; 29: 11, 20; 30:33.)

Restraint is to work at curtailng the problem . Restraint is the approach when the resistance fails. It is stopping oneself prior to going too far in sinful responses or habitual action. Restraint is the "recognition of sin" and seeking immediate forgiveness for it and obtaining help to discontinue the sin. **It is thought before action or speech as the element in the restraint of evil.** Memorization and meditation on the Word of God are very helpful in all of this effort toward change.

H. Aiding in the Practice of New Patterns.

It is very important to help the counselees discipline themselves in order to have the "key" to holiness. There is no option for godliness as the goal of the Christian life. One's whole life must be disciplined, set up, organized and running day by day toward the goal of Christlike living. It will necessitate sacrifice; there are no shortcuts.

VI. Getting Help From Others for Biblical Change.

Change is difficult because without thinking we respond to temper, we clam up, and internalize resentment, etc. We live according to the sinful patterns and habits that we have developed over the years.

Others can aid in building new habits and the breaking of the sinful practices. This takes willingness and an understanding that it is a process. The Scriptures continually stress the need for "mutual help." (See Romans 15:1; Galatians 6:2.)

People do not seek help for many reasons. Pride is one of the primary reasons (I Corinthians 10:12; Proverbs 16:18). Because people are spiritually unwise they do not see the need for the counsel they desperately need. They hate to admit they have failed and cannot make it on their own and therefore need assistance.

note: When people fight over things like squeezing the toothpaste tube in the middle, turning lights off, etc, they give evidence of a number of things.

- Their problem is much bigger than the issue (or issues) over which they are currently quarreling.
- They are not seeking solutions to problems; they are concerned about making points, proving themselves to be right, and the other wrong.
- When there are flaming emotions over little issues it is because there are weightier issues which they have not settled. From those confrontations they have emotional hurts which affect their daily responses.

- People do not look for solutions to personal conflicts until they have responded in repentance of their sins.

VII. We must Stress Their Whole Relationship to Christ.

(The Whole Life is Important for Change.)

A. It All must be Discussed when Extended Counseling is Done.

- * devotions
- * church attendance
- * witnessing as a vital part of growth and victory
- * repentance, confession, and reconciliation, etc.

B. The Goal is not to Make People Better, or Happier.

You will want to focus not just on their immediate problem but also on their relationship to Christ. Get them into a Bible study, help them know their position in HIM.

VIII. Helping Them Handle Life's Dominating Problems:

(We will be brief in dealing with this aspect here.)

Don't focus only on **the** life dominating problem. Consider the total person, focus also on the life patterns which make up the life. Total restructuring must take place and this means dealing with **the** problem in relationship to all areas of the life.

Dominating problems are those problems that affect every area of one's life--drugs, alcoholism, homosexuality, etc. (There are many.)

Every area of the person's life must come under review. A drunkard, for example, develops sinful patterns of family relations, irresponsibility toward job, church, neighbors, finances, pressure, etc. He has difficulty dealing with his many problems as well as **the** major sin problem.

I want to give special recognition of the fact that many of the ideas of the materials in the immediate foregoing sections is from a study of --- Dr. Jay Adam's writings... In *The Christian's Counseling Manual* and from Dr. Walt Croom's writings in the manual... *Institute of Christian Counseling* materials .. and the materials of Dr. Larry R. Thornton... in *Counseling Principles* and Martin Bobgan's book *How To Counsel From Scripture*.

COGNITIVE ASPECTS OF BIBLICAL COUNSELING -- Recognition of Thoughts and their Effect on the Life.

Introduction:

Biblical counseling always includes dealing with both the inner man and the outer man--with thoughts and emotions and with words and actions. For a Christian to live a consistent life, his thoughts, emotions, words, and actions must cooperate with the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Christ emphasized the relationship of inner thoughts, understanding, and desire, with outer actions and words (Matthew 12: 34-35). In the psychological world there is an argument between those counselors who deal with behavior and those who deal with thought. As far as the Bible is concerned both are important. Proverbs 16:3 says "Commit thy works unto the

Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established." In Romans 10:9,10 we see the combination of belief or thinking and action or confession. Here is an internal choice of belief combined with an external action of confession.

What a person does influences his thoughts and what a person thinks influences what he does. Sinful thoughts can eventually lead to sinful behavior. Conversely, thoughts often conform to behavior. People may distort Scripture to fit their behavior. In Scriptural counseling inner thoughts and outer works are intertwined. The outer renewal consists of new ways of behaving that are consistent with Biblical principles.

But to make this work there must also be a change in the thinking of the person. Change must take place both in the inner life (thoughts) as well as the outer life (or the actions). The problems of lust and pride, for example, must be faced basically, first, as thoughts, as well as the outcome produced in sinful practices or actions. (see John 8:31-32; Proverbs 23:7.) Abiding in God's Word means more than casual believing; abiding implies thinking, feeling, and acting according to faith in His Word.

God expects change in thinking. This take place when the Christian chooses to be transformed by the renewing of the mind by the Word of God, with resultant change (Ephesians 4:23; Romans 12:2; Colossians 3: 8-14).

God desires to set us free from sinful practices. Wrong **thinking** causes havoc in emotions and error in actions. When a person's thoughts, feelings, and actions are based on the Bible, he receives wisdom, peace, righteousness, and the blessed fruit of the Spirit.

God desires accurate, truthful thinking. Erroneous thinking often gets a person into deep misery and complicated conflicts (Ephesians 4:15, 25).

1. Therefore, one of the primary concerns ought to be that we walk in truth.
2. The counselor must be greatly concerned about the thought life of the counselee (John 8:31,32).
3. We must help the person to focus on what is right to think (Philippians 4:8).
4. As thought life changes, behavior will change also. Accurate thinking will free a counselee from the bondage of sin, Satan's lies, and the practice of self-deception or telling oneself lies which are embraced and practiced.
5. Lies are often in the form of generalizations.
6. Thoughts can be evil continually. Sinful imaginations and falsehoods can form strongholds in the mind and then in the will (II Corinthians 10:3-5).
7. The mind is a battleground on which thoughts from the world, the flesh, and the devil can vie against the truth of God.
8. Imaginations can include fears, doubts, and other forms of sinful unbelief which can undermine the Christian's walk.

I. Recognition of the Importance of One's Thoughts.

A. People's thinking includes their beliefs, attitudes, opinions and values.

1. Thoughts take the form of internalized sentences or self-talk. In fact, it is said that we can internalize thoughts in speed upwards to 1300 words a minute.
2. People are constantly telling themselves various sane or crazy things which are reflected in their emotions and actions.

3. People can live the most fulfilling, creative, and emotionally satisfying lives by disciplining their thinking so that it is God honoring.

B. Thinking is a train of ideas manifesting itself in sub-vocal speech.

note: We can alter our emotions by altering our words. We normally react logically to our own words. For example, you will feel differently if you-

1. Call a person careless instead of calling him a stupid idiot.
2. Call a person black instead of calling him a nigger.
3. Call a person a strong leader instead of calling him a dictator.
4. You say the boss saw you make a mistake and brought it to your attention instead of, "My boss chewed me out."

note: Our inner thoughts or words spoken to ourselves do have a great influence upon our emotions and our actions. Irrational (sinful) thinking produces disaster in the emotional sphere. A good example of this is the person who carries much free-floating anger around with him and who, as a result, finds the world he encounters also to be angry in order to justify his own feelings of anger. Even in this case, where emotions have influenced thinking, it is evident that it is the thinking element in the original free-floating hostility that needs to be discovered and handled if the person is to live more effectively.

C. Not only our perceptions but our evaluation of what we perceive causes our emotions and our reactions.

1. We perceive our own thoughts and memories and evaluate them as well. Emotions do not exist mysteriously in their own right; they are caused. Emotions usually are not causes; but they are like the smoke detector- they only tell us that something is wrong.
2. We can have emotional reactions to thoughts themselves by our evaluative self-talk, and out of that we can produce many sinful responses which can bring sorrow to many. Emotion, then, is almost always caused and controlled by thinking.
3. People do not go to counselors (or psychiatrists) because their thoughts are irrational but because they are hurting emotionally. But they do have thoughts that are sinful and irrational as they are not founded on truth.
4. It is human (sinful) nature to pervert and distort truth (Jeremiah 17:9). When one makes a study of what God says about the sinful, wicked, unregenerated mind, it is obvious that man's thoughts will be sinful, distorted, and bring many hurtful results.
5. We do most of our important thinking in terms of self-talk or internalized sentences. The Biblical counselor will work with the counselee to help him see the need of substituting Biblical truth in place of his self-defeating lies, which bring misery.

note: Understanding the source of emotions is to understand that they are composed of 1) your perception, 2) your evaluating thoughts and 3) your emotive feelings.

It must be noted that the evaluations that the brain automatically makes are either positive, negative, or relatively neutral. Emotions, then, are value judgments--and they are always logical, correct, and appropriate to **how you are evaluating a situation**. This is why when the Word of God is memorized and meditated upon daily it will greatly affect one's emotions, and consequently the actions or pattern of behavior.

The counselor must encourage people to **question** the validity of their sincerely held beliefs, attitudes and thoughts. His aim is also to help them make rational, Biblical choices.

note: Our brains often control us by habits to which we have become enslaved. Habits are formed by our repeatedly choosing to do something. **For example**, when you habitually think the same types of thoughts about your perception of a particular extreme event, you will begin to automatically react to that type of perception with positive, negative, or neutral feelings. Your emotional habits are being converted into relatively permanent personality traits and into relatively permanent attitudes and beliefs.

II. Recognition of Some Rules for Testing Right Thinking.

A. **It is Based on Objective Reality.**

The objective is to remove from the picture that which comes from one's own imagination. By doing this, one's thoughts, feelings, and actions will be based on what is really happening. One will be guarded from unwarranted assumptions and jumping to conclusions.

B. **It Helps You to Achieve Your Goals.**

Much thinking is self-defeating. The Bible promises are given, among other reasons, to help our sinful unbelief which defeats us daily. As we think God's thoughts from His Word we are greatly benefited in our actions and attitudes.

C. **It Keeps Us out of Conflict With Others.**

God's Word teaches us *as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.* (Romans 12:18). Does your thinking on a particular issue keep you out of trouble or plunge you into it?

When no principle of Scripture is compromised by our giving in to the wishes of others in order to avoid conflict with them, it should be seriously considered as the course of action to take. Right and kind thinking does make a difference in the relationships of life.

D. **It Eliminates Significant Emotional Conflict.**

As long as we are alive and conscious, there will be times when a conflict of motivation will be experienced in our minds. The believer, for example, knows that if he allows the Holy Spirit to control his life this will involve him in a conflict with his old fleshly nature (Galatians 5:16, 17).

