

Counseling People's Problems

By Dr. Edward Watke Jr.

- Preface -

There are many problems people face about which we need to be ready to counsel... to give guidance... to prepare homework for their sake... to understand... and to help bring permanent change. The subjects dealt herein could be sources for personal study, for teaching a class, for preaching, and for one on one application. It is our desire that this material will give you a great resource for the benefit of many.

- Table of Contents -

Helping People In the Midst of Their Depression	pg. 2
Handling Guilt Biblically	pg. 13
The Practice of Blameshifting	pg. 20
Dealing With Stress Biblically	pg. 24
Dealing With Worry	pg. 27
How To Handle Anger	pg. 32
Facing the Pressures of Life Biblically	pg. 39
Handling Resentments and Bitterness	pg. 43
Who Controls Your Thoughts?	pg. 46
Dealing With Child Sexual Abuse	pg. 50
Facing Fears and Anxiety	pg. 56

Helping People In the Midst of Their Depression

Possibly one of the greatest problems people face today is the impact of personal depression. Some consider it to be the number one problem in our nation.

Each year over 125,000 are hospitalized in the United States for depression, double of that number seek some psychiatric help. It is said that one out of every eight people in our nation is in need of professional help. That may be an exaggeration of sorts, but even Christians experience depression at times. It is said that one of Charles H. Spurgeon's greatest personal problems was ongoing bouts with depression. Probably many are depressed because it is a spiritual problem as much as it is mental or physical.

I. LOOKING AT THE STATE OF THE DEPRESSED PERSON

A. A truly depressed person does not snap back when things take place, rather they -- gradually cease to function,

1. they withdraw from life and retreat into crushing dejection, guilt, and unworthiness.
2. They carry the world on their shoulders and find it very difficult to make simple decisions.
3. Their attentions span narrows and they find it difficult to concentrate.
4. They cannot assimilate what others are telling them. They may be so preoccupied with self and personal problems they cannot give full attention to anyone.

B. At one moment he may be so depressed he may experience exaggerated mood swings and the slightest movement may agitate him, at other times he may laugh at anything hilariously. This outburst of laughter is really a facade or cover up for the inner true feelings. He may come to what some call manic depression.

C. The depressed person is often irritable and touchy and the least little thing annoys him. So taken up with self that outside interferences disturb him. This can degenerate to the place that he is totally unaware of what is happening around him. He also generally loses interest in his environment, possibly in his wife and children and idly sit. He may even sleep all week end, or contemplate suicide because life appears meaningless.

D. David described feelings of depression as:

A broken heart and the terrors of death, fearfulness and trembling, a crushing feeling of horror. He desired to fly away like a dove and be at rest. (Study Psalm 38.) God comforted David when depressed over the hatred of a friend. He comforted David, in time of sin, and used it to drive him to seek repentance and forgiveness. (Psa. 32, 38)

A person may be depressed because of the loss of a job, loss of a loved one, or financial or marital problems. **But these are not the roots of the problem.** They are contributing factors.

Counseling People's Problems

Physiological problems are not included in root problems, though they may exist. These contributing elements are merely predisposing factors and may help pave the way for depression which is actually brought about by the *root problems*.

Depression may be anywhere from slight at one end of the spectrum to very severe at the other end. Almost every person has at times been depressed to some degree. For many Christians it has been only minor or for a short period of time. As they applied Biblical truth their depression problem was cared for.

II. CONSIDER ROOT PROBLEMS WHICH CAUSE DEEP DEPRESSION

A. Depression Is Often Caused By Internalized Anger. This is anger held inside the heart and thoughts.

1. Maybe the person has never verbally shared his anger but it is there. As anger is suppressed and thus internalized it grows until the person may be on the verge of exploding.
2. Anger destroys as it erupts in some
 - a. physical problem (like shingles, colitis, heart-attack, etc.) ,
 - b. personal reaction (like beating children, slapping wife, etc.),
 - c. ruining personal relationships or bringing physical disease or major personal problems.

B. The direction anger takes determines its rightness or wrongness, its hurt or damage or, felt or expressed.

1. Christ (Matt 23) was angry and used anger to drive them to repent and face sin.
2. Not all anger is wrong, every emotion is a gift from God to be under His control for His glory. Damaging emotions are a result of sin.
3. It is not a sin to feel anger, maybe its the only thing that will cause us to do something about a problem.
4. Suppressing anger brings depression, destroys relationships, and brings psychosomatic disorders and suffering..

III. BIBLICAL APPROACH TO ANGER TO SHARE IN COUNSELING:

A. Anger is not sin, (Psa. 7:11 God is angry with the wicked every day.) Anger is not sin in itself, but can lead to sinful action. It is not wrong to be angry at sin.

1. It is wrong when it grows out of pride, and hurt feelings, etc.
2. It is wrong when it is expressed in sinful ways. (selfish desires)
3. It is wrong when it is destructive to others.

B. Anger is an emotion and every emotion God has given to mankind is good,

Counseling People's Problems

however the emotion may be misused. Anger is an emotion designed to mobilize force to care for something. Energies of this emotion should be directed at the problem and not the person.

- C. Anger should not be released hastily.** (James 1:19; Eph. 4:26,27) But anger should not be held in for it will lead to wrath, bitterness, malice, desire for revenge, and then directly and indirectly it will produce depression.

We should release anger in accordance to Matthew 18:15-10. Be willing to forgive, and to forget. If we are wrong we must be willing to confess, forsake and reconcile. If anger is held inside it brings guilt, depression, ruins personal relationship which triggers more depression. It will bring physical disorders, and ruin the spiritual life.

- D. Resolving anger can free us** to resolve the problem that occasioned the anger in the first place.

- E. Don't try to resolve anger by** ventilation, (punching a pillow, etc.).

1. It is much better to aim the response at the problem involved rather than to attack a person or an object.
2. Some counselors suggest getting it off your chest! Some people have ulcers and some give them.

- F. Don't be angry with the person --** but, if angry, may it be with his attitudes or deeds. And be very quick and willing to recognize your own shortcomings, sins, faults, and not just your brothers. Forgive quickly and fully!

- G. Realize that many differences** can be and should be overlooked. "Discretion of a man defers his anger, his glory is to pass over a transgression!" (Prov. 19:11; 30:33; 15:1)

- H. Any anger problem should be short lived,** dealt with daily, immediately, if at all possible. (Eph. 4:26,27)

IV. FAULTY THINKING PATTERNS OFTEN CAUSE DEPRESSION.

Is there hope for the depressed person? Is it something merely to be endured? Is it a result of sin or a trial to be put up with or an ailment like some sicknesses? Many feel that depression is a disease and seek to treat it as such.

NO, depression is not something to be endured or to be put up with as some chronic illness or sickness that has no answer. Rather it is something that can and must be conquered.

THINKING AND DEPRESSION

- A. Thinking is internalized sentences.**

1. A person's internal thought process will determine how a person will act and how a person will feel.
2. Events do not cause positive or negative feelings. Rather it is the attitude toward the event that will determine how a person feels and responds.
3. Actually it is our self-talk and belief system that determines our response to

events, circumstances, and people.

4. The writer of Proverbs said, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."
(Prov. 23:7). What is in the thoughts comes out in words and actions.
5. Renewal of the mind precedes behavior changes.
Behavioral change will not last unless it is preceded by mind change.
(Eph. 4:23; Rom. 12:2)

B. Problems must be dealt with on two levels -- behavior and thinking.

1. Tackling a problem only on the behavior level will only prove fruitless.
2. Thinking must be consistent with the Scripture.
3. Behavior will be an outgrowth of thinking.
4. If a person judges himself to be a failure, he (may) will perform on the level of a failure and feel as a failure. This in turn can bring depression.

A man was passed over in a promotion and a position. He indulged in self-pity and introspection. He became very depressed as his thinking and attitudes brought depression into his life. *Change or renewal does not take place or begin in the emotional or behavior center, but in the mental center.*

5. The Christian counselor must challenge thinking as well as behavior.
 - a. Wrong reasoning must be cast out.
 - b. Wrong beliefs also must be challenged.
6. Proper behavioral patterns must be put on. This new pattern of living should be consistent with new thinking patterns.

ATTITUDES AND DEPRESSION

A. We must build positive attitudes.

1. Faulty thinking patterns must be identified for they build our attitudes.
2. Unless the counselee can see the wrongness of these attitudes and the devastating consequences, the counselee will not be motivated to change.
3. The counselor should take great pains in building a Biblical case for change.

B. Development of proper attitudes.

1. Build an attitude of praise. Phil. 4:4
Mental sins lead to physical problems. Proper thoughts lead to a healthy countenance, a relaxed mind and a merry heart. (Prov. 17:22; Phil. 4:8)
2. Build a practice of right praying. Phil. 4:6 We need to teach the counselee to pray biblically, how to pray, and the importance of a good prayer life.
 - Too often our prayers are nothing but a selfish pity party (for me, myself and I).
 - Paul gives the content for Biblical praying. (Phil. 1: 9-1; Col. 1:9-11)

Counseling People's Problems

- Pray about everything and build a spirit of prayer (I Thess. 5:17).
 - We must supplicate and direct prayer toward God to resolve the problem for this will help us drain off damaging, wrong emotions.
 - Prayer should be aimed at resolving problems. Let God change you.
 - Pray with thanksgiving, for everything, for this will guard against self-pity.
3. Build a practice of right thinking. (Phil. 4:8)
We must learn to think Biblically. Maybe the person needs to make a *think list* of all that God has done. Go over that list daily, study *why* and the *benefits of right thinking*.
4. Build a practice of positive living. (Phil. 2:13; 4:19; Rom. 8:28)
Anchored in Christ we can be an overcomer. By living a positive life, resting in the Lord and His promises we can overcome. An overcomer is one whose fellowship with Christ is real.