E. **It Will Be Based Upon Spiritual Realities.**

A believer, and even an unbeliever, needs to take into his consideration the following spiritual realities: A holy God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, Heaven, hell, judgment to come, and the love and grace of God. Meditation upon these things should greatly influence the life.

F. **It is Based Upon Scriptural Principles.**

Any thought, emotion or action that is contrary to the Word of God is spiritually irrational. Whether or not we understand God's ways, we still will find it pays to obey

God's Word (Isaiah 55: 8,9). Almost the whole history of Israel bears witness that people are not rational (or doing the rational and correct thing) when they disregard the Word of God.

III. Recognition of Common Irrational, Unbiblical Ideas.

These irrational ideas which people might entertain in their thought life do have a great impact on the life. Some of these irrational thoughts are seen often in lives of people around us and with whom we labor. **LIKE:**

- It is a dire necessity that I be loved or approved by almost everyone for virtually everything that I do. (See Luke 6:26; Ephesians 1:6.)
- I must be thoroughly competent, adequate, and achieving in all possible respects or I will be very unhappy with myself. Some think that if their performances are not nearly perfect, they are failures. (See Romans 12:3-6; I Corinthians 12:14-18.)
- It is terrible, horrible and catastrophic when things are not going the way I would like them to go. (See Romans 8:28.) It is easy to exaggerate the importance of things such as mistakes or the achievements of other people. For some a single negative event is taken as a never-ending pattern of defeat. For them a single negative detail spoils everything.
- Human happiness is externally caused and people have little or no ability to control their sorrows or to rid themselves of their negative feelings. (See Philippians 3:1; 4:4, 13.)
- If something is or may be dangerous or fearsome, you should be terribly occupied with it and upset about it, for that is normal. (Philippians 4: 6, 7.)
- It is easier to avoid facing many of life's difficulties and self-responsibilities than to undertake some rewarding forms of self-discipline. (See Galatians 6:5; Philippians 4:13.)
- The past is all-important and because something once strongly affected your life, it should definitely do so now. (See Philippians 3:13.)
- You feel it, therefore it must be true. (See Kings 19:10.)
- People and things should be different from the way they are. (See Romans 3:10; 8:7; II Timothy 3:1-4.)
- Positive experiences don't count when you already have a negative belief. (See Exodus 16:3.) You can foretell the future--so why not worry.
- Maximum human happiness can be achieved by inertia and inaction, or by passively and uncommittedly enjoying yourself. (See John 15:10, 11.)
- You can read people's minds. This is the basis for jumping to conclusions. (See I Kings 5:11.)
- By mislabeling something or someone with language that is highly colored and emotionally loaded, you can actually change your evaluation of reality to be what you label it. (See I Samuel 15:13, 20.) Many do this.

Thoughts shared from -- *You Are What You Think..* by- Dr. Robert Brien, pgs--125-136

note:

1. Accurate thinking will free a counselee from the bondage of internal deception and gross generalities. Deception originated from Satan himself, the father of lies. Any time Satan can cloud an issue or alter the truth, he can gain a foothold in the mind. (See II Corinthians 10:3-5.)
2. Many people carry around lies in their minds as facts. The counselor must help the counselee to recognize those lies and replace them with the truth of the Word of God.
3. Most of this internal lying centers in self and comes from having accepted and believed false assumptions about self and God.
4. The Bible is the counselor's textbook of truth; he must know it well and use it well. All that

is said in the counseling interview must be evaluated in terms of the "thus saith the Lord."

It would be wise to download the book.... Why DO I Do What I Do, and FEEL as I FEEL?

HOMEWORK-- AN AID TO HELP THE COUNSELEE

Homework is one of the most important aspects of counseling. It is the exercise of homework that really brings about change. When homework ceases, so true counseling ceases.

I. Helping Through Homework.

A. The Counselee Needs Help as Well as Hope.

1. Homework will help uncover some of the basic problems from the past and in the present.
2. Homework will help the counselee to handle the problems that motivated him to seek counsel.
3. All problems must be considered important, genuine, and worthy of working on.

B. Homework May be Geared at Reeducating.

Many counsees are feeling disoriented and often do not think properly. They live according to impulse rather than according to God's commandments. They need carefully prepared homework assignments that will speak to their problems.

C. Counsees Need New Insights Into Their Problems.

They need to see the potential for change. Written homework speeds up the counseling, opens their minds to problems, and helps them to see the answers according to God's Word.

D. Homework Clarifies Expectations.

1. The counselee sees clearly what is expected of him.
2. He may only remember small parts of the counseling time, but the homework will take him back over truth, and into new truth.
3. Written assignments force the counselor to be more concrete and more specific, and the counselee to receive far more help.

E. Homework Sets a Pattern for Change.

1. Homework must be expected from the beginning.
2. It should accompany every session, or almost every session.

3. It should be designed to lead to Biblical action and change. The counselee needs to see change taking place in his life.

II. The Blessings That Come Through Homework.

A. Counseling Takes Place More Quickly.

Written homework speeds up counseling. Real change takes place during the week rather than during the session, and the high point becomes the homework rather than the session.

B. The Counselee is Freed From Dependence Upon the Counselor.

Directive counseling that directs the counselee to work on his problem at home, on his own, is very excellent. Homework helps the client to break loose--to stand on his own feet--to rely upon God, and not upon the counselor. The counselor is the coach, and the counselee must learn to do much for himself.

C. Homework Helps to Either Gauge Progress or See the Lack of It.

It gives both the counselor and counselee a better idea of what is taking place. Without homework there will probably be very little progress or even an idea of what is needed to bring about change.

D. Homework Allows the Counselor to Deal With Problems.

1. The counselor must set the stage for change. He does this by setting the Scriptural goals. He must design and assign the work.
2. In a truly Biblical sense he is the expert who aims to prescribe the Biblical method for change.
3. He must monitor the progress. He is able to spot potential problems and better deal with them as they are developing.
4. The D.P.P. form and the Problem Solution Sheet could be used in discerning problems and in monitoring progress. The use of priority lists and scheduling helps to reveal problems.

E. Homework Helps Regulate and Discipline the Counselor's Counseling.

1. It helps the counselor to stay on track. As his goal is to bring about sanctification, he can know the extent to which he is succeeding.
2. Weekly homework assignments keep the problem and the goals before the counselor. It forces him to talk about solutions as well as problems and to bring about change. Homework will help the counselor to eliminate talking in circles.
3. It will drive home truth in the life of the counselor as well, for he must search the Scriptures for the homework to be given.
4. Homework provides a starting point for the next session. Each session can more easily build upon the other.

III. When There Is Failure In Doing Homework.

A. Maybe Questions Should be Asked.

1. Was I thorough in giving the assignment? Did they understand what was really desired from them?
2. Was there a lack of motivation? Were the counselees simply disinterested? What can I do to motivate?
3. Did the counselees not find the time? What are their priorities? Do they understand the tremendous importance of their homework?

B. Maybe The Following Needs to Take Place.

1. Write out the assignment so they totally understand.
2. Have the counselee repeat the assignment back, aloud, and ask if there are questions.

C. When They Fail, Do the Following.

1. Give the same assignment again.
2. Have the counselee go into another room and work on the assignment for 30 minutes, if possible. Help him to know you mean business.

D. Understand the Failure.

Distinguish between unwillingness and legitimate obstacles that hinder the counselee, or merely personal failure due to some personality weakness that also needs attention.

1. Have you granted forgiveness? It must be given or there will not be any future progress.
2. Is there hope? If there is no genuine hope, there also will not be any real change. Is the counselee saved? Dead men have no power to change for the glory of God.

note. Has the counselee been overcome by fear and worry? This will sap the energy that would otherwise be used to tackle the problem. The counselor may have to disengage from going further until these problems are dealt with.

E. Counselees Are Apt To Fail.

1. Learning new ways of living and building new habits is difficult. Because of this the client is apt to slide back. The counselor must be there to help.
2. It will take firm, loving, straightforward sharing to bring change. There must be a lot of love but also honest sharing.
3. He must help the counselee to call sin--sin. He should not minimize the problem. If the Counselor minimizes the problem the counselee will minimize it also and will wonder if the counselor really wants to help.

F. Failures Can be Turned into Opportunities.

1. He must see where he failed, why, and how to correct it. (This could include slothfulness, physical sickness, pride, sleep loss, etc.)
2. The counselee can see his basic problems in a new light and possibly recoup by confession and reconciliation concerning this area of failure.

IV. Some Samples of Possible Homework Assignments.

- A. Write out a list of your sins.** (See Eph. 4 as a guideline.)
- B. Seek reconciliation with that offended brother.**
- C. Write out a praise list.** (Ps. 142, 145) or a think list, (Phil. 4:8) or a thank list. (See Eph. 5:19,20.)
- D. Use the D. P. P. form and make a notation of your anger outbursts.**
- E. And make up a schedule for your life,** and also a list of priorities. List those priorities in order of importance to you, and/or to God.
- F. As a counselor you need to prepare a number of studies** on various problems that people face and have them ready for homework assignments. These studies will get the clients into the Word of God for themselves.
- G. Write out questions you may have this week.**
- H. Attend Church and Sunday School and begin a devotional life.** (Help the counselee to begin a devotional notebook.)
- I. Memorize and outline certain portions of Scripture such as,** (Rom.13:14; II Cor. 3:18; I Cor. 6:11; 6:19-20)

Appendix A

THE NATURE OF COUNSELING PHILOSOPHIES

I. Definitions

- A. **Psychology** can be defined as a science, and an art, which studies the directly observable behavior of men and animals, and the less directly observable feelings, thoughts, motives and self-concepts that cause or accompany such behavior.
- B. A **clinical psychologist** attends 4 years of college, followed by 4 or 5 years of graduate school and completes at least a year of internship. At the end of this training he receives a PH. D. in clinical psychology. After an exam he is certified as a psychologist. He can conduct interviews and treat people or groups of people.
- C. A **psychiatric social worker** takes four years with a pre-social work major. This is followed by a two year graduate study which leads to a master of social work degree. He or she is involved in group and individual counseling, especially between the patient and his family.
- D. The **psychoanalyst** is a psychiatrist with several years of additional training in the specific treatment and techniques and theories of Sigmund Freud and his followers. Only a few have taken this long and specialized training which qualifies them to be psychoanalysts.

II. Four Secular Models of Psychology and Religion.

A. Psychology Against Religion-- it's position is-

1. Science or the scientific method is the only valid means of truth. Truth claims other than science are destructive.
2. Religion is a myth rather than truth, and is destructive.
3. Religion's destructiveness is its prohibitive or inhibitive effect on its members and on society.
4. "Scientific" (valid) psychology is the solution to individual problems.
Examples: Ellis and Freud

B. Psychology of Religion -- or that--

1. Man is a spiritual-moral being, at least from a humanistic sense.
2. Religion, technology, science or society which denies man's spirit, and thus his nature, creates pathology (or suffering).
3. Most all religions have recognized the spiritual-human quality of man and thus have the right approach.