Right thinking leads to right attitudes, actions, behavior, and emotions.

The counselor must help the person to identify the faulty thinking patterns that led to depression. We must expose these attitudes as sin, and inconsistent with Biblical Christianity. Unless the counselee can see the wrongness of the attitudes and devastating consequences he will not be properly motivated to change.

We must build a Biblical case for change. Consider Psalm chapters 73, 42, and 43. God requires the believer to battle the wrong thoughts (II Cor. 10:3-5) and requires right thoughts of the believer. Proper thoughts (Psa. 50:23) glorify God. Mental sins such as worry, complaining, etc., lead to physical problems and can bring depression as well.

Rejoicing in the Lord, and a practice of praise does make a big difference. Christian counselors should help counselees make thanksgiving a habit of life, and not live under the circumstances as a way of life.

God has everything in control; He is sovereign and will do right. Help the person to make a thanksgiving list for which to praise and rejoice.

GUILT AND DEPRESSION

A. Guilt is an emotion we experience when we violate our value system.

1. Our value system consists of those things we have come to accept as being true.
 - a. things from school,
 - b. things from home training,
 - c. things from the impact of society, (Rom. 2:14-15)
 - d. things from Scripture as God's Word convicts us.

Guilt comes from that written law that has been written on our hearts, or imposed on our hearts. Conscience gives assent to that written law. All people, no matter their culture, know guilt. Gentiles did not have God's law, but had a law written on the heart!

B. Guilt is an attitude of condemnation and punishment.

1. When the conscience is violated, guilt steps forth like a prosecuting attorney, saying "guilty, guilty, guilty."
2. In several of the Psalms, David characterized his state well. (Psa. 32:4; 38:3, 7, 8, 10)
3. Guilt rises up in the mind screaming words of accusation.
4. Guilt can be merciful or a destroyer. Guilt sent David to his knees and Judas to his death. After Judas acknowledged that he had betrayed innocent blood, he "went out and hanged himself." (Matt. 27:4) His inner depression, guilt and pressure of wrong overwhelmed him as he did not seek forgiveness and reconciliation.

C. Guilt may manifest itself in a myriad of forms.

1. ***unconscious pay-off:***

Guilt originally meant the payment of a fine for an offense with a desire to make personal atonement. It was to offer something in return for a wrong. It made the person no closer to God's forgiveness though they may have felt they had a part in personal atoning for wrong. It was conscience money -- for example.

2. ***blame shifting:***

As a counterfeit of real reason, the guilty one hides and shifts blame, such as Adam. "*The excuse is a lie wrapped in the skin of a reason.*"

3. ***defensive aggression*** - Possible action of a teen as a smoke screen to cover guilt.

4. ***attitudes of persecution***

5. ***extreme cleanliness*** -- such as continual washing or bathing

6. ***free-floating guilt*** -- In this aspect a person has a lot of guilt and may not even know why... the result of many unresolved sin habits, sinful actions and practices.

Consider:

- When a person violates his conscience or value system he experiences guilt!
- Guilt is usually a major cause of depression.
- Many Christians even feel they must offer a *psychological offering* that consists of frustration, anxiety, and guilt before they can accept God's forgiveness or feel forgiven. They think that they'd feel better if they suffer some for sin.
- They may well believe they must have feelings of depression as a result of their sin and wrong.
- Depressed feeling of sorrow, anxiety over life-style, and fear about the future are often all associated with ongoing depression. Often this takes place because of the poor way the person has dealt with sin and wrong.

A woman in apathy and depression did not desire to study the Word of God, or pray and did not enjoy spiritual things. She was resentful and bitter toward God for she felt God did not answer her prayers. She harbored resentment toward a family member (not shouting, etc., but fuming within). The faulty relationships with others destroyed her relationship with God.

D. Removal of guilt

1. Do not minimize guilt for the person needs to face its reality.
2. Confess sin. (Psa.32:5; 38:18; I Jh. 1:7, 9) agree with God about the sin. Confession must be as broad as the offense. Thank God for His forgiveness whether you feel it or not; God forgives and forgets. Instead of extending your energy in psychosomatic suffering, use that energy to forgive, give thanks and move toward positive action.
3. Realign conscience with Scripture.
(James 5:16) A woman, for sixteen years unfaithful in her marriage, had tried alcohol, and other therapy to relieve her guilt and depression. We need to help people to face guilt, for like pain, it is an early warning signal which will help to save the person from self-defeating behavior.

E. Guilt versus bad feelings

1. If a person violates his belief system, he is still guilty. (Rom. 14:23)
The guilt he experienced is still real.
2. Uneasiness or awkwardness is not sin. Many things could be distinguished as bad feelings over something... that is not sin. **Guilt come from the deliberate violation of one's value system.**
3. When in doubt, don't do it.

After you have Biblically determined that a certain practice or action is proper and there will be no occasion for another stumbling, then go ahead and do it. If done in good faith and on the authority of the Word of God, good feelings will eventually follow.

PHYSIOLOGY AND DEPRESSION

A. Physical and spiritual depression are not the same.

1. Physical depression generally has an "organic base" or reason.
2. Spiritual depression lies in the area of faulty Biblical responses.
 - a. Spiritual depression can occur as much from ignorance as it can from a willful violation of Scripture.
 - b. Many depressed people cannot tell you why they are depressed, but when their behavior and thinking patterns are scripturally examined, sins of omission are often discovered.

B. Extensive and intensive data gathering will real the problem (s).

All problems fall into one of two areas -- organic or spiritual. Spiritual problems can be broken down into two areas -- behavior and thinking. Extensive data gathering brings all component parts into focus. Intensive data gathering is more narrow and "hones in" on possible clues in one area.

Generally there is no need to consider the physical until the areas of the spiritual have been thoroughly considered.

C. Possible areas of exploration

1. Anger and resentment
2. Wrong beliefs such as, "I can never do anything right," or "everyone is against me," or "all anger is sin."
3. Habitual areas of sin -- practices, thoughts, etc. (Masturbation, adultery, fornication, and an improper thought life.)
4. Procrastination, poor scheduling, slothfulness.
5. Indebtedness, poor financial management
6. Bitterness, malice, and desire for revenge toward some person.
7. Anger with God, dislike of one's lot in life
8. Battles in marriage, practicing scorn, contempt, etc.

D. Physical causes of depression

Physical causes of depression can set the stage for spiritual depression. It is very important that the Christian counselor understands some of the disorders the physical body can suffer.

1. Thyroid deficiency
2. Hypoglycemia or low blood sugar
3. Vitamin deficiency (or some mineral lack)

V. SOME EXPERIENCE DEPRESSION BECAUSE OF NEGATIVE EMOTIONS.

All of us are subject to feelings and are *low at times* or more calm at other times. Every day we come into contact with things that effect our emotions. We can experience restless nights, arguments, marital problems, etc., which can begin a path of inward depression. There are a host of things that may arouse our emotions to tension or relaxation, to excitement or depression, which extreme depends upon our attitude toward the or person(s) involved.

WE ARE EMOTIONAL BEINGS, SO --

A. The things we say, the things we do, and the things we think about produce feelings or emotions.

B. They are a blessing; they make us human.

1. The problems come when we allow negative feelings to dominate our attitudes and dictate our actions.
2. If we are held by the cords of our own negative feelings and allow them to dominate the life -- we will probably have a self-fulfilling habit and life of depression made by the forging of our own chains.

VI. NEGATIVE FEELINGS ARE NOT TO BE IGNORED

A. They indicate a hidden problem.

1. We can invite depression. We control our choice of feelings by controlling our thoughts and actions.
2. Basic law of psychology is -- you feel as you think and act.

B. We are never commanded to be happy, but to praise.

1. All this is a choice we must make daily.
2. **Note:** We build habits of continued response that then become the *conditioning* for our responses in future things that touch our lives.

C. To Help the Counselee:

1. Root out wrong thinking; medication is not enough.
2. To get to the bottom of any depression related problem, make two lists;
 - a. On the first list have the person write down their faulty responses to life.
 - b. On the second list have the person write down responses God commands us to put in the place of the first list.

Illustration:

Old Habits and Patterns:

1. not submitting to authority
2. lying
3. constant gripping
4. anger, resentments
5. continued introspection
6. slothfulness
7. misuse of the body
8. negativeness

New Habits and Patterns:

1. subjection to all authority
2. truth telling
3. giving thanks in everything
4. solving problems daily, facing anger
5. involvement in life, get busy giving everything to God.
6. scheduling, goal setting
7. proper rest, diet, etc.
8. study God's Word, note His faithfulness

Some Major Steps In Overcoming Depression.

1. Recognize that most things that lead up to depression are sin habits. Recognize that he needs a new life in Christ.
2. Realize that the habits he needs to break are habits of sin against God and against himself. Whether poorly organized time, drinking, procrastination, etc., all are sinful.
3. He must acknowledge that depression is harmful, displeasing to God, wrong, debilitating. Motivation must be biblical or change will not last. Habits of life must be seen as God sees them. We must face the need of change, that we are not the product of our own environment.

Depression is never the will of God and to continue to be in that state is never the

will of God.

4. Help the counselee to believe that he can change. He can succeed in change, that God can give grace to keep and grace to lift up. Only faith can make the difference! He must believe in the infinite ability of the Creator to sustain and to give grace and strength.
5. He must acknowledge that depression is often the result of the sin of unbelief, that it is the opposite of trusting and rejoicing. Only by faith can we have victory. (Heb. 11) Faith is the only thing by which there can be victory for the drug addict, prostitute, the homosexual, etc.,. Only by faith can they be transformed from the kingdom of darkness into the family of God. Only by faith can the person find the release from the bondage of depression and break the old habits that squeeze life from his inner person.
6. He needs others to pray for him and to provoke him to biblical obedience. He should stay away from people who give the wrong kind of sympathy and encourage his self-pity, excuse making, brooding, or the neglect of responsibilities. (Study I Cor. 15:33; Prov. 22:24,25; Heb. 3:12,13; 10:24,25 concerning the kind of companions he needs.)
7. Help him make a “*think and do list*” of profitable things he can think about and do when he is tempted to be despondent. (Consider Phil. 4:8,9)
 - profitable things in activity when tempted to be blue,
 - profitable things to think upon when tempted to be despondent,
 - profitable things he could do for others.
8. Help him (her) make a list of responsibilities. Note which ones he is fulfilling well and regularly and also note those he has been neglecting or is prone to neglect because he does not feel like doing them.
 - plan a schedule which gives him time to do all that he really must do,
 - get busy and seek to fulfill these responsibilities,
 - don't focus on how bad he feels, or how he dislikes the task,
 - focus on God, and His will,
 - focus on God's promises, blessings and provisions,
 - focus on the help God gives to do what should be done in obedience,
 - focus on God's presence, care and grace. (I Pet. 5:7; Heb. 13:5,6; Heb 4:14-16)
9. Help the counselee make a list of 30 - 50 blessings that God has bestowed upon him in every area of his life.
 - spiritual blessings
 - material, or physical blessings
 - family and social blessings
 - financial and work blessings
 - possessions and environment blessings
 - community and housing blessings
 - opportunities and encouragements from others

Consider Psa. 103:1-10; 68:19. The blessings are there, we need to be in the habit of seeing them, recognizing them and thanking God for them. Make it a daily practice to give specific thanks for particular, specific things. (Phil. 4:8; Psa 34:1; Eph. 5:20)

Counseling People's Problems

10. Maintain a regular practice of daily Bible reading and study, prayer and meditation.
 - Help him to plan his procedure: schedule a regular time for devotions, and put his plans into action,
 - Keep a written record of what he gets out of his devotional time,
 - Ask some mature Christians for help in making them more profitable and seek immediately to implement what he learns and to share it with other people.

11. He should be taught to serve God and others in practical ways for many depressed people are moody, blue, listless, and doing little to help their problem.
 - Make a list of abilities and gifts to use to serve others,
 - Ask others to evaluate strengths and gifts,
 - Read Romans 12 and see where he fits into the picture,
 - Make a list of specific ways in which he can and **will** serve others,
 - Begin immediately to put that list into practice,
 - Keep a record for a little while of how he is serving the Lord and others.

Handling Guilt Biblically

When a person trusts Christ as Savior, the guilt of personal sin before God is forever removed.

As far as one's standing with God is concerned, that individual is from that moment on -

- unconditionally accepted and declared righteous by God,
- even though, as a new believer, he or she has a lot of personal weaknesses, hang-ups, and sins in his or her daily life, for which victory has not yet been experienced.

This perfect standing, free from condemnation, is because of the work of Christ on the cross and Christ's merits, given as a gift to the believer's account.

I. Why is this subject so important to us to understand?

A. Because so many of the world's counselors say it is unimportant.

Example: "The murderer is not to blame because he had a bad childhood." They try to find out who did what to whom.

B. If guilt is not handled Biblically, it distorts other problems in the life.

1. A condemning conscience keeps us from answers to prayer, and from confidence with God. (I Jh. 3:18-22)
2. A clear or free conscience means we can draw near to God. The opposite is the case when sin has not been dealt with. (Consider Heb. 10:9-22, especially vs. 22)
3. "The wicked flee when no man pursueth." (Prov. 28:1; Gen. 4:11) The person who is under a weight of guilt may manifest strange actions in life.
4. Sin not dealt with gives satan a toe-hold in the life. (Eph. 4:26,27)
5. A condemning heart can bring the person to death, as seen in Judas's personal decision.
6. Guilt will hinder many varied relationship -- at work, in the school, at church, and in the home. Along with guilt we will usually find bitterness, resentments, anger, and even hatred.

C. How you view guilt will determine how you respond to events, circumstances, situations, and people.

1. You are confronted with a wrong action. Is this a hurt or a blessing? Is guilt a blessing from God at this point?
2. Your child has done wrong. How will you respond: protect, shield, or help the person to face the wrong of the action and corresponding guilt.
3. Many experts in child training say, "Only use positive reinforcements, never be negative. Just ignore wrong."

4. When something takes place and you *feel guilty* is that true or false guilt?

II. Secular counselors only deal with the effects of guilt.

A. Consider Freud: He taught:

1. A man's problem is a conflict between the id and superego within the person. (Id-- personal inner drives; superego -- teaching given by others)
2. The counselor must always side with the id. They teach that the super-ego is what is wrong and the person must be freed from inner guilt.

His answer: Relearning so there is no conflict with the drives.

Note: In this there is no truth, no accountability and of course no sin, hence the person should be freed from any guilt. Freud is WRONG.

B. Consider Skinner (and those who support the second force):

1. Man needs to change his behavior that is counterproductive to what he truly wants and results in bad consequence.
2. Change behavior for good results. The person had the inner ability and just needs to know how to release it.

His answer: There is no standard of truth, or right or wrong. Do not deal with the offense. The person has inner strength, or power to effect personal change. *Just manipulate the results of being caught!* Skinner is WRONG.

C. Third Force in secular counseling:

1. Mowrer says: Guilt is sorrow for the effect caused to others.
Rogers says: Guilt is the difference between what a person is and should be.
2. They teach that the person needs to change the idea of what he **is** and what he **should be**. Since everything is relative this depends on your outlook.

Note: There is no standard. No dealing with the offense, sin, or shame. Only remedy is to change the feelings. *Help the client not to hurt!* This is all WRONG.

Applications:

1. They do not recognize that guilt is caused by offending a Holy God. (Psa. 32; 51) There is a vast difference between dealing with hurt feelings and trying to effect a healing of the emotions on a human level.
2. All the above disregard the conviction that comes from breaking the standard of God's law (Word of God and law written within the conscience).
3. They also disregard the conviction of the Holy Spirit and the person's individual accountability to a Holy God. (Read Romans chapters 1, 2, 3)

Counseling People's Problems

All of this probably springs from a belief in evolution and a god of man's own making.

4. All the above seek to deal with the symptoms or "feelings" of guilt by:
 - a. They explaining guilt away in many different ways.
 - 1) Society's problem - *We do have a problem.*
 - 2) Sickness or disease - *"labels" are given!*
 - 3) Bad set of *"genes, chromosomes"* which are inherited.
 - b. By Desensitizing it.
 - 1) Do what feels good, do what you really like to do, actually do more sin.
 - 2) Give medication, mask over the problem, dealing with symptoms only.
 - 3) Labels become excuses.
 - 4) Conditioning by behavior change, or shock treatments
 - c. Work on improving your self-esteem, your self-worthy, feel good about yourself.
 - d. Blame shifting (see study on this)
5. Individual ways of coping.
 - a. Get someone to agree. Go on a pity-party.
 - b. The person sears his conscience, and ignore inner qualms.
 - c. Run, hide, stay busy,
 - d. Deny fact of God, sin, and failure. Maybe failure is just a fall upwards?

III. A Biblical View of Guilt

A. Definition: "Guilt is the result of having committed a breach of conduct, especially violating the law and involving a ignoring of the Law of God -- a feeling of liability, sense of despair, or blame."

Note: There is the liability of guilt and the culpability of guilt! Feelings may or may not follow. We are talking about offending a Holy God.

B. General truths about guilt

1. Universality of guilt. (Rom. 5:12; Jh. 16:7-11; Rom. 3:23; 5:8)
2. Accountability that comes because of guilt.
 - a. Exod. 20:7 "The Lord will not hold him guiltless."
Rom. 1:20; 2:1; 2:14; 3:9-12, 19, 23 What do these portions teach?
 - b. What about those who feel no guilt? Are they free from sin?
 - 1) No guilt because of an untrained conscience.
Did Paul feel guilt as he endeavored to destroy the church?
(Consider: Lev. 4:3; 22-24, 27-29; Rom. 1:20; 2:1-14; John 7:17.)
 - 2) No guilt because of a seared conscience.
(Consider I Tim. 4:12; Tit. 1:15; Eph. 4:19.)

Counseling People's Problems

Note: It would be good to study McArthur's book, *The Vanishing Conscience*. Such a person may or may not fear consequences, pain, sorrow for hurt to God, others or toward self.

- c. What about those who *feel* guilty but have violated no Scripture? Many would teach at this point that they have a false guilt.

They have a weak conscience. Their guilt is triggered by something else than the standards of the Word of God, (Rom. 14:1-5, 23) by what some person has said, by what society has said, or by some standard, idea, or preference of another person.
(See other study on guilt as it is connected to depression.)

Note: If there is no false guilt, then why are we concerned about the enemy of our souls who, as our adversary, endeavors to make us feel guilt when we are not guilty?

- 3. Guilt is a great blessing when it leads us to Christ. (Gal. 3:24; Rom. 3:19-24; 5:8)
- 4. Guilt is still present after we are saved. (I Cor. 11:27-30)
- 5. Feelings of guilt can impact the total person, emotionally, mentally, physically, and spiritually. These feelings will be experienced in deep inner conviction.