4. Good psychology translates the valid insights of religion into psychology and uses them for human good. Examples: Fromm, Jung, and Mowrer

C. Psychology Parallels Religion --or that--

1. Religion and psychology are not related, each exists in its own sphere. One is scientific and the other is not.
2. Religion is a personal (and social) matter, while psychology is intellectual and academic.
3. Both religion and psychology can be embraced. There is no conflict since they do not interrelate. Examples: Thorne

D. Psychology Integrates Religion

1. A unifying or integrating view of truth in religion and psychology is both possible and desirable.
2. The truth or insights from psychology or religion will have some correspondence with the other discipline.
3. The truth or valid principles of religion and psychology are in harmony and form a unity.
4. Religion as socially manifested may be pathological, or brings suffering, but its intrinsic nature is acceptable.
5. Valid religion and religious experiences are helpful in transcending the pains of existence or in assisting in the maturing process of growth.
Examples: Allport, Frankl, and Guntrip

Above quoted from "*Secular and Sacred Models of Psychology and Religion.*" Journal of Psychology and Theology, Summer 1977, P. 199

III. A Biblical View of Psychology

Psychology may make many helpful studies of man. It may be descriptive, but goes beyond its bounds when it becomes prescriptive. It can tell many things about what man does, but not about what he should do. Psychology should get out of the business of trying to change people.

It would be good to read the book... = "*More Than Redemption*" by Dr. Jay Adams=

A. The Problems of the Accommodation of Christian Counseling to Secular Psychology.

1. God is dishonored as God.
2. God's power through the Word of God is denied.
3. It deceives and discourages counselees.
4. It yokes God to pagan counseling systems.
5. It places secular psychologies many times on an equal authority basis as the Word of God.

6. The Word of God is added to a secular theory of psychology and thus seeks to Christianize it.

B. Eclectic and Biblical Approaches of Psychology and Counseling

<u>Eclectic</u>	<u>Biblical</u>
General Revelation	Special Revelation
Science and scientific method	Jesus Christ and the Scriptures
Tentative confidence	Absolute confidence
Study of the World	Study of the Word

“All truth is God’s truth, however it is revealed” is what many of the so called Christians psychologists who are integrationists. This is not true.

IV. Four Christian Models of Psychology and Religion

A. The Scripture Against Psychology

1. Soteriology and the Fall are stressed so as to eliminate and ignore creation and providence.
2. Basic epistemological assumption (i.e. the way to know knowledge): Revelation is against reason, i.e., the Scripture is contradictory to human thought both rationally and empirically.
3. All emotional problems are spiritual problems because they result in disobedience. (Not true, for some stem from physiological problems.)
4. Basic psychological assumption: The Scriptures contain all the precepts of mental health. (Only partially true, only if physically caused.)
5. All problems can be solved by obedience to Scripture if the individual is confronted with a relevant passage of Scripture. (Not fully true.) This is called-- "Nothing Buttery" by Dr. L. Crabb, in book-"Effective Biblical Counseling," Pg 31
Examples: Adams, Ganz, Mack, Howard Eyrick, Henry Brandt

B. The Scripture of Psychology--(or the Bible of psychology)

1. Emotional problems can be solved by consulting a therapist or applying the principles of emotional maturity and good interpersonal relations.
2. Basic psychological assumption: Psychology has discovered the basic principles of emotional health, maturity, and good interpersonal functioning.
3. Basic epistemological assumption: Human reason is more fundamental, comprehensive, technical and contemporary than revelation.
Dr. L. Crabb calls this - "Tossed Salad", Examples: Relational theology, Hyder,

C. The Scripture Parallels Psychology

1. Basic epistemological assumption: Revelation can never be reduced to reason nor can reason be reduced to revelation.
2. God requires obedience to both revelation and to reason. God never bypasses the mind. There is an implicit tension existing in the approach. They are not separate, but equal.
3. Spiritual problems should be dealt with by the pastor and emotional problems by a psychologist or psychiatrist.
Examples: Clement (Isolation) Meehl (Correlation)

D. The Scripture Integrates Psychology

1. Basic epistemological assumption: God is the author of both revelation and reason because all truth (and truths) are God's truth and thus ultimately a part of a unified or integrated whole.
2. Creation and providence are stressed equally with soteriology.
3. All problems are, in principle, a result of the Fall but not, in fact, the result of immediate conscious acts.
4. Since values are significant both for the Christian and for therapy, a genuine Christian therapy is necessary.
Crabb would call this-- "Spoiling the Egyptians"
Examples: Crabb, Hulme, VanKaam, Wagner, Carter, etc.

Shared from *"Secular and Sacred Models of Psychology and Religion"*, Journal of Psychology and Theology, Summer 1977 P. 204

THE BIBLICAL BASIS OF GOD-HONORING COUNSELING

A. Old Testament Precepts

1. God is mighty in counsel-- Jer. 32:19; Ps. 16:7
2. His counsel shall stand forever--Ps 33:11; Prov. 19:21; Isa. 46:10
3. His counsel shall direct the path of the believer-- Ps. 73:24; Prov. 3:5,6; Ps. 85:13
4. The counsel of God comes through the Word -- Ps. 119:24, 105
5. The Son of God shall be called-- Counselor-- Isa. 9:6; 11:2
6. The Holy Spirit is counselor-- Isa. 40:13
7. The believer is not to walk in the counsel of the ungodly-- Ps. 1:1
8. It is good to seek counsel of godly people-- Prov. 11:14; 15:22; 24:6

B. New Testament Precepts

1. God's counsel is immutable-- Heb. 6:17
2. Christ, the Counselor, prayed the Father to send another Comforter, the Holy Spirit--Jn. 14:16,26; 15:26; 16:7

3. Pastors are to counsel their people--I Thess. 5:12
4. Christians are to counsel one another--Ro. 15:14; Col. 3:16
5. Children of Christians are to be counseled-- Eph. 6:4
6. The Scriptures were written for our counsel--Ro. 15:4; I Cor. 10:11; II Tim. 3:10, 17
7. The word comforter is also translated--encouragement, exhortation or to comfort, to encourage and to exhort.
8. Exhortation was one of the "gifts" to the church-- Ro. 12:8
9. Paraklesia (meaning to comfort, see # 7 above) is a model for counseling for the concept is broad enough to support a variety of therapeutic techniques from crisis intervention to depth therapy by biblical means and methods.
10. The word admonition (nouthesia) is used in -- I Cor. 10:11; Eph. 6:4; and Tit. 3:10.
11. To admonish or to warn (noutheteo) is used eight times as found in Acts 20:31; Rom. 15:1-4; I Cor. 4:14; Col. 1:28; 3:16; I Thess. 5:12,14; II Thess. 3:15.

Further Presuppositions in Biblical Counseling.

- A. There is one Triune God as Creator and Sustainer of the universe.**
- B. He has given general revelation in nature and special revelation in the Word of God.**
- C. The Bible is sufficient source for the principles needed to do Christian counseling.--J
John 17:17; II Timothy 3:16,17**
- D. Counselors as all others must interpret the Scriptures, by the literal approach--
grammatico-historically correct-telically-theologically-and exegetically correct.--
Eph. 1:10; 3:2; II Pet. 1:20; II Tim. 2:15**
- E. Man was created in God's image as a responsible being.**
- F. Man's corrupt nature expresses itself in sinful behavior and living patterns. Sin
results in problems that bring misery.-- Gal. 6:7**
- G. Human thought and behavior were created to be moral.-- Gen. 1:27; Deut. 32:4;
Lev. 11:44; I Pet. 1:16**
- H. Unbelievers must be converted before they can be counseled. Otherwise they cannot
be changed in counseling so as to please God.**
- I. Counseling depends ultimately upon the work of the Holy Spirit. --
I Pet. 1:2; Gal. 5: 22,23; Rom. 8:1-16; 6: 6-14.**
- J. Methodology must grow out of Biblical principles and practices.**
- K. True counseling is a ministry of the Word leading to sanctification.**
- L. Christian discipline is an important factor in biblical counseling.--
Matt. 18:15-18; Gal. 6:1,2**
- M. Non-Christian content or methods may not be eclectically incorporated into a
Christian system.**

VARIED APPROACHES TO CHRISTIAN COUNSELING

Dr. Gary R. Collins has stated what he thinks Christian counseling is, and I am sure that we would not totally agree with his ideas. His approach is thoroughly eclectic. In his book...*Helping People Grow...* he sets forth a number of chapters in which he shares the approaches of various men in the counseling field. Most of these he would consider to be Christians.

The chapter headings include:

Relationship Counseling-- David Carlson

Tournier's Dialogue Counseling-- written by Gary Collins

Growth Counseling-- Howard Clinebell

Transactional Analysis-- H. Newton Malony

Family Counseling-- John A. Larsen

Sexual Counseling-- Curtis Wennerdahl

Nouthetic Counseling-- Jay E. Adams

Biblical Counseling-- Lawrence J. Crabb, Jr.

Discipleship Counseling-- Gary R. Collins

Three-Dimensional Pastoral Counseling-- Paul L. Walker

Love Therapy-- John W. Drakeford

Catholic Approaches to Counseling-- Mose J. Glynn and Gary R. Collins

In his book he also deals briefly with another twenty plus approaches to counseling by various individuals. I think one of his basic purposes is to set forth the fact that Christians do have viable methods as he sees it. The book is probably an answer to the American Psychological Association and their approach in which they say that there is no such thing as a Christian theory of counseling.

The A.P.A would say that every current acceptable approach to counseling is based on humanistic, naturalistic, non-Christian presuppositions. I am sure that this is their view today. Dr. Gary Collin's approach to Christian counseling would include these basic points according to his book which is mentioned above.

- A. The counselor can lead the counselee to a personal relationship with the God of the universe through His Son, Jesus Christ.
- B. The Christian counselor holds the only truly satisfying solution to a meaningful philosophy of life.
- C. The counselor relies on the Bible as a guidebook for moral and ethical behavior.
- D. The Christ-centered counselor finds in the Word of God great truths of human adjustment.

E. The Bible has the only clear answer to the problem of sin and guilt.

note: Every psychological and counseling system begins with underlying assumptions or presuppositions. These assumptions influence counseling whether the counselor is aware of this or not.