Consider: Psa. 32:1-5; Prov. 14:30; Psa. 38:1-8

David was aware of violating God's standard and did not deal with his guilt for nearly a year. What did he experience as God's judgment and discipline rested on him? **See Psalm 38 and 32.**

vs. 2 _____ vs. 3 _____
vs. 4 _____ vs. 5 _____
vs. 6 _____ vs. 7 _____
vs. 8 _____ Then consider Psalm 32: 2-4:

IV. What Are God's Answers for Our Guilt?

The fact of guilt for us as believers exists whenever we have violated a clear statement of or command of God's Word.

When we feel guilty, we need to ask ourselves, "*Have I violated a clear statement of command of God's Word and/or His express will for my life?*"

A. Facing guilt itself

- 1. It must be acknowledge, not circumvented by hiding, running, denial, etc.
 - a. Prov. 28:13 _____
 - b. Psa. 51:4 _____
 - c. The publican said, "_____."
 - d. I John 1:7, 9 _____

2. Sin must be confessed: *"Taking God's side against our sin, saying what He says about it, agreeing with God."* (Or just a mistake, failure, fault, etc.!)
 - a. Unsaved must confess Christ as the Sin bearer. (Rom. 10:3-10)
(Judicial forgiveness... bringing justification... Rom. 8:1, 32-29... imputed righteousness!)
 - b. Saved must confess sin as an act of a child against the Father. (Psa. 51)
(We should desire to walk blameless, in constant fellowship with our Father so we need parental forgiveness.)
 - 1) **Not:** *"Whoops, I goofed!"* Or *"Well, you know I really didn't mean to do that."* *"I'm really not usually like this!"* *"Oh, I just had a lot on me today!"*
 - 2) **But:** *"Lord, I failed to apply your grace. I yielded to an idol of my heart!"*
"I choose to sin and do my own will." I Jh. 1:6-10
3. We must confess to the appropriate people! (Matt. 5:23-26; James 5:16; Matt. 18) We must accept our responsibility. (II Cor. 5:10)
4. We must make restitution as a result of our sin, if at all possible.
 - a. Note the action of the prodigal son... he went, said, and was repentant.
 - b. Note the action of Zaccheaus in Luke 19:8... restored four fold.
 - c. Note Christ's command in Matthew 5:23-28.... first, go, settle offenses.
 - d. Note the teaching of I Corinthians 7:10,11.
 - e. Note Romans 12:18, for sometimes restitution is impossible.

Note: If there is no restitution the offender may be allowed to enjoy the fruits of his sin. We must show the world that sin will be dealt with. Always when the world has witnessed a genuine revival, restitution has been one of the chief ingredients. Where there is genuine conversion there will be restoration and restitution as a natural result. **The prodigal son was willing to do right!**

5. There must be change! This comes through the application of the Word God! The emphasis is not to ***feel forgiven***, but to ***think forgiven***.
 - a. Forgiveness must be accepted or we reject truth! (Rom. 5:1; 6:11; I Cor. 6:9-11) Forgiveness must be embraced, accepted no matter how unworthy we may feel. It is based on the finished work of Christ.

Note: But what if our feelings of guilt remain when there is no longer any fact of guilt? That means we have not entered fully into God's forgiveness in a personal way. We are holding a grudge against ourselves. The motive for any grudge is vengeance. We may look at ourselves as bad, even though God says we are made righteousness in Christ. We may want to punish ourselves with penance of one kind or another.

- b. We need now to have changed behavior, as a result of knowing we are forgiven and because of our stand against our own sin. (Eph. 4:22-24) We must practice the *put off and put on* principle!

B. False guilt often comes from a weak conscience. So-called false guilt

It can be caused by disobeying what the person thought was God's Word. When a misuse of God's Word forms a standard that is not Biblical the person will

experience guilt... but this cannot be called false guilt. The problem is a lack of rightly dividing the Word of Truth.

This may also be a representation of the term **legalism** as it is so often spoken of today. There are those who coerce others by preaching and teaching preferences that are not convictions based on the Word of God this can cause the listener to feel guilt over some thing that is not based on Scripture at all.

V. Unbiblical Concepts About Forgiveness

A. Forgiving God.

This is wrong; God cannot sin; this is blasphemous and puts man over God.

1. How can man forgive a loving God who does all things perfectly? (Rom. 8:32)
2. How can man forgive a divine Creator who providentially ministers to us?

B. Forgive yourself.

1. This is NOT taught in the Bible. But we do need to enter into the forgiveness promised and **accept it by faith.**
2. Only God can forgive, I cannot forgive myself.

Note: Satan can work to bring feelings of false guilt when we have truly confessed and dealt with our sin. He is the accuser of the brethren. He puts us down and makes us expect that God will cast us away if we sin. He makes us fear punishment, which is contrary to God's provision *for those in Christ Jesus.*" (Rom. 8:1) Satan can encourage self-depreciating thoughts that make us feel unworthy of restored fellowship with God. He also encourages feelings of alienation and isolation from the very people who care most for us, and of course that includes God. (To that measure some say we need to forgive ourselves... I think, at times, it is a matter of semantics.) Also this is a consideration we need to consider when we think false guilt does not exist.

3. Through this means we may excuse ourselves through self-pity, brooding, and not changing. We need to: *think forgiven and live forgiven!* (Rom. 6:11-13)

C. Feeling forgiven and why it is lacking

1. We may not feel forgiven until habits of life are changing, for continued sin brings continued guilt. (Prov. 28:13; I John 3:20-22)
2. It may be lacking because we are feeling-oriented and not Bible-oriented, embracing the truth of what God has said! (Jh. 8:32; Jh. 17:17)
3. It may be lacking because we are still feeding the flesh and sin is appealing as we built it and respond to it's appetite. (James 1; II Cor. 7:10; Gal. 5:16-17)
4. We are not thankful to God for trials, in fact we may be bitter over our *lot in life*, which we feel is not fair. (James 1:2-5; Phil. 2:13)

Counseling People's Problems

5. We may feel unforgiven because we are not accepting God's Word.
(Heb. 11:6; Eph. 1:7; Isa. 44:22; Psa. 32:1,2; Rom. 10:17)
6. We need to enter into restoration , forgiveness, and restitution. If we do not forgive others we will not be forgiven. (Matt. 18:21-35;
7. We have no plans for change and continued failure brings continued guilt.
Perfect love casts out fear, fear has torment and when we do not walk in God's love applied we may well expect fear and guilt.

The Practice of Blameshifting

- Blameshifting began in the Garden of Eden.
- Mankind ever since naturally practices circumventing personal responsibility by placing blame on others, or the environment, events, circumstances, or situations in life. *"Anything and anyone is to blame, but self,"* seems to be the normal reaction to failure in life.
- Blameshifting keeps us from facing responsibility, being accountable and also destroys the potential for change.

This study will help us face this problem that is often manifested by our practice of rationalizing, defense mechanisms, denials, etc. **This is assignment # 1.**

A. What does the Bible have to say about man's natural condition?

- 1 . Genesis 6:5 _____
- 2 . Ecclesiastes 7:20 _____
- 3 . Romans 3:10 _____
- 4 . I John 1:8, 10 _____
- 5 . Because of man's pride, who does he naturally think is right? (Prov. 21:2):

- 6 . Who is responsible for your sins? _____

B. Read Matthew 7:1-5.

- 1 . What does Jesus say you should not do? _____
- 2 . What does He say you should do? _____
- 3 . Who is the guiltier party -- the accused or the accuser? How do you know?
(vs. 4) _____

C. As an assignment, list 50 ways you have been failing God as a husband/wife, mother/father, church member, Christian employee, student, etc.

D. Read the following verses and write out how each shifted the blame to someone else. (Put it in your own words.)

- 1 . Genesis 3:12 _____
- 2 . Genesis 3:13 _____

How did blameshifting affect the relationship between Adam and Eve?

3. In what way is blameshifting contrary to the definition of love as found I Corinthians 13:5...*"Love doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil..."* _____

Or consider Proverbs 19:3 _____

4. Are you blaming God for the results of your own foolishness and sin? _____

Consider Genesis 39:7-20: _____

5. Are you blaming someone else for your own sin? If so, whom are you blaming and what sin have you committed? _____

Consider Numbers 13:26-14:6: _____

Are you blaming God for your lack of faith? Or for your unwillingness to accept and learn from providential changes and trials in your life? Have you been blaming someone else because things don't go the way you want them to go? Have you done this for years? _____

6. Study I Samuel 15:1-23, particularly consider verses 15, and 21.

a. What did God specifically command Saul to do? (vs. 3) _____

b. What did Saul do? (vs. 9) _____

c. Whom did he blame? (vs. 15) _____

7. If we seek to justify our actions and shift blame to someone else, what will be the result? (Consider Job 9:20.) _____

E. How does God want you to deal with your sin?

1. Proverbs 9:20 _____

2. Psalm 32:5 _____

3. Psalm 51:4 _____

4. I Samuel 3:15-18 _____

5. II Samuel 12:13 _____

6. Psalm 103:3 _____

7. I John 1: 9 _____

8. James 5:16 _____

9 . Micah 7:9 _____

Assignment # 2:

After you have made your list of failures (assignment # 1) ask God's forgiveness. If you have hurt another person, ask that person's forgiveness. If you have sinned against a group of people, go to that group and confess your sins publicly. *Your confession should be as public as the offense.*

What should be your response when someone blames you?

1 . Romans 12:17a _____

2 . Romans 12:19 _____

3 . Philippians 4:4 _____

4 . I Thessalonians 5:18 _____

5 . I Peter 2:15 _____

6 . I Peter 2:23 _____

7 . I Peter 3:9 _____

8 . Titus 2:7,8 _____

9 . I Peter 3:11 _____

Assignment # 3:

Write out at least ten ways you can respond Biblically to someone who accuses you or blames you. Keep in mind that you want to *bless rather than to condemn.*

Assignment # 4:

The Bible says *pursue peace with all men* (I Peter 3:11) and *overcome evil with good* (Romans 12:21). Make a list of 25 things you will do or say to pursue peace and overcome evil with good.

To overcome blameshifting you must:

- 1 . Take full responsibility for your own sins? (Mic. 7:9)
- 2 . Thank God and others for bringing your sins to your attention. (I Thess. 5:18)
- 3 . Confess your sins to God and to others whom you have offended. (I Jh 1:9; James 5:16)
- 4 . Allow God to deal with the sins of others. (Col. 3:25; Nah. 1:2)
- 5 . Seek to change in the areas where you have sinned. (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:8)
- 6 . Commend, bless, express appreciation, pray for others. (Luke 6:35)
- 7 . Maintain a blameless testimony by good works. (I Pet. 2:15)
- 8 . Always seek to put the best construction on what others say or do. (I Cor. 13:5)

Assignment # 5: For further study and help consider these verses to discover how David handled a situation when he was mistreated by the wicked.

1. Read Psalm 37:1-5

a. What was the circumstance of David's problem? (vs. 1) _____

b. What two commands does God give in verse 3? _____

c. What does God say will be the inevitable fate of evildoers? (vs. 2) _____

d. Rather than retaliating toward those who seek your harm, according to verses 3, 4, 5 what should you be focusing on? _____

e. What promises does God give to those who trust Him and fulfill their responsibilities? vs. 3 _____
vs. 4 _____
vs. 5 _____
vs. 6 _____

2. What should we do with our *so called "personal rights?"* _____

Dealing With Stress Biblically

Stress is a major problem in today's society. In fact, possibly more people complain about stress in the twentieth century than those who suffer from depression.

Stress is considered to be undesirable and sufficient to warrant a person to do whatever is necessary to free oneself from the problem.

I. WHAT IS STRESS?

A. Definitions:

1. Dictionary:

- a. pressure, force, strain -- World Book
- b. constraining force or influence -- Webster

2. From Selye and his experiments:

- a. Our response to pressures and strain of life.
- b. Rate of wear and tear on the body.
- c. A danger and an opportunity; a friend of a foe, if used right stress can be a good friend.

3. Current popular view:

- a. The pressures placed on a person by various unwanted and unpleasant circumstances and events in life.
- b. Includes all the pressures that cause wear and tear on the body.

B. Origins of stress we experience in life.

1. Situations and events of life over which we have no or little control

- a. Unpleasant situations or circumstances
- b. Pressure from people which is felt in many ways
- c. Expectations placed on you, or self-induced oughts
- d. Uncertainties of life

2. Situations and events which were results of our own failure

- a. Unrealistic standards we set for ourselves
- b. Personal life style which results in undue stress
- c. Personal sin habits and practices which brought stress:

- we might get caught
- guilt due to inner pressure from the Lord

d. Workaholic self imposed demands

3. Your inner thoughts (self-talk practices) about any of the above

4. Your personal attitude depending upon how you responded to any of the above.

Consider:

- Many of us labor under a misconception about pressure.
 - We think of it as something from without which builds up the pressure within us.
 - Pressure does not come from the outside; we will see it originates from inside the person.
 - No other person can put you under pressure. You are the only one who can do that to yourself.
 - The pressures under which we labor are our responses to external circumstances, events, and people.
-

II. HOW TO RESPOND TO STRESS, OR TO MANAGE IT:

A. Contemporary methods of the world.

1. Prevent it if you can
2. Methods to respond to stress.
 - a. Attempt to avoid any and all stressful situations.
 - b. When you can't reduce the stress, then learn to relax and decrease its effect on your body.

B. The Biblical approach to stress.

Consider:

- Stress or pressure does not come because you have too much to do.
 - Most of us instinctively respond to pressure by feeling that we have too many demands on our time or our life.
 - This reveals the idea that without external demands the pressure would be gone.
 - Stress truly comes from our own response to the things that are our obligation to do.
 - As a result of the wrong responses we suffer what we have to say about stress.
-

1. Recognize that God is in control; He is working His providential plans.
 - a. Gen. 50:20 - events take place for our good
 - b. I Cor. 10:13 -- God is in control, nothing can take place outside His will and plan. He limits testings, etc., God will not exceed your limits.
 - c. Phil. 2:13 -- It is God that is at work through everything that touches the life.
2. Choose to **think Biblically** -- Accept God's workings for good:
 - a. Rom. 5:3-5 -- tribulation, pressures are meant for good, accept it.
 - b. James 1:2 -- count divers testings and trials as God at work for good, accept it.
 - c. I Pet. 4:12,13 -- God allows fiery trials to build us.
3. Thank God for the pressures.
 - a. Eph. 5:20 -- in everything give thanks

- b. Phil. 4:6 -- in everything, by prayer, supplication, thanksgiving.....
- 4. Ask for and expect wisdom from the trials (Rom. 5:3-5)
 - a. James 1:5 -- wisdom from, learning in, not trying to escape from...
 - b. To know how to change the sources of stress you produce in your own life.
 - correct poor health habits
 - correct poor time usage
 - correct self-imposed pressures, know your limits
 - correct poor work habits
 - correct sinful thoughts and attitudes
 - correct personal habits
 - c. To recognize God's goals -- His will and plan. (I Thess. 5:18, 24; I Pet. 5:10) -- His purpose to "*perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.*"

C. Our personal choices in stress and pressure.

- 1. Look for God's good in the stress and pressures.
 - a. Rom. 8:28, 29 -- consider the chart about accepting God's providence, and will.
 - b. Heb. 12:11 -- God's chastening, (child-training) often comes through the medium of pressures and stress in life.
 - c. Matt. 11:28-30 -- Yoked to Christ we can see Him at work in our lives. We need to learn from and of Him.
 - d. Gen. 50:20 -- They "thought all they did for **evil**," God allowed all of it for good.
- 2. Accept the pressures and stress that they might accomplish good.
 - a. I Tim. 1:5 -- labor to build a pure heart, good conscience and faith unfeigned.
 - b. I Pet. 5:10 -- God is seeking to build our lives. (Note the list)
 - c. Phil. 4:11-13 -- God desires we would use stress for our benefit.

Here are some safety valves we must consider:

- The safety valve of rest (Matt. 11:28-30)
- The safety valve of prayer (Phil. 4:6-9)
- The safety valve of planning ahead (Psa. 34:5,6; Prov. 3:5-6)
- The safety valve of saying NO (Eph. 5:17; Col. 4:12; Psa. 37:23)
- The safety valve of trusting God fully (Isa. 41:10-11; Psa. 61, 62, 63)
- The safety valve of resting in His promises (Isa. 40:28-31)

Dealing With Worry

Introduction:

- Worry can be a means of escape adopted by the mind in order to prevent the individual from honestly facing reality.
- It is a form of maladjustment, of tensions within the personality which render the person incapable of executing his work, or developing or utilizing his potential.
- It is a form of fear arising primarily from imaginary causes and is generally more intense than fear arising from real situations.
- Worry is an "acceptable" sin, unlike murder, stealing, etc.
- It is a manifestation of a life lived in unbelief as if God was dead.

I. THE PROBLEM DISTINGUISHED:

A. Worry compared to anxiety

Anxiety is a form of painful uneasiness of the mind over an impending or anticipated ill.

B. Worry compared to concern

Concern is the wholesome state of mind which is earnestly interested in a given situation.

C. What worry is like:

1. Worry, then, is closely related to an obsession.
2. It is often a persistent and irresistible feeling and idea of impending doom.
3. It is often caused by a deeply rooted guilt complex which acts as a continual irritation. The person is usually unaware of this and therefore seemingly helpless to deal with it.
4. Worrying we will not give proper care and concern. Therefore, we do not attend to business in a responsible way.
 - a. II Cor. 11:28 -- Paul had care for the churches
 - b. Phil. 2:20 -- Paul had no one like-minded
 - c. Gal. 4:19 -- Paul travailed for the churches, (deep concern)
5. Worry is often the result of not planning correctly. James 4:13
6. Worry is an over-anxious concern about the future and about things. (Matt . 6:25-34)
7. The original word stresses the action and effects of worry.
 - a. Meaning "to divide, part, to rip, tear apart, be anxious, distracted in attention."
 - b. (See Matt. 12:25; Mk. 4:41; 4:19)

D. When worry becomes “concern out of control”:

1. When thoughts are focused on the future with anxiety and fretting
2. When thoughts become unproductive
3. When it becomes an obsession that is all pervading
4. When it causes you to neglect other responsibilities and relationships
5. When it damages your body
6. When hope is lost instead of finding answers
7. When you actually stop functioning

II. THE PROBLEM OUT OF CONTROL: (Matt. 6:25-34)

A. Worry is unproductive

1. Worry accomplishes nothing - vs. 27
2. Worry is a thief of time - vs. 34
3. Worry controls the mind -- vss. 25, 28, 31, 34 *“take no thought or anxious care.”*
4. Worry thoughts lead no where -- vss. 24, 27
5. Worry blurs the person's vision
6. Worry wastes energy -- vs. 32, 33
7. Worry in time damages the body
8. The worrier will stop functioning in many areas of life
9. Worry will produce laziness, slothfulness. (We could become a wicked servant. Matt. 25:14-30; Mk.. 4:21-25)