Dr. Collins states, *"The solution in a Biblical counseling methodology is not to throw out psychology. Some evangelicals claim to do this in a sincere but misguided desire to have a pure Biblical approach to counseling. Such approaches are never totally free of psychology, however. Psychological terms, methods, and concepts are "thrown out," only to be distorted and brought back under other names."* Pg. 329.... *Helping People Grow*

"In the future, let us begin with our theologically based assumptions, and then learn what we can from modern psychology, accepting that which we perceive to be consistent with the teachings of Scripture. This is easier said than done, but we must consistently seek to evaluate psychology from a Christian perspective, avoiding the tendency to quickly and uncritically accept or reject psychological findings." Pg. 329.... *Helping People Grow*

Collins also accepts the idea that Christian counselors will have many different approaches, each of which may be built on a study of Scripture. The field is large, growing, diverse, and complicated. It is populated by counselors and writers who may be sincere, compassionate people but whose personalities, theologies, psychological orientation, values, and personal experiences have led to a variety of sometimes clashing counseling goals, assumptions, theories, and techniques-- all of which are labeled, "Christian." (And so it is!) Pg. 318... *Helping People Grow*

PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC MARKETPLACE

Psychotherapy Is big business in America. As a nation we spend about seventeen billion dollars every year for mental health. While it is difficult to give an exact figure, almost ten percent, or about twenty million people, have either been in or are now in some sort of therapy.

In the psychotherapeutic marketplace there are about 200 different therapeutic approaches and over 10,000 specific techniques available to the consumer. Morris Parloff reports:

New schools emerge constantly, heralded by claims that they provide better treatment, and management of the problems and neuroses of the day. No school has ever withdrawn from the field for failure to live up to its claims, and as a consequence all continue to co-exist.

Man cannot escape his need of the supernatural. He can distort it; he can attempt to substitute it; he can deny it; but he cannot escape it. The cosmic loneliness we find in literature, the reaching outward for union with the seemingly unknown, and the seeking inward to find meaning in life are all indications of the desire to unite with the supernatural.

Psychotherapy as we now know it has failed and will fail because it is filled with a simplicity that defies both proof and denial. At the present state of knowledge no one can prove the final cause of disorders of the mind. Psychotherapists can only puff themselves up, use the best rhetoric they can muster up, and hope that someone will line up behind them.

To fill this void and escape the growing criticism of mainline psychotherapy, new forms of psychotherapy which follow the religious nature of man will become increasingly popular.

They will discard their scientific sheep's clothing and blatantly turn to the occult. They will probably expand their interest in higher consciousness to include a mishmash of Eastern and Western religions. They will combine elements of psychotherapy and religion with all kinds of occult beliefs and practices.

--These are selections, and thoughts from writings of Martin Bobgan... *The Psychological Way/*
The Spiritual Way

Appendix B

RENEWING OUR MINDS AND IDENTIFYING FALSE BELIEFS

There must be the process of laying aside the old self and putting on the new self, so that our thoughts, emotions, and actions increasingly reflect the character of Christ. That is what change we have endeavored to deal with thoroughly in former chapters is all about.

Here we want to give some added materials, aspects, and principles which could be reproduced and used in a counseling format or situation.

A. The Battle For a Renewed Mind:

We first note that II Corinthians 10:3-5 sets forth the fact that we are in a battle. We are in a war. Most of us don't understand that this war involves our thought life. We don't like to even admit that we are in a warfare, hoping that if we ignore it, it might all go away.

- A. This Battlefield Is the Mind.** Also we are instructed in Romans 12:2 that we can only be transformed by the "renewing of the mind."
- B. Satan Produces a Self-Feeding System Through the Thought Life.** His intent is to keep our minds unrenewed so that we won't be transformed.
 1. He does this through establishing fortresses of deception which are produced in the thought life. These fortresses stand against the truth of God.
 2. Fortresses of deception are belief systems that are reinforced over the years by our thoughts, then, the emotions and actions they produce.

note: It becomes self-feeding, for as we feed on the thoughts--they produce further thoughts about the same lies or misbelief--which in turn defeat us. The sinful lies or sinful self talk continues to grow as it feeds upon itself.

C. We Must Establish a Stronghold of Truth.

note: We do this by making a "truth card" or a stop card to bring about change. (A simple 3x5 card can be a key factor in helping you base your change on liberating truths of the Scriptures.)

Illustration:

If a Christian is struggling with acceptance and forgiveness he needs to apply the following, which would doubtless be contrary to Satan's lies:

I am deeply loved by God (I John 4: 9,10).

I am completely forgiven, and am fully pleasing to God (Romans 5:1).

I am totally accepted by God (Eph. 1:6; Col. 1:21,22).

I am a new creation, complete in Christ alone (II Cor. 5:17).

A truth card or stop card ought to be carried constantly; it should be meditated upon slowly and often. Work at accepting change and building change over a month. Memorize the supporting verses that are used for whatever need that is being dealt with.

Also memorize the lies, the false beliefs, so they are recognized for what they are--lies.

D. We Must Learn How To Expose Ungodly Thoughts.

1. Our thoughts reveal what we really believe, yet it is difficult for most of us to be objective in our thinking simply because we haven't trained ourselves.
2. We usually let any and every thought run its course in our minds without analyzing its worth.
3. We need to ask the questions: Is the thought God-honoring? Is it speculation? Is it a lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God (II Cor. 10:5)?

note: It is very helpful to be able to identify thoughts that are not honoring to God. *Then we can reject them, and replace them with truth.*

It is very helpful to state the thoughts and then to compare them with Biblical truth. Our thoughts are seldom neutral. They either reflect beliefs based on the Word of God or beliefs based on the world's values. We must have God's leadership in perception to identify the source of our thoughts and determine those that are not of Him (Phil. 2:5).

Purity of thoughts and purity of life go hand in hand. If we are to honor God with a godly life it can only take place through a mind that is controlled by the Holy Spirit, or we will "mind" the things of the flesh (Romans 8:5-8).

II. Be Able To Identify False Beliefs.

Situation -----> Belief System -----> Thoughts-----> Emotions-----> Actions

Satan's lies control us far more than we are willing to admit. God's love and power can progressively set us free from introspection, anger, and fear and give us a heart of thankfulness and a greater desire to live for Him.

Where do emotions and actions come from? *"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh"* (Matt. 12:34). In other words, our communication (which reveals our thoughts, emotions, and intent or our actions) comes from our hearts or our belief system. Much of this we have programmed in our lives by our thoughts, habits, and patterns of life. Because every situation in our lives is interpreted by what we believe, our belief system, not the situation, is the key to our response.

This belief system comes from our self-talk about truth or lies--from our family background--our past experiences and relationships-- and from patterns of responses. We talk to ourselves about all of these things.

False beliefs-----> Ungodly Thoughts-----> Sinful Emotions-----> Ungodly Actions

note: Consider recent situations: (Use the following to work through problems.) Consider: What were my thoughts? What were my emotions I was experiencing? What were my actions? What false beliefs were involved?

1. SITUATION: _____

- a. Sinful thoughts _____

- b. Emotions _____

- c. Ungodly actions _____

- d. False beliefs (lies) _____

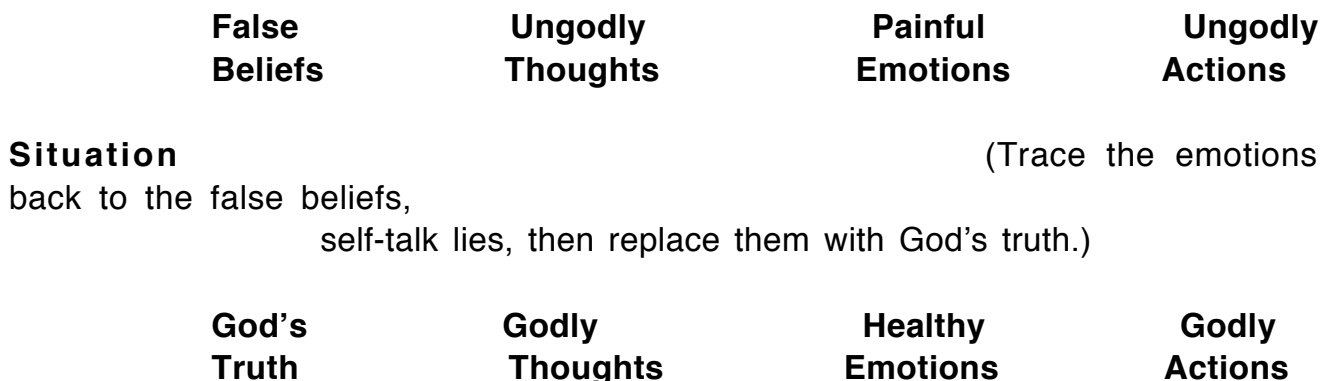
III. Practicing Rejecting the Wrong and Replacing the Right

Painful emotions such as anger, fear, resentment, and anxiety can show us that we we believing the Devil’s lies and the practice of our own self-talk lies.

Being honest about these and other emotions is crucial to the application of the Word of God! Once we are aware of the specific lies (s) that is affecting us, we can then apply God’s specific solution to the lies (s) from His Word -- a process that often occurs best in the context of counseling help and affirming relationships.

The Scriptures must speak powerfully to the specific need, or there will be much frustration and disillusionment instead of freedom and encouragement.

Note the following diagram:



EXAMPLE:

1. Situation: My wife was late when she picked me up from work. I will be late to my appointment at church. What will people think of me now? (My self-worth is at stake, and she is putting me in a bad light; I will look like a FOOL.)

2. Thoughts: (false beliefs) This just isn't fair. My wife knows better. I don't see why she "always" has to be late. She ought to love me more than this--for this is terrible treatment!

3. Emotions: I can't help feeling the way I do! I have a right to be angry. I do feel strong resentment, for she is always doing this to me. I know I feel hostile, disgusted and irritated, but she knows better and I can't help it!

4. Ungodly actions: Is it my fault if I feel like screaming at her? She deserves it if I don't even talk to her tonight! I'll show her; the next time she fails in something, I won't let her forget this poor action on her part. She deserves my hostile attitudes and actions toward her.

5. False Beliefs: God surely does not expect me to treat her any differently than I do! Anyway, how will she change if I don't put the pressure on and make her change! (She will always be this way and I will be put in a bad light over and over again.) God expects TOO much from me anyway; I just can't help it if I have the feelings that I do! It's just my nature to be angry and hold resentments; God made me this way.

--Those who fail are unworthy of love and deserve to be blamed and condemned. People do not have a right to treat me this way.

--I must be approved by certain others to feel good about myself. (She surely destroys this capability.)

6. God's Truth: (passages, replacing lies with truth)

Propitiation: I am deeply loved by God; therefore, I can love others with God's love. John 4:9-11). God loves my wife perfectly, too. I don't need to treat her this way.

Reconciliation: I am totally accepted by God (Col. 1:19-22; Eph. 1:6). My wife is totally accepted by God-- JUST AS SHE IS-- can't I accept her, too, as she is?

Justification: I have been justified by His grace (Romans 3: 24-26; 5:1). I have been set free, as if I had never sinned. And my wife is justified; God sees her as in Christ, without sin; I can see her that way, too!