B. Worry is totally unnecessary (Matt. 11:28-30)

1. Christ gives rest unto our souls. -- vs. 28
2. We are “yoked” to Christ; He is our strength; our everything. -- vs. 29
3. Christ walks with us; His yoke is easy -- vss. 29, 30
4. God is able and completely trustworthy. -- Matt. 10:28-31

C. Worry is unbecoming to a child of God!

1. We live like an orphan, as if God was dead. (Psa. 27:1, 14; Isa 41:10)

Counseling People's Problems

2. We are focused on what we do not have, rather than what we do have.
3. We are focused on earthly values, not on the things of eternity.
4. We are focused on the gift we want for self-satisfaction and not on the GIVER.
5. Worry will never bring hope nor fulfillment.
6. Worry is actually idolatry. (As we do not trust God we will put our trust in self and in things.)
7. Worry is the result of a temporal value system which places concern on tomorrow and what we want out of life. *Who has our rights?*
 - a. We will probably be angry - for we did not have our way.
 - b. We will probably entertain fear and hurt -- if our desires are not fulfilled.
 - c. We will focus on our opinion-- not God's will and way. (*God's ways*)
8. The focus of life is wrong, because: (See Matt. 6:21-34.)
 - a. The treasure in the heart is not right -- Matt. 6:21; 12:33-35
 - b. The eye is not single, but divided, (double -minded) -- vs. 22 (Jam. 1:8)
 - c. What we love is wrong - vs. 24
 - d. What we live for is wrong - vss. 25, 31 (Rom. 14:17) The kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, joy

D. Worry can lead to a "neurosis."

1. Neurosis is any activity of the nervous system or a functional nervous disorder without demonstrable physical cause. A neurotic is one affected by nerves habitually.
2. A neurosis can produce emotional and physical by-products, such as:
 - a. depression and dark moods
 - b. digestive disorders
 - c. loss of appetite
 - d. weakness and fatigue
 - e. loss of weight
 - f. weariness
 - g. inability to concentrate
 - h. aches and pains

III. THE PROBLEM UNDER CONTROL -- how to get rid of worry.

A. Things that people try -- and will not work.

1. Minimizing the problem, and thinking it will go away.
2. Wishing it away
3. Putting forth a lot of self effort
4. Trying to manipulate: facts, people, events, circumstances, etc.
5. Trying over-activity to drown the problem - (seen a lot today)
6. Talking the problem to death
7. Praying which is actually "*worrying while praying.*" (Praying with anxiety,
Copyright 2001, Revival In the Home Ministries 29.

not trusting the Majestic God who answers prayer.)

8. Trying to get rid of the anxiety through -- drinking, drugs, party life, dancing, sexual activity, etc.

B. Three things to do -- that will work!

1. Thinking right (Phil. 4:6-9; Matt. 6:33; Phil. 4:19; 4:13; Eph. 6:10)

- a. Think about God's provisions in the past -- (Psa. 111; II Cor. 3:4-5; 12:9)
 - Make a list of God's works in your past life (Psa. 111; 27:1-6; 34:1-10)
 - Make a list of all that God has done -- His ways, and provisions (Psa. 23; 61)
- b. Think about God's promises for right now! -- (Phil. 4:19; I Pet. 5:7; Heb. 13:5-6)
- c. Think about planning for the future, trusting God for direction in making plans instead of worrying. (Jam. 4:13-16; Eph. 5:17; 6:6; Psa. 37:23)
- d. Think about solutions - instead of about cares, anxieties, and anxious concerns.
- e. Think through a list of Bible promises to meditate upon, memorize and make your very own. (Begin and end each day -- **praising as you think about Him !**)
 - Worry is the result of long-standing neglect of the Bible and prayer.
 - Worry is a result of alienation from fellowship with God. (Isa. 26:3; Psa 27:1)

2. Praying right (Phil. 4:6-7; Luke 11)

- a. Recognize that worry is a sin to be confessed as unbelief. (Heb. 11:1, 6)
- b. Recognize that God allows problems for our sake. (Rom. 5:1-5; Jam. 1:2-3)
- c. Recognize the need of:
 - bringing requests with supplication (strong crying) (Consider Heb. 5:7-10.)
 - bringing our requests with thanksgiving (Phil. 4:6,7)
 - bringing our prayers with anticipation (Psa. 62:6)
 - Right thinking will help us in right praying and right praying will help us build right thinking.

3. Acting right -- (Phil. 4:9; II Pet. 1:3-10, add to your faith and be not barren)

- a. Direct energy to do right! "*Do right though the stars fall, just do right.*"
- b. Acting by doing the will of God from the heart will help us put away worry.
- c. **Act** rather than react to circumstances, situations, events, and people.
 - Act with **expectation** that God will be at work (Cf. Gideon, Esther, Daniel)
 - Take action by faith, see the faith chapter -- Hebrews 11.
 - Recognize that fretting will avail nothing -- Psalm 37:1-8; Matt. 6:24-34

Conclusions:

1. Determine the cause of worry. A problem well-defined is a problem half solved.
2. Name and list the causes of worry and what you will do about it.
3. Relate conditions to reality. Worry cannot change facts; therefore, we cannot solve a problem unless we admit its existence.
4. Consider the spiritual and physical implications of the sin of worry. Pray and confess this as sin. (Psa. 51:10; 55:22; 119:133; 139:23-24; Prov. 28:13; I Jh.. 1:9)
5. The goal is restoration of fellowship with God - a walk of trust, peace, and joy.
6. Reeducate yourself with workable, applied, Biblical principles. This involves the substitution of a new habit of trust to replace the old habit of worry. (Heb. 11:6)
7. Build a daily walk of "rest" in the Lord, tapping into His power (Eph. 6:10)
8. Acknowledge God's faithfulness and sufficiency! (Psa. 56:13; Isa. 41:10; Jude 24-25)

SO -- thinking right, praying right and taking right Biblical action will help us put off worry, anxiety, anxious care, and fretting that so often defeats us!

How to Handle Anger

It has been proven that 80% of the all people have a problem with anger. A pastor of a large church, who had counseled over 2,500 couples, stated that, "*When I found it difficult to arrive at the most pressing problem in a counseling situation, I would start with the problem of anger and found that this was always a chief element of every couple's marriage problems.*"

Possibly anger, more than any other thing, is the most disruptive problem among church members and causes as much strife, turmoil, and division among church members as any thing humans face.

1. Anger is manifested in so many ways. Some have said that there are 33 different words in the English language that are used to describe anger and how it is manifested.
2. Anger unsolved will usually produce bitterness, resentments, hostility, depression, and possibly from these will issue forth malice and a desire for revenge.
3. Anger is an emotion which is not always sinful. It is a "normal reaction" to many things in life, and yet most of the time we sin in our anger. There are many mistaken concepts about anger which help to produce failure and ongoing hurt to many. (See study on "*Self-talk and Anger*" in the book... *Why Do I Feel as I Feel and Do as I DO?* found on the web site!)

I. WHAT UNRESOLVED ANGER WILL OFTEN PRODUCE:

A. Church division and strife

1. Often there is an unreconciled state between believers.
2. There may be an ignoring of the truth, that "*we are members one of another.*" (Rom. 12:3-4)
3. No man lives unto himself, "what hurts others will also hurt me." (Rom. 14:7)
4. We are to live at peace with all men!

B. Anger destroys family communication and relationships!

1. Holy wedlock becomes unholy deadlock.
2. Marriage is to be a lovely duet, not a living duel.
3. God commands that with an "angry person you shall not go." (Prov. 22:24-25)
4. Family members often treat each other like enemies, not as gifts.

C. Anger causes parents to miss their goals with their children.

Counseling People's Problems

1. Anger begets anger and brings ongoing hurt and strife between family members.
2. Anger provokes to wrath, discouragement, frustration, bitterness, etc. (Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21)
3. Parents are to be like a coach, not a staff Sargent. (Prov. 6:20-23; 2:1-11)

D. Anger even affects the joy and health of individuals. (Neh. 8:10)

1. Doctors say there are over 51 illness attributed to psychosomatic suffering. Unconfessed, unforsaken sins in the life (bitterness, anger, etc.) can cause many kinds of physical ailments such as heart attacks, colitis, ulcers, etc.
2. According to James 5:14-16 we may experience illness's caused by sin! Confessing sin one to another can bring healing.

E. Uncontrolled anger is most dangerous because it is so widely excused.

1. "I am just doing what comes naturally."
2. "Well, you would be angry too, if someone treated you like they did me."
3. "I have a right to be angry the way my life has been."
4. "Boy, you sure jacked up his jaws, and laid him in the shade."

F. The world has few answers for the problem of anger.

They often teach and practice ventilation, projectionism, "*letting it all hang out,*" get it off your chest, etc.

II. AT TIMES ANGER IS NORMAL AND NOT A SINFUL RESPONSE:

Let us start by looking at anger itself.

- Anger is an emotional reaction involving energy.
- Anger is not bad in itself, but it can become very constructive. The Bible says, "*Be ye angry, and sin not*" (Eph. 4:26).
- God is saying it is okay to be angry, but do not sin in your anger. That tells us that it is what we DO with our anger that can make it bad.
- Truly what causes our anger and what we do with it is the real issue.

A. The God-Head manifests anger at times.

1. God is angry with the wicked every day; God is angry with sin. (Psa. 7:11)
2. Christ manifested anger in various situations. (Mark 3:5)

B. Anger causes us to act; at times we might be indifferent, careless if not moved by anger to change a situation. But then we must be under control, lest we sin in our anger.

III. UNDERSTANDING WHAT ANGER IS:

A. Biblical usage of the word:

1. “**orge**” -- meaning passion, energy, deeply moved.
2. “**thumos**” -- meaning agitated, boiling within

Anger can be an explosive response or it can be a “slow burn within” in which the person holds on to ill will, resentments and floating hostilities.

Webster's definition: “**Excessive** emotion or passion aroused by a sense of injury or wrong.”

B. Good working definition: “God-given stimulus (energy) to help me solve problems Biblically.”

Anger itself is an emotion that is “neutral.” It is what we do with it that determines whether it becomes a positive or negative force in the life. **Valid anger** is an emotion, which if under control can bring something constructive out of a situation. **Invalid anger** -- when a perceived personal right is really a selfish or perfectionistic demand -- usually has negative results and therefore should not be pursued but yielded to God.

C. Examples of right use:

1. II Sam. 12 -- Nathan and David
2. John 2:13-18 -- Christ in the temple,
3. Gal. 2:11 -- Paul withstood Peter to the face
4. Eph. 4:15,25 -- Speaking truth (both ways) with love to face facts and bring change and growth.

IV. WHEN ANGER BECOMES SINFUL, Damaging and Hurtful:

A. When it is selfishly motivated --

“I have my rights.” “No one is going to push me around.”
“I'm not going to take that.....”

There are times when we feel angry, yet a perceived personal right that was violated was not a valid right at all. Our “**right**” was based on selfish demands. In these instances, the best thing to do is to yield such perceived rights to God. This type of anger should not be pursued with an offender since there is, in fact, no valid offender.

For an example: A father is reading his newspaper when his small son jumps into his lap and tugs at the bottom of the paper, wanting his father's attention. The father feels a surge of anger within.

Why? He, at first, perceives that its his right to read the paper without being disturbed is violated. On second thought (if he is a good father) he realizes that this is not a valid right in light of the circumstances. It originates in self-motivation, in selfishness! Of course his son is more important than reading the paper, so he yields his “rights “ to God, enters into responsibility obediently and ministers to his son.

Explosive parents are never good disciplinarians -- their goal is wrong, for it is selfishly motivated!

B. When God's goal in the matter is distorted:

There are only three things that impact our lives: events, circumstances, and people. It is in these three areas of life that we get "bent out of shape," angry, and God's will is not fulfilled.

1. Rom. 8:28-29 -- We must yield to God's providential, sovereign will,
2. Rom. 8:28-29 -- We are to be conformed to the image of His son,
3. I Cor. 10:31 -- That we might bring glory and honor to God,
4. Phil. 4:6-8 -- That we might have His peace that passes understanding.

C. When anger is allowed to linger: (Consider Eph. 4:26,27)

1. We make a choice to hold on to our feelings and then we will build resentments, hostilities, bitterness, etc.
2. It can become suppressed rage, held within, which turned inward will bring about depression, and many other problems.
3. It can cause a desire for revenge. Be alert for vengeance. It is not our responsibility or right to punish our offenders. In so doing we are not allowing God to be the agent in revenge if such is to take place.

D. When in anger we attack the person and not the problem.

(Eph. 4:15,29)

When rip up the person and we by pass the real issue.

V. TWO RESPONSES WE NORMALLY HAVE TOWARD ANGER:

A. Some clam up:

1. This style involves saying nothing about our anger feelings and holding on to a grudge then our anger becomes resentment and bitterness.
2. It affects our health. It can turn into depression, and even lead to suicidal thoughts. (This grieves the Lord and blocks our fellowship with Him. The motive for holding a grudge is the same as for open hostility -- vengeance.

B. Some blow up:

1. To blow up is to express anger in a sinful way.
2. It is a way of getting even by --

- a. physical, verbal, or mental abuse and often “acting out” in such ways as slamming doors, screaming, or driving in a reckless manner.
- b. indignation is manifested in many ways --

- by words,
- sarcasm, putdowns,
- name-calling, temper tantrums,
- threats, even giving the “silent treatment”.

The angry person wants to hurt others as much as he feels he has been hurt.

VI. STEPS TO HANDLING SINFUL ANGER:

A. Recognize, be honest, admit and confess it as SIN. (We will never deal with any thing unless we see the seriousness of it! Consider Psalm 51.)

B. See God in the trials -- that come through circumstances of life, events that come and go, and people whom God puts in our lives. (II Cor. 12:1-9)

a. God is working for our good; give Him His providential right to work in your life. *He is the witness and the planner of your good.!*

b. Gen. 50:20; Deut. 32:50; Rom. 8:28,29; II Cor. 12:9,10

C. Give God the right to be your vengeance. (Rom. 12:19b) ??

a. *“Vengeance is mine, I will repay saith the Lord.”*

b. Make room for God’s wrath.

D. Return good for what you feel is evil. (Rom. 12:20-21)

E. Communicate feelings to solve the problem.

1. Use “I feel” statements, **not** “Look what you did,” statements.

2. Verbalize is to turn your angry feelings into words. Tell the person exactly what you feel. In so doing, you should not attack him, but confess your own feelings about a matter.

3. Don’t use “why” questions that bring accusations.

4. Give your “rights” to God as you share your heart with the person. Give God the right to allow your feelings to be trampled upon. Don’t have an agenda of what “has to take place” to make you happy.

5. Be **right** with the Lord, let that be the source of your own joy and happiness. (Prov. 28:13; James 5:16; Col. 3:8-14)

F. ACT -- not react -- to events, circumstances, people ! (Eph. 4:30-32)

Right actions, not wrong, sinful reactions. Act in kindness! Act in tenderness! Act in forgiveness!

Look at the following results:

If we clam up

we will have a pity party
we will be inwardly irritable
we will inwardly justify ourselves
we will focus on hurts, on the offender
we will build bitterness, resentments
we will be depressed, experience poor health
we will be difficult, poor company

we will be lonely, recluse, find boredom
we will close the door to reconciliation

we will hinder communication, solving

If we blow up

we will defend self by actions
we will outwardly aggressive
we will outwardly defend self
we will focus on revenge
we will lash out, destroy others
we will be depressed, guilt laden
we will drive others away by our explosive nature
we will experience ill health
we will hinder any reconciliation by the wall we have built
we will hinder good goals, communication and solving

Sinful passivity is not the answer -- neither is aggressive angry responses!

VII. PRINCIPLES FOR DEALING WITH ANGER MENTALLY:

Listed are a number of steps that will help you when you become aware of and admit to your anger. They will help you before you verbalize or demonstrate your angry thoughts and feelings.

A. Get more information before you respond

1. Are your angry thoughts justified or unjustified?
2. Ask questions for clarification of what was said, or done.

B. Go to the memory file!

1. Is it because the person or events reminds you of some other thing or time when you did not handle something right?
2. Are you about to "dump a load of anger" due to some previously learned sinful response?

C. Become aware of displaced anger!

1. Are you responding in anger at one thing, but it is because you are actually angry at something else. (projectionism)
2. Do you transfer your anger when you are driving or toward your family?

D. Evaluate your thoughts when you are angry

E. Remind yourself that God is in control, He is sovereign, He is doing right.

F. Learn to God about how angry you are, share your feelings with Him.

G. Learn to deal with the sinful thoughts in your anger.

1. Learn to discipline your mind
2. Learn to consider your attitudes and your "belief system" that is part of your response in anger.

VIII. PRINCIPLES FOR DEALING WITH ANGER VERBALLY:

A. Don't put off expressing how you feel for long periods of time.

B. Make it a habit not to withdraw into silence.

C. Be open to criticism

D. Share only one issue at a time

E. Don't use the past to manipulate people

F. Learn to express your expectations for others verbally

G. Share your hurt or complaint as objectively as possible.

H. Avoid a win-lose situation

I. Don't make threats to terminate or leave the relationship.

J. Don't exaggerate the issue and

K. Allow time for your reaction.

Facing the Pressures of Life Biblically

Life will have its many pressures. We hear so much about “stress in life” in our age. I think people have always had pressure and stress since sin entered the world. Our forefathers (who settled our country) did not write about stress as we view it today. They must have felt that pressures, difficulties, infirmities, etc., were just a normal part of life to be accepted and not lamented about.

How do we handle pressures and stress? Probably much of the anger, hostility, unrest, and discontentment we see manifested on the part of many is largely due to the way people handle the stress and pressures that life brings.

Consider:

- The Word of God has a lot to say about testings, trials, afflictions, persecutions, etc. All of these bring pressures and stress to life.
- How we **view** various pressures, how we **think** about them, our **attitudes** toward them and then our **responses toward them** depend upon Biblical application of truth.

I. Some Reasons We Have Pressures in This Life:

A. A competitive society --

1. Man is taught to compete from an early age.
2. Man is taught that winning is the most important thing.
“Winning isn’t everything, it is the only thing” -- some would say!
 - a. This philosophy sets people up for a fall.
 - b. “Burn-out” is often the result of the “shame” of being second.
 - c. If we don’t experience “burn-out” we will probably experience envy or some other sinful, unhealthy responses.
3. There is a place for competition! But it must be kept in proper perspective.
When should we not strive to win?
 - a. When it means -- lying, conniving, scheming, backbiting to win.
 - b. When it means destroying character or the reputation of the other person.
 - c. When it violates Scriptural principles.

B. A fast moving society ---

1. We either flow with or get trampled under foot.
2. We are enslaved by a strict time framework -- now, now, now.
It is a hurry, scurry age.