Forgiven: I am totally forgiven, and redeemed by His grace. I am also to forgive as I am forgiven... or God will not forgive me. (See Col. 3:14; Eph. 4:32; Matt. 6. 14,15.)

7. Possible Godly Responses:

-- I will forgive my wife. I will help her more so she is not under so much pressure. She needs my encouragement and help in her stressful life (Gal. 6:7-9; Romans 12).

-- God desires that I treat her as HE treats me. Anyway, I don't want to be delivered unto the "tormentors." (See Matt. 18: 21-35.)

-- If at times I arrive late to a meeting at church, my self-worth is not damaged. My acceptance is not wrapped up in what others think of me when I can't change the circumstances.

- I can RELAX in the Lord and realize that there is nothing that I can do in those infrequent times when things don't work out for the very best. It really is not a "life and death" matter and is not to be treated like one, either.
- I can arrive for the meeting with the peace and joy of the Lord in my life (Gal. 5:17; 22, 23).

8. Summary Statements:

- It would be nice if my wife would pick me up on time, but she didn't. Even so, she is deeply loved by God, and that love is not based on performance.

I am glad that God's love to me is not based on how well I perform (John 15:9), or I would not be loved.

- The people at church will accept me even if at times I happen to be providentially late. I'm still deeply loved, completely accepted in the Beloved, completely forgiven, and He is my "fullness." I can also give others His love. (See Eph 3 -- height, depth, etc., of His love.) How I feel about myself does not hinge upon how well I perform. AMEN!

WORKING THROUGH THE PROBLEM, BIBLICALLY:

1. Situation:

2. Thoughts:

3. Emotions:

4. Ungodly Actions:

5. False Beliefs:

6. God's Truth:

7. Possible Godly Responses:

8. My Summary Statement: *(It would be nice if....)*

CONCLUSIONS:

Hopefully, you are now gaining a better understanding of how to use your emotions to identify your sinful self-talk, and sinful misbeliefs or wrong beliefs. You will need to work at rejecting Satan's lies and your own self-perpetuated lies, and replace them with truth. Truth will set you FREE.

You have built your belief system (lies we say to ourselves and hence beliefs we accept) over the period of many years. Change will not take place in a day! You will need to work at it, using the above suggested method and materials.

You may have experienced the deep pain of a dysfunctional family background, neglect, abuse, chronic condemnation, and many sinful habits and patterns of life you have formed. These must be considered and dealt with as you work toward change.

Appendix C

WORKING WITH CRISIS PROBLEMS

To be *called into crisis* is not unusual for the busy pastor, it might take place in the middle of the night or in the middle of an important meeting. And it can take many different directions, and for many different reasons. It may come from active church members or someone with whom the church has some contact. Often the cry of distress will come. Inevitably and repeatedly people will desire an answer in their need, or at least some comfort and hope. It can be from a drug overdose, or a sudden heart attack, or a rage in the home that turns violent, sudden illness, teenage pregnancy, and a multitude of other things.

But do pastors feel prepared? Capable? Fit for the task? After all, who is really fit to piece together a shattered marriage? Who's prepared to call on the father whose .44 magnum in a daughter's hand snuffed out her life? Who is sufficient for the questions an agonizing adolescent seeks about his homosexuality or the devastation the parents feel. Yet pastors must respond and care for the hurting of our world--despite their own frailties, inabilities, their own needs or misgivings. Yes we are *called into crisis*.

I. A General Understanding of The Crisis Involvement.

Pastors will find themselves called into a number of crises: Problems with children, loss of jobs, arrest, rape--you name it, many a pastor has faced it. People do get into binds and pastors do get involved, and often they are expected to have all the answers.

The editors of LEADERSHIP JOURNAL, in conjunction with Christianity Today, Inc., surveyed clergy subscribers and found that there are nine crisis situations that pastors found to be the most difficult and the most frequent. We will endeavor to deal with these briefly in this material.

These nine include: domestic violence/family abuse, suicide, homosexuality, death of a child, drug-alcohol abuse, divorce, adultery/sexual misconduct, death of a spouse, and catastrophic or terminal illness. A tenth, congregational personality conflicts, scored high in difficulty and highest in time spent on it.

We will endeavor to give an overview of each one of these, (not stories or illustrations) including insights, principles and possibly some books or materials that could be studied in preparation for the time spent with the people in the crisis.

II. The General Components of a Crisis.

A. Is the Crisis Caused by Real or Imagined Factors?

1. The person may perceive that he is in a crisis, (and in his mind he is) but actually it may not have a basis of reality.
2. Our perceptions of events affect our behavior more than the events themselves. In fact, our feelings aren't products of the event; they are produced by what we TELL ourselves about the event.

note:

Illus: What if I were to attend a class reunion. While I told myself it was going to be fun, etc., and I should have all good emotions, what if I had put on seventy-five pounds and just been released from jail? Now what would I think about? What would I be telling myself? My thoughts about it could provoke a crisis in my own life, at least in feelings. This helps us to understand that for some persons an event will hardly touch their lives and for others the same event can be traumatic.

B. What History Did the Person Bring Into This Crisis?

No crisis is an isolated event; what people bring into the crisis has great bearing on how they will deal with it, and how they survive it. (A desk plaque read: I can handle just about anything but adversity.) For some that is true.

note:

Those who have trouble handling adversity could well include the following:

- * people already hurting and emotionally weak.
- * people in poor physical condition.
- * people who are adept at denying reality.
- * people who are addicted (drinking, smoking, eating problems, talking, excessively, drugs, sexual addictions, etc.)
- * people who struggle with excessive guilt.
- * people who are quick to blame others, and seldom see any fault or sin in their own lives.
- * people who are co-dependent (or those very independent or too dependent).
- * people without faith or who have little faith or an immature faith.

The religious or the saved can fall apart as easily as others if certain things are allowed to build in their lives. A deep and abiding faith in the sovereignty of God and the unchanging love of Christ should be assets for a long-term crisis resolution.

C. What Support Does the Person Have?

To find support in the midst of the crisis is very helpful. The social support the person receives can spell the difference between resolution or long-term disastrous effects.

To find a network of support through family and friends can help to bear much of the stress in the assaults of life. It can make a difference in the blessing the church experiences in assisting in the victory, as well.

D. What Kinds of Symptoms Seem to Be Present?

Probably there will be a number of symptoms present in the life of the distressed and devastated, these could include the following: *Headaches, vomiting, hyperventilation, fainting, depression, panic, feeling desperate, being overwhelmed, frantic, shut down of abilities, defeated, sleeplessness, bleeding ulcers, etc.*

If the person is contemplating suicide, it will probably result from the feeling that he can no longer endure the pain. He cannot make the "hurting" stop, so death looks more inviting than the pain faced through living.

note:

The pastor will desire to assist in the symptoms, but at the same time he will need to trace it to the root causes. Pastors bring themselves, their faith, their understanding, compassion and interpersonal tools into the crisis intervention. They must be involved in a therapeutic way, not being aloof or detached, but very much *present* in the need. The desires can be so great that the pastor can be over-involved. It takes great wisdom and a strong dependence upon the power of God, and the work of the Holy Spirit to have the right balance.

III. The General Understanding Needed in Handling a Crisis.

Every crisis is different, every background is different, and each person is different. While there are tested approaches and basics, there is no single way to help another through a crisis. We will note some stages!

A. The Stages of Counseling in Crisis Problems-Defining.

Counseling in crisis difficulties probably normally includes three stages--*problem definition, goal development, and action*. Each of these could be divided into three steps of approach:

1. Problem definition: We must uncover the problem, its nature and its dimensions before we can begin to help. If we don't understand the problem we will not be able to assist. Probably we will ascertain this quickly.
2. Helping the client to tell the story. It is not always easy for someone to talk--trauma, anguish, emotions, shock, etc., can be so great that speech is not easy. Many things can contribute to this difficulty.

note:

Trust must be built on the spot. This often is based on appearance, body language, physical presence, command of the situation, compassion shown, etc. Sometimes a relationship already exists, but this does not always help. The task is to help facilitate the telling of what has happened and is happening.

If they are crying, allow them, encourage them, tell them you understand, maybe say-- "*Go ahead and cry as long as you want. You won't hear me saying anything, but I'll be praying for you. We can talk some more whenever you feel ready.*"

3. Helping them to focus on the problem. This includes clarifying, giving understanding, focusing and screening through the need.

note:

When an alcoholic comes (for example) his problem may include a: *crumbling marriage--job on the rocks--acute health problems--legal entanglements--financial problems--depression--etc.* Not all these things can be handled at once nor do they all contribute equally to the crisis.

Criteria such as 1) perceived importance, 2) apparent solvability, 3) relative pain it is causing, 4) and the counselee's willingness to work on it all help determine where to begin.

B. The Stage of Goal Development.

The counseling time must succeed in bringing about goals and action. There must be a conceptualization of what the situation is, what improvements can be made, and how to gain them.

The counselor must be able to put together some immediate obtainable goals and then some long range goals that will come into play in the regular counseling sessions.

Goals, if they are going to be reachable must be clear, specific, realistic, adequately related to the problem situation, in keeping with the Word of God, and capable of being accomplished in a reasonable length of time.

Sometimes painful choices have to be made such as: temporarily leaving an abusive spouse, telling an employer of a drug dependency, admitting to parents homosexual activity, deciding to end futile efforts to maintain a child's life, etc.

C. The Stage of Choice, Will and Commitment.

There must be the willingness of the person in need to make basic Biblical choices for change. Much of the material already given comes into application here.

D. The Stage of Action.

Once people know what the problem is and have an idea what God desires in their lives, it is time to take action--time to begin a definitive action plan. Laboring together with the counselor they can discover strategies for action.

Illustration: A new widow feels paralyzed at the prospect of managing her financial affairs. She will need help through many decisions. She can get aid from some consultant, read good books that will help her explore the options, and in other ways get help during this special time of grief.

1. A good plan must be formulated, obstacles and ways around them anticipated. A good plan must be devised if there will be results.
2. Coming up with as many ways as possible of achieving a goal increases the probability that one of them or a combination of several will suit the resources and the need of the particular client.

IV. Counseling Theologically in a General Way.

Crisis has a way of bringing out issues and making doctrinal understanding of very critical importance.

A The results of the fall (bondage, rebellion, guilt and shame) often come into the picture. These issues must also be focused on in many of the counseling situations.

B. The issue of "blindness" to our own sinfulness and being impotent to change

those things of which we are aware (that we cannot in our own strength bring about change) is an important truth to be kept in perspective.

- C. **Rebellion involves our decisions to go against the will of God.** Many of the crises people face are the result of someone's rebellion against God and His Word.
- D. **Guilt is not just a feeling; it is the result of violating God's law.** When God's standards are broken, we stand condemned and guilty before God.
- E. **Shame is what we feel when we understand our shortcomings,** or sinfulness, and shame can ruin a life and cripple recovery. Shame says, *I am an awful person.* It is a natural consequence of a sound conscience mixed with a violation of God's standards. *While confession breaks the hold of guilt, it may not ease shame.*
- F. **A Biblical counselor will attack problems in all four areas:** 1) The aspect of **bondage** to sin, that he might be set free; 2) the problem of **rebellion** which probably helped bring about the bondage; 3) the fact of **guilt** over the sinful habits or actions, 4) and the **shame** that is felt for the acts. *We must apply all the Biblical truths covered in earlier parts of this material.*

V. Christ's Counseling in the Midst of Crisis.

When Jesus walked the road to Emmaus with two of his former followers, both were in deep crisis following the Crucifixion.

- * Christ built rapport with them by listening to them.
- * He confronted them after a while and gave them a new understanding in order to change their thinking.
- * He left them, which probably spurred them on to action.
- * He moved them to the point of independence, so they would no longer lean on Him.

GIVING COUNSELING IN SPECIFIC CRISIS SITUATIONS

I. Counseling in Marital Conflict and Divorce Situations.

Pastors who care about their people see the awful destruction of divorce, feel the sorrow of a divided home, of children uprooted, of love turned into bitterness and self-reproach. It hurts to be called into crisis. (We will need to be brief in our content here.)

A. Things to Keep in Mind.

1. Emotions will run high. Expect tears and anger. Emotions need to be vented in a controlled situation.
2. Two people have caused the problem, it is rare when both are not become a part of the problem, and both need to become part of the solution. There are two sides--listen to both.
3. Resolution of the problem will likely be a long process. For months and years they have build up to the crisis; a snap resolution seems improbable. Help them move from destructive to constructive modes of relating.

4. Your role is to open the lines of communication, to help the couple hear and understand each other.
5. Help them focus on "what can I do to make my marriage work." Then healing can begin. (WORK through habit and thought change.)

B. Immediate Concerns That May Be Addressed.

1. Assess the potential for physical assault. Should one of the spouses leave the home? Might you be in danger when you intervene? If so, call the police.
2. Decide whether to wait until you are asked to help or to take the initiative. Waiting may make you more effective, but it can also allow the situation to move beyond hope.

C. Things to Do or Say.

1. Provide the opportunity for controlled release of emotions, but don't allow hurtful or spiteful attacks.
2. Provide understanding about the real issue (s). Point out the issues and what options they might have and what needs to be considered. Help the couple work through these options. (Of course use the Biblical methods for counseling dealt with earlier in this material.)
3. Encourage the couple to talk *with* each other and not *at or about* each other. Help them look for things to appreciate.
4. Remind them of the covenant they made on their wedding day. Help them rebuild their marriage around self-giving *agape* love rather than self-seeking feelings or expectations.
5. For those already divorced, help them rebuild their spiritual, emotional, and family lives with the loving care and Biblical standards of the Word of God.

D. Things Best Not to Do or Say.

1. Resist taking sides, to designate who is villain and who is victim. Although fault may not be equal, it takes two people to make a marriage crisis.
2. Do not assume the responsibility to patch up the marriage. Only the couple can rebuild their relationship.
3. Do not condemn. People with faltering or fallen marriages already know their failures and are loaded with guilt and shame.
4. Do not underestimate the potential for violence in a domestic quarrel. Use caution entering a marital fight in progress. Also realize that they could both turn on you as well.
5. Be very cautious of unhealthy attractions or dependencies that can be formed between you and a counselee.

II. Counseling in Sexual Misconduct Situations.

Sins listed are not petty irritations drawn up for the sake of a jealous God. They are, rather, a description of the impediments to spiritual growth. We are the ones who suffer when we sin. We forfeit the development of character and Christlikeness that would have resulted if we had not sinned. God, the Father, has something better, far better than what sin brings in all its enticements.

Divorced from love, giving, personalities and God's regulations, sexuality becomes an ugly, demanding, destroying master. The obsessions may bear resemblances to pornographic additions. These also are displacements of the sexual energy meant to fire the love between a husband and wife.

Lust is the lion that can destroy. Tame him as we will by day, he rages all the wilder in dreams by night. Just when we think we are safe from him, he raises up his ugly head and smirks, strikes, and destroys. Bogus sex damages both the user and the used.

A. Immediate Concerns You May Need to Address.

1. Deep pain, anger, and hurt are in play.
2. The emotional stability of victims and victimizers demands first attention.
3. You will need to try to forestall any rash decisions on their part.
Usually they feel they must act--now.
4. Rash solutions they want to implement are usually born in the throes of anger, rage or despair, (such as quick divorce, violence, rash acts.)

B. Things to Keep in Mind.

1. Truthfulness may hurt like an incision, but it begins the healing process. Lies foster marriage dissolution.
2. Lust has its attractions. It must be replaced with Biblical actions. Truly knowing God and deeply experiencing marital love offers hope. They must be helped with Biblical counseling. This will take much time.
3. Sexual deviations usually require more than volition to be healed. Many factors have brought the person to this place; there must be thorough ministering to bring the person to wholeness.
4. Prayer, spiritual healing, and competent Biblical counseling will have their good affect.

note: Crisis counseling involves a number of steps:

- * First, help the person bring to light what has been hidden.
- * Develop a preliminary plan to break the habit.
- * Work toward a fundamental change of attitude. (The behavioral roots of obsession can be laid bare--such as childhood factors, dubious self-perception, misunderstandings, past failures, etc.)

C. Things to Do or Say.

1. Hear the whole story. Let it all come out, even though that is so difficult to do. It has probably been bottled up for a long time. Expect a background of things to be involved.
2. In cases of infidelity, work with the couple if possible. If not, build up the will and emotional strength of the cooperative one to make that person prepared for the hard work possible reconciliation.
3. Radiate HOPE for the ability to make things right. Believe in the power of God for change, even when the counselees no longer believe in themselves and do not see the way to a solution.
4. Stand for righteousness, but in a forgiving, inviting way that makes the right more compelling than the wrong. Manifest the LOVE of GOD--help them through repentance, forgiveness, etc.
5. Insist that the whole story be told to the spouse who knows but little of wrong that has been taking place. Buried secrets have a way of returning and destroying tentative new trust.
6. Use the power of the Word of God toward change, prayer, great music and whatever else can help reach to the depths of the heart and intellect of the persons involved.

D. Things Not to Do or to Say.

1. Do not allow confidences to be broken.
2. Do not denounce persons, only sin.
3. Do not neglect the seemingly strong party. Outward calm often masks seething internal emotions.
4. Do not expect easy resolutions. Sexuality is a slippery creature difficult to capture and tame.

III. Counseling in Major Illnesses and Injuries Situations.

It may require more courage to suffer illness than to die. The body is not simply flesh and bones arranged in a unique way. In a real sense a person is much more than body, and yet a person's body *is* that person. It is the carrier of the total selfhood of the individual.

A change in the body image involves an altered perception of the self. A physical crisis can bring a change in body images which include: painful, weary, immobile, needy, barren, deprived, limited. Prior to that the perception may have been: attractive, active, nurturing, energetic, caring, competent, giving, reproductive, etc.

Isolation is often the one word that describes the distress those with terminal illness experience and it affects the will. Unremitting pain saps the very life from the victims. Dreadful weariness makes it hard to face an uncertain earthly future.

A. Things to Consider and Keep in Mind.

1. The shock of sudden illness or injury affects not only the patient but all those around him or her. If you can't get to the patient immediately, minister to the family.
2. Timing is important, get to the people as quickly as possible.
3. People with terminal diseases probably know it. Our failure to talk about it does not shelter them; it isolates them. Whether now or later, while there is a right time, it must be spoken of.
4. The adjustment to a new (and often inferior) body image can be a great crisis for illness or injury victims.
5. Hospitalized children need opportunities to be victors over the oppressors of pain, loneliness and fear. Recognize significant steps toward victory and acceptance.
6. With children, often hospitalization is traumatic. They must have help to handle it.

note: People need to grieve their losses or be helped to approach death. The five stages of grief--*denial and isolation, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance*-- can be expected to both patient and loved ones. These steps are normal, acceptable, and even therapeutic. They need help through these steps usually.

B. Things to Say and/or to Do.

1. Help the patient to sort the probable results from their injury or illness from the irrational and overstated fears. Help them to decide how they will cope with impairment which may be their continued lot.
2. Provide emotional and social support for the ill person and for their families. Caring churches will be involved in meals, baby-sitting, companionship, help with bills, transportation, etc., --as part of the crisis response.
3. Offer realistic hope. Help build the will to live. Give patients human touch, they need to sense love.
4. Help them to take control over their situation, talk with them about what *they* want to talk about, sensing the important.
5. Listen to the person who is about ready to talk about death. Help that person put life and faith in order so that death becomes a natural transition to real life--not a dreaded doorway to terror.

C. Things Not to do or say

1. Do not make light of the adjustments an injured person may have to make with a new body image.
2. Do not talk about a patient in his presence--even one in a coma--as if the person were not there.
3. Do not give patients a sense of abandonment. Let them know when they can expect to see you, and make every effort to visit regularly.

4. Do not normally withhold information from the patient. In some extreme circumstances (like many of the family killed in a car accident), it may be prudent to wait to share all the details. Normally people have a right and a need to know.

IV. Counseling People With Alcohol and Drug Problems.

It is said that one in ten social drinkers will become an alcoholic, and no one knows who those individuals will be. It is estimated that ten million Americans are alcoholics, or about four percent of the population, this represents one in every twenty-five people. Some feel that the percentage is even higher than this.

Since each alcoholic has family members, relatives and friends actually over 30 percent of the population of our nation is heavily impacted in some way by those who drink. With six percent of our work force alcoholic this habit costs our nation and employers an incredible amount.

Heavy drinking contributes to an estimated 80 percent of the fires and drowning accidents, 60 percent of violent crimes, and 30 percent of the suicides. Someone dies every twenty-two minutes because of drunken driving.

It is impossible for any of us to totally appreciate the impact in families destroyed, children abused and neglected, potentials unreached, careers, ruined, individuals devastated, and hearts broken because of alcohol alone.

A. Alcoholics Helped By Confrontation.

The alcoholic must face honestly the destruction his practice has caused. He needs to become willing to seek help immediately. This is the end purpose of such confrontation.

B. Families Caught in the Web.

Ninety-seven percent of all alcoholics are persons raising families, holding jobs, struggling to continue on with life in the face of great odds because of their destructive habit. This means that husbands, wives, children who are living with an alcoholic are also living with a lot of pain.

The difficulties faced in such homes include the following (plus much more)--financial problems, social embarrassments, possible abuse, worry, lies and deception, irresponsible actions, indifference to pains caused, and psychological games which are played by the alcoholic.

These people, when sober, have their good traits, such as--being charming, loyal, loving, humorous, caring, chivalrous, highly competent--all the good things people love in each other. The sober times probably dominated the relationship in the beginning of the marriage.

note: What holds these marriages together? Probably basically three things:

- * **Intermittent reinforcement.** The alcoholic during sober times manifests his good traits, and the mate is impacted by this and the memory of other good times. There is the potential for change, therefore, the mate continually hopes for things to be different.

* Reciprocal roles. This means that both the alcoholic and the mate gain something from the conditions in which they find themselves. A wife with a personal need feels a gain from "mothering" her drunken husband and feels she deserves her lot. And the husband who for example wants to dominate his wife can do so because of having a drinking wife. Both are willing to settle for a mate fractured by the habit because of their own personality problems.

* Agape Love. God's love flowing through the giver can have impact toward change. This love gives worth to the beloved, not because of the worth of the person. This love will continue to give long after most would have given up. It is a tough love that gives and yet honestly faces the issues in order to bring about good results for God's glory. Agape love will bring love to the person in spite of the problem and will work to bring Biblical change.

C. Some Immediate Concerns When Trying to Give Help.

1. Some people high on drugs and alcohol can be dangerous. You probably cannot reason with them, get medical help and talk later when the person is sober.
2. Drugs and alcohol can be deadly. Obtain immediate medical help if there are indications of a drug overdose or an alcoholic coma is evident or probably. (A fifth of alcohol ingested can bring death in an hour.)

D. Some Things To Keep in Mind.

1. Reason will probably not sway the person, an alcoholic will probably outtalk you with denial and rationalization. Probably only pain of consequences will move them.
2. Being an addict they cannot quit no matter how strong their will. Promises mean nothing, he must realize that he is helpless or he will pursue dead ends and never change.
3. The most humane treatment is to expose the addict fully to the personal and family pain he is causing. He must see the horrible results of his actions.
4. The whole family is affected and they will all need help.
5. You must help him get professional help.

E. Some things to do or say:

1. Provide hope, love, encouragement, and support without sheltering the person from the consequences of his actions. Give Biblical counsel to the family members.
2. Counsel and obtain help for family members affected by the results which come from the addicted member.
3. Help loved ones arrange for intervention led by competent and experience professionals. Give them literature and help educate the family members about the realities of drug and alcohol addiction.

F. Some Things Not to Do or Say.

1. Don't free the person from the consequences of their addiction.
Don't allow emotional responses to aid their continued problem.
2. Don't use guilt to try and get them to change, even if unspoken. They probably have a lot of guilt already. Guilt without release from such could push them to suicide.
3. Only God can rescue someone. Don't blame yourself if efforts seem in vain.
Choices are up to the person, not the counselor.
4. Do not expect the addicted to quit by his will power. He is powerless, God must intervene, and he must make right choices toward the Lord.

V. Counseling in the Face Of Suicide.

Suicide intervention is a life and death crisis. There may be only once change to help. Doing the wrong thing may bring it all to an end.

A. Things to Keep In Mind.

1. Your primary goal is to keep someone alive. If you were contacted, you were contacted for a reason. Take it seriously.
2. Diplomacy and warmth may help maintain the contact; hope and caring may forestall a suicide attempt. Try to determine where the person is in mental attitude, etc., as quickly as possible.
3. Your responsibility is to help; but you cannot hold yourself responsible for success, the person may die. You cannot make their choice.
4. If there is an indication that a suicide attempt is in process or imminent, call the police, paramedics, or someone you trust, or intervene yourself.
5. Remember that the person may be dangerous to others; find out what weapons or other dangers may be present.

B. Things to Do or Say.

1. Remember especially to pray for their safety and for God's intervention. Offer better options than suicide, help them see hope in spite of their thoughts and feelings.
2. Keep the person talking--maybe they will quiet down, or have a change of heart and while talking they at least cannot follow through on their plans.
3. Show love, compassion, concern and respect. Recognize that they may manifest accusations, bitterness, anger, and manipulation. In Christ absorb these reactions kindly and prayerfully.

4. Seek to defuse the suicide plan if possible. Have them promise to unload the gun, or dispose of the drugs, or seek company, call you before they do anything rash, etc.

C. Things Not to Do or Say.

1. Don't make light of the situation, this could be their last try for help, even if it appears unlikely to you.
2. Be careful not to load on guilt concerning their thoughts toward suicide. They probably already carry a heavy load of guilt.
3. Do not leave the person alone. A relative, friend, neighbor or church member needs to stay with him or her.
4. Do not allow yourself to be upset--anxious, fretting, angry, etc., for the person needs a calm, controlled, capable person to counter his or her emotional imbalance.

VI. Counseling Where There Is Domestic Violence and Abuse.

Many a home is traumatized because of the eruption of abuse and anger. So often the weakest are the victims. Domestic violence and abuse can be physical as well as verbal, as in wife or child beating. Even battered husbands and elderly is not uncommon, sad to say. Sometimes it is sexual abuse. Or it may be emotional for here the cruelty is verbal and the words do hurt deeply. Such problems plunge the family into crisis.

A. The Immediate Concerns.

1. You must beware of the potential for continued and even more severe violence and abuse. The victim's safety is of primary concern.
2. A victim should never stay in a situation where violence or abuse continues or is threatened. Seldom do the pleas that it won't continue mean much without total restructuring of the lives.
3. Call the police where it is in process, and follow their instructions.
4. Never promise strict confidentiality for you may not be able to keep such a promise, either legally or morally.

B. Things You Must Keep in Mind.

1. Small children nearly never make up sexual abuse charges. They cannot make up something about which they know nothing.
2. Spouse abuse is rarely a chosen response. It is a response born in passion and frustration. Usually self-hatred, sinful habits, anger, and poor coping with life in general underlie the problem.
3. Often abused children do not expect anyone will believe them, hence they will not divulge information harmful to the abusing parent, whom they still love.

4. Sexual abuse is not something a spouse should have to bear. A spouse should not be violated sexually merely because they are married to the abuser.
5. Abuse must be reported as difficult as they may be. Families will need support as they go to the correct authorities.
6. Just because the abuser seems to be repentant and exhibits genuine guilt does not necessarily mean the end of the battering problem. Many have remorse when anger subsides, but repeat their behavior.

C. Things to Do or Say.

1. Show love, concern, warmth--remain unshocked by what has happened. The victim needs to be able to relate the story without inhibition. (Seek safety for the victim.)
2. Remove the notion that Christians "never do such things." All victims need to be believed, even when the accused is a Christian.
3. Help the victim and victimized find specialized help.
4. Use a tape recorder if necessary with the permission of the victim. Tapes may well convince the skeptical parent or other authorities. Also have the child make drawing, etc., if necessary to ascertain what has happened. (Role playing, anatomically correct dolls, etc., are used to help children share facts.)
5. Report child neglect and abuse to the proper authorities for it is required by law in most states. (Give aid, try to help effect change through counseling if you feel that you are ready to do so.)

Appendix D

GATHERING DATA

I. TWO KINDS OF DATA-- to be gathered for and during the counseling interview:

A. Non-verbal communication

This would be derived from appearance, clothing worn, signs of embarrassment, tension noted, blushes, evasion, redirection of conversation, nervousness, etc. It might be evident in the person's breath, in a clammy handshake indicating anxiety or fear, and other indicators of the person's present state. Body language is often as to the person's

B. Verbal communication

This relies primarily upon questioning --- verbally or in written form. It is usually more substantive and more specific than non-verbal communication.

II. METHODS OF GATHERING DATA

A. Printed forms

1. Personal Data Inventory
2. Discovering problem patterns
3. Form: "Why Do I DO as I Do, and Feel as I Feel?"
4. Problem solution sheet
5. Marital questionnaire
6. Financial profile sheet
7. Weekly counseling record

B. Questions

1. Using leading questions, like:
 - What is your problem as you see it?
 - What brings you here?
 - What have you done about it?
 - What do you want me to do?
 - What are your expectations?
 - Is there any other information we should know?
 - Have you gone to other counselors? Who?

note: Using what questions rather than why questions will bring forth facts and arouse less tension and hostility than the use of why questions.

2. After those questions follow up with --

- HOW? The purpose is to find out the way things have happened, that which may be in the background, or the mechanics of something.

- **WHAT FOR?** You are seeking for the motive, the purpose, or the function. *What for* focuses only upon intentions.
- **HOW OFTEN?** By this question the counselor seeks to discover whether an event was a practice or only some isolated incident. He asks it when he is looking for habits, lifestyle patterns of reactions, or sinful practices.
- **WHEN?** Often the answer to this question will uncover the precipitating factor or factors. It may disclose the fact that one has reached a desperation point at the culmination of many events or certain circumstances that have been experienced.

note: Four factors and their relationship:

The counselor will also want to use questions to lead to an agreement and agenda concerning homework. There must be a commitment on the part of the counselee to spend the time and effort to bring about changes. Homework can also be structured to obtain data which the counselor did not have the time to gather. Example: Write out a list of habits in your life which you know help to bring defeat; i. e. sins not repented of, etc.

There also may be probing questions asked in order to secure data information about the physical, social, occupational, financial, personal, and spiritual or religious aspects of the life of the counselee.

III. HANDLING OR USING DATA:

A. Avoid the improper use of data.

1. Do not counsel a person about another person who is not present. Receiving information about the other person who is absent, without their presence if not good.
2. Do not receive privileged information. Counsel only the person you are with or the person who comes to you.
3. Try to involve the other party who is connected with the problem in order to solve it faster and more completely. Be wise in the use of data shared.

B. Recognize the fact that you may have false data.

1. Often people just are not truthful. Verify your understanding of the data given, probe to get additional facts as you seek the truth.
2. Maybe it will take more probing or more homework before you will have what is needed.
3. The decision to proceed or stop counseling will really depend upon:
 - a. the strength of the evidence,
 - b. the importance of the data, and
 - c. the extent of the guilt of the counselee.
4. Sometimes homework reveals the deception of the counselee which must

be pointed out for repentance.

5. Sometimes, because of the seriousness of the problem, the counselor must place the responsibility on the client by stating that nothing more can take place until he repents of some matter. A truthful, repentant heart on the part of the counselee is extremely important.

C. Recognize the fact that you may get only rambling comments.

1. Biblical counselors should maintain control and guide the session at all times.
2. Wandering may indicate that the person wants to change the subject, is more interested or concerned about another topic, missed the point of the question, or feels the question is not relevant.
3. Or the counselee may be deliberately seeking to side track the counselor from the real facts or seek to bias the counselor toward their viewpoint.

D. The counselor must know how sort data.

1. Look for various aspects of the problem. Deal with them one at a time. (The total picture might include in-law problems, sex problems, financial problems, work problems, etc.)
2. Separate the relational problems (such as bitterness, resentments, aloofness, anger, etc.) from the issue or the root problem (the problem causing it all). Do not allow an individual to shift blame.
3. Counselees must be brought to forgiveness and to grant forgiveness to others. The person must develop Christian attitudes through acts of love before any progress can be made in the whole.

Goals
(Biblical, articulated)

Obligations
(Biblical, known)

In there an agreement or conflict?

Is there an agreement or covenant?

Abilities
(gifts, skills)

Resources
(God, Scriptures,
Church, used, unused)

Appendix E

Helping the Counselees Tell Themselves The Truth

Believing what is not true leads to misunderstandings, which lead to miscommunication, which leads to conflict. Many negative emotions such as anxiety, depression, jealousy, insecurity, and anger results from telling ourselves things that are not true.

Note: Often couples fall prey to stating things to one another which are part truth and part lie, and they believe their lies and partially-true comments which they make to one another. These are so often damaging and bring many hurts and misunderstandings.

Sometimes we work with a couple who are saved and know the answers for their marriage from exposure to Biblical teaching and preaching. They seem to have adequate exposure to conflict-management and communication skills and yet do not make progress in the problems of their marriage. We may expect problems due to their faulty perceptions. But probably, *more than anything else, they are not telling themselves the truth.*

I. As Man Thinketh In His Heart -- So Is He. (Prov. 23:7)

What I (man or woman) think in my heart -- in other words what I believe -- determines how I feel and how I behave. The Greek philosopher Epictetus, who was also a convert to Christianity and a contemporary of the apostle Paul, said that it is the view we take of events, rather than the events themselves, that causes us difficulties.

Illustration: *If you walk into a room full of people, many of whom look up at you, what do you conclude? They are wondering who this attractive person is? Or, they see a homely, unwanted intruder? Your conclusion, not the actual thoughts of the people leads you to hold your head high, or makes you want to crawl into a hole. It is not the event, but your thoughts about the event, your evaluation is what makes the difference.*

A. Thinking upon the wholesome. See Philippians 4:8.

We can think upon those things which are **positive** -- just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtuous and praiseworthy. We do have choice.

B. Thinking upon the truthful. See Phil. 4:8

We can think upon those things that are **true** (honest). Paul made the first admonition toward truthfulness and the second toward being positive.

Note: Paul was not always positive, nor only speak of the positive. His circumstances surely were not always positive. (Sees II Cor. 4:8, 9; 4:17) Paul was truthful about the things that he experienced, but he did not magnify the negative. He did not engage in self-pity. He gave us his truthful reporting of the events, his own interpretation, but also his view through the Word of God.

Why was Paul troubled, perplexed, persecuted, and cast down, but not distressed, in despair, forsaken and destroyed? Weren't things bad enough? We believe things were bad, very bad, but Paul did not exaggerate his problems, but trusted God.

His thoughts about life, about events, and circumstances, was what made the difference and brought the equilibrium to his life. He had peace because of how he reflected upon, meditated upon, and accepted mentally each event that God allowed in his life. (See II Cor. 12:9-11)

II. Thinking Rationally or Irrationally -- Biblically or Anti-Biblically.

Lets look at the following:

- A -- the **activating event** or triggering event that comes in life. (the issue)
- B -- the **belief** (what one thinks or says to oneself about A.
- C -- the **consequences** (the resulting feelings/ and or behavior.)

If you analyze the ABC give above you will note that we do what do and react as we react, and feel as we feel based upon our belief or what we say about the the event, person, or circumstance that we face.

The A can be a very minor thing such as dripping gravy on one's shirt, or tie or blouse. Or it can be a major event like losing a job, death in the family, etc. The event (A) does not by itself produce the consequences, or C. One person might react to being fired (C) by becoming depressed, even suicidal. Another person may view being fired as a chance to change to a more desirable job. Clearly, A does not automatically produce C. It is our (B) **belief system** or self-talk about the event which determines our response.

A. Recognizing Sinful Thoughts

1. Because of our sin nature (and beliefs were involved from the beginning when sin entered into the world), we naturally are prone to accept lies.
2. Satan is the father of lies and is a liar from he beginning. (Jh 8:4); therefore, lying is part-and-parcel of the inherited sin nature. We are far more prone to lie than to be totally truthful with ourselves, others, and especially with God.

B. Recognizing Sinful Self-talk

1. Demands are often involved in our misbeliefs -- our sinful self-talk lies. We believe we must do certain things, or that others must do certain things, or that we have a right to be upset if they do not live up to our demands, expectations, or desires.
2. Counselees must be taught that while it is healthy and rational to desire things, it is not right to allow those desires to control us. Often it is not the desires that are the problem but we make them into demands that cause us and others problems. We often have demands.

Helping People Change Their Thought Lives

As one is helping a person deal with thoughts, we need to help him make a value judgment about what he is doing. In other words, he needs to state whether he is willing to change. He needs to understand what God desires of him.

A. There Is a Choice to Make.

1. Just as the man of John chapter five had to face his being crippled for 38 years, and whether he desired to be healed or not, so each person must make a choice to accept God's will for his life. He must face the choice.
2. There is a choice to make to change, to grow, and that choice must be made before there can be progress.
3. Choice involves risk, commitment, effort and pain. It requires the best that a person can give. If there is to be transformation then the person must renew his mind toward that change. (Rom. 12:1,2)

B. There Must Be an Awareness of Individual Thoughts.

1. As you use the **cognitive approach**, your initial goal will be to help the person (s) restructure thinking by becoming more aware of his or her thought processes. You will need to teach the counselee that learning to be sensitive to one's thoughts is basic to personal growth. **Being objective is the first step.**
2. As the person records his thoughts, he can begin to see the pattern. Then you can help the person identify false beliefs or self-talk lies.
3. Don't necessarily label them as false beliefs at first, but help the person to label his how thoughts or belief system and consider the consequences of those beliefs.
4. One method of identification is to focus on and verbalize the thought that occurs before, during, and after the difficulties the person has described and with which they are battling.

Illustration: For example, a wife is upset with her marriage, her husband's lack of involvement with the family, and his long work hours. You will need to encourage her to discuss her self-talk concerning her husband's non-involvement. **Some question you might ask her are:**

- a. What thoughts go through your mind right before you start feeling upset?
- b. Do you tell yourself that your husband should be more involved in the family life and with you?
- c. Do you tell yourself that he doesn't love you?
- f. Do you tell yourself that life is not fair, and what he is doing is just not fair?
- g. Do you tell yourself that he should not stay away as much as he does and that you cannot stand it?
- h. Do you tell yourself that he should treat you better?
- i. What thoughts do you have about yourself in this situation? Do you say, "*If I were a better wife, he would want to be around me more?*"
- j. What thoughts go through your mind when your husband does not come home at the time you think he should? Do you doubt his word and imagine that he is untrue to you?
- k. What thoughts do you have the future of your marriage? Do you think that it will never change? Do you wonder why your husband is mistreating you this way?

Asking questions this way. . .

- a. Will help you to identify the specific beliefs that are causing or continuing to cause the unhappiness. This should be compared with truth and the Word of God.
- b. Asking questions helps you to understand the problems, to see the real issues, to sense the heart of the person answering, and to measure what the root problem may be. The wife above may be a jealous person, or a very selfish, self-centered person, or a nagging, difficult wife. And then she might be very right and correctly looking at the problem at hand.
- c. The person must learn to weight their thoughts and see if they are lies, truth, half-truth, misconceptions, or perceptions that are false.

C. The Value of Questions

1. Questions help greatly in giving insight, bringing interaction, and helping toward solutions.
2. They help the counselee to correct his faulty thinking and recognize the lies he has accepted and the control he needs to gain over his thought life.
3. Almost all sinful responses in life, marriage, etc., are conceived in the thought life.
4. *Questions that could be asked:*
 - a. *What is the evidence for or against this thought I have been entertaining? You are asking for evidence for the truth or the falseness of the self-talk belief.*
 - b. *Where is the logic for this belief?*
 - c. *Are you confusing the facts with your perception of the facts? As the person begins to look at his own interpretation, the situation may be clarified.*
 - d. *Are you basing what you are doing on facts or on feelings? Many people use feelings to validate themselves when facts do not uphold their thoughts of feelings.*
 - e. *In what way might you be thinking in all-or-nothing terms? Are you exaggerating for example, when you say that no one likes you? Are you generalizing something that is not necessarily true?*
 - f. *Could you be using some defense mechanism? Often people use denial, projection, rationalization, etc., to free themselves from bad feelings or from guilt.*

D. Guidelines For Using Questions

1. Do not answer the question.
2. Ask specific and concrete questions.
3. Be sure that you have a good reason for asking any question that is asked.
4. The purpose of any question should be to build both the relationship between you and the counselee and to help the person learn to solve problems.
5. Space questions so the person does not feel he is under attack or under pressure.
6. Use questions to gain information and to uncover thinking that is below the surface.

Discovering Evidence

Where is the evidence? Help them, as you interact, find the evidence, if any, for the beliefs which they hold. Sometimes it helps to encourage them to write down the evidence (Illustrations: self-talk, perceptions, etc.)

You might encourage them to carry a notebook and write down in one column their wrong, sinful thoughts and the evidence of those thoughts being wrong. They could in another column write down the correct thoughts (Biblical) they need to embrace.

A. A List of Questions to Help Discover Evidence.

1. Am I taking examples out of context?
2. Am I making a mistake in assuming what causes what?
3. Am I focusing on irrelevant factors? What do I want, or expect?
4. Am I close enough to the situation to be correct in my analysis?
5. Am I being honest with myself? Or confusing a thought or feeling for a fact?
6. Am I assuming every situation to be the same?
7. Am I asking a question that has no answers?
8. What are the distortions in my thinking?
9. What difference will this make in a week, or a year, or ten years?

B. A Game Plan For the Counselor. . . in Meeting Needs

1. Identify the person's false beliefs. Help him discover and face them.
2. Ask the person about specific past and present behaviors and extents that are related to this false, sinful, self-talk belief.
3. Determine the kinds of behaviors or events that would actually contradict the person's beliefs.
4. Ask detailed questions about the circumstances, thoughts, or behavior patterns surrounding one problem example which the counselee claims supports his false belief or inner lies.
5. Compare and contrast the person's thoughts, feelings, behavior and consequences concerning the time when he became depressed (for example) as opposed to the time when he did not become depressed (or otherwise affected by his actions.) Help him see the difference.
6. Help the person to challenge his thoughts and replace them with Biblical truth.
7. Make a thought evaluation worksheet to help him face his irrational, sinful self-talk.
9. Help him make "stop cards" to use toward change in his life.