C. Irresponsible living patterns can cause stress. --

1. Procrastination; no accountability; apathetic; selfish, and lazy
2. Failure to respect and honor rules of society,

3. Failure to respect and honor scriptural rules and direction for life.

D. Improper childhood training can later bring stress --

1. Responsibilities should begin early and increase with age.
2. Training about accountability should begin early.

II. Pressure and MATURITY Go “Hand in Hand”

A. Pressure is necessary to the attainment of Christian maturity.

1. Impossible to become a content, mature Christian without pressures.
2. Consider the pressures faced by -- Daniel, Nehemiah, Elijah, Joseph
3. Some develop what is called “nerve problems” due to inability to cope with or handle pressure.
4. Pressure should produce character, beauty, and strength:

Examples: A diamond gets its beauty as a result of pressure. Beauty is brought out in the wood when pressure is applied. Wood for the sounding board of a piano is from wood from the most difficult terrain.

III. GOD Uses Four AGENTS in Applying Pressure in Our Lives:

A. Holy Scriptures -- Psa. 19:9-11; Heb. 4:12

B. Holy Spirit -- Psa. 32:1-3; Jh 16:7-11; ??

C. Circumstances and situations -- Phil. 4:13; I Thess 5:18; 5:24;

D. People -- Job 42:5; Moses verses Pharaoh; Nathan toward David, etc.

IV. God Has a PURPOSE in Pressure.

A. To help us see more clearly God's will and plan for our lives.

(I Cor. 10:1-11; Heb. 12:5-11; Prov. 3:5,6)

B. To show us our sin, (Heb. 12:12-13; Psa. 32:1-5;)

C. To produce godly character,

(Job. 42:5; Psa. 119:67, 71) We would have gone astray if God had not afflicted us.

V. Biblical Examples of Pressure:

A. Under pressure -- Moses struck the rock, (Num. 20:7-13).

B. Under pressure -- Elijah fell into deep depression, (I Kings 19:1-4).

- C. Under pressure -- **Nehemiah's determination to build the wall increased,** (Neh. chapters 1-6.)
- D. Under pressure -- **Joseph accepted affliction as God's will,** (Gen 37-41.)
- E. Under pressure -- **Job's faith was increased,** (Job. 42:5).

VI. Lessons LEARNED From Pressure:

- A. **That God has a purpose in all things.** (Rom. 8:28,29)
- B. **We cannot deal with our problems on our own.** (Psa. 61, 62, 63)
- C. **God wants us to depend fully and completely on Him.** (Heb. 11:6)
- D. **Pressures move the believer from disobedience to obedience.**

VII. Advice for the Counselor's Use:

A. Give hope and encouragement to the counselee

- 1. Share personal testimony and experience of how God delivers.
- 2. Share about how God brought others through deep waters of testings and trials. (Bible characters)
- 3. Share how God met Paul in the midst of great trials. (II Cor. 12: 5-10)
- 4. Share God's promises for times of trials, and testings. (II Cor. 1:20-21)

- a. Heb. 4:14-16 _____
- b. I Peter. 5:7 _____
- c. Psa. 55:22 _____
- d. Heb: 13:5,6 _____
- e. Isa. 41:10 _____
- f. Isa. 40:28-31 _____

B. Help the counselee understand the reason for God-allowed pressure.
(Note the chart on God's love, care and providential workings.)

C. Help the counselee determine whether the pressure is self-generated or a result of God's will for us.

D. Help the counselee understand that the "nervous problem" is a result of failure to cope with or handle pressure in the right way.

- 1. People seldom have emotional breakdowns, but become emotionally "shook up."

2. Emotions are aroused because they have a problem and have not dealt with it properly.
3. "Root out" the problem (s) and their emotions will level out.

E. Give the person practical advice

1. Learn to accept personal responsibility which maybe was never learned as a child.
2. Deal with the problems daily. (Eph. 4:26,27)
 - a. Or problems will build up till they have an explosion.
 - b. Problems may build up until they are full of bitterness and then they will devastate relationships with others.
3. Deal with problems one at a time (Matt. 6:35; Eph. 4:26,27)
4. Take one day at a time. Not all problems can be solved in one day.
5. See things from God's perspective.
6. Devise a schedule for life and living. Major on priorities pleasing to God.

Handling Resentments and Bitterness

Since I have prepared other studies about this subject, this will be brief, but I trust comprehensive and helpful.

- Bitterness is a problem in a high percentage of homes and among many church members.
- Hurt harbored in the heart leads to bitterness, and becomes one of the most devastating sins of Christians.
- Bitterness grows in an environment where we do not deal with conflicts and confrontations, but allow them to linger, fester, build, and destroy.
- Bitterness is often a continuation and a deepening of anger.

Definition: *“An attitude of revenge and spirit of unforgiveness directed toward the person or thing that has offended or caused hurt.” (or that is the perception)*

- Seen in the life of the prodigal son's brother. (Luke 15:11-32)
Felt hurt because of his father's dealings with his prodigal brother.
- Seen in Cain's reaction to his brother, Abel. (Gen. 4:1-8) Murdered out of hurt because God did not accept his offering which he knew was not acceptable.

I. ROOT CAUSES:

A. Failure to recognize that God has everything under control.

1. God can turn bad to good.
2. God is the primary mover in our lives, as our Sovereign Master.
3. Counselee must look beyond circumstances.

B. Failure to recognize that all things work together for good to the faithful servant of God. (Rom. 8:28,29; Phil. 2:13; 1:6)

C. Failure to yield personal rights to Christ's purpose in our lives.

1. Does the person accept what God is doing in the life?
2. Does the person recognize that God is seeking to bring maturity and growth?

D. Failure to act Biblically.

In every situation we can act negatively or positively.

II. RESULTS of RESENTMENT and BITTERNESS:

A. It is harmful to the resentful person. Harbored resentment leads to -

1. Depression
2. Physiological problems -- such as 51 diseases that are induced by bitterness.

3. Hindered testimony, violation of conscience,
 - a. Brings guilt and a myriad of forms of problems, (like imagining many things for example).
 - b. May cause ritualistic behavior - (like constantly washing hands)
 - c. Some experience feelings of persecution, etc.

B. It is harmful to others who are recipients of our bitterness and resentment. (Heb. 12:12-15)

III. HELPS FOR THE COUNSELEE WHO IS SUFFERING FROM BITTERNESS:

A. Help him to identify bitterness. (Heb. 12)

1. Show him it is sin.
2. Show him the devastating results or effects of bitterness.

B. Help him to enter into these five steps for overcoming bitterness.

1. confess - true confession always begins with God. (I Jh 1:6 -- 2:2)
2. List the offenses of the one who has hurt him. Purpose: To determine where to begin in removing bitterness and resentment.
 - a. Failure to honor an agreement,
 - b. failure to maintain a good testimony.
3. Help him to accept God's providential will -- in the events, circumstances and people involved in the life.
4. List personal faults. Purpose: To force objective thinking, and help bring about balance in thinking.
5. Seek forgiveness and give forgiveness!
 - a. Counselee's harbored bitterness makes him just as wrong as the offender.
 - b. Forget the "past faults" once they have been confessed and forgiven.

IV. HOW TO KEEP BITTERNESS AND RESENTMENT FROM CONTINUING:

A. Build a better relationship with the person toward whom resentment has taken place, or who has offended you.

1. Confront, lovingly but firmly, those who have wronged you, at the time of the offense, (Matt. 18:15; Luke 17:1-3).
2. Pray for the other person daily,
3. Yield personal rights to others as well as to the Lord.

4. Love your enemies; do something nice for him, (Rom. 12:21).

B. Build a better relationship with the Lord

1. Deal with problems daily, (Heb. 12:12-13).
2. Practice daily devotions, (Psa. 1:1-3). Resentment and bitterness is most apt to be a problem because of a weak spiritual walk.
3. Confess all sins daily, (I Jh 1:7, 9; 2:1-2). (Our own unconfessed sin makes us far more susceptible to inner criticalness, scorn, and contempt of others.)
4. Pray fervently, regularly, (James 5:16; Eph. 6:18).
5. Speak fervently, regularly, for Christ.
6. Endeavor to keep a clear conscience at all times, (Acts 24:16).

Bitterness is always sin and must be put away!

Who Controls Your Thoughts?

(Prov. 23:7; Matt 12:33-35; John 8:31-32; Rom. 8:5-8; 12:1-2; Isa. 26:3; Phil. 4:8)

- Paramount to counseling is to understand the importance of the thoughts of the counselee.
- No one can truly counsel and work toward change without helping the counselee to understand the importance of his thoughts or self-talk inner evaluations.
- Most people are not aware of the fact that behind virtually every emotion and action are thoughts. These thoughts are the “seed-bed” of life itself.
- The brain (or mind, heart as used interchangeable in Scripture) is either involved in or is the source of -- thoughts, evaluations, actions or will, emotions or feeling, imaginations, taste, smell, touch, conscience, perceptions and a number of other things that make up daily life.

I. WE BECOME WHAT WE THINK UPON! (Isa. 26:3; Psa. 15:2; Prov. 23:7)

1. Behind every sin are thoughts.
2. Sin is first conceived in the mind.
3. Our thoughts take the form of internalized sentences or self-talk.
4. By our thoughts we consider and establish:
 - a. opinions, values, and convictions
 - b. perceptions, imaginations, and
 - c. a belief system about everything of any significance.
5. In our thoughts we either entertain:
 - a. truth we accept and embrace
 - b. or, lies we accept and embrace

II. WE BUILD A “TREASURE” BY WHAT WE THINK UPON: (Matt. 12:33-35) Study the text as given!

1. What we put into the heart via the mind -- is what we can bring out.
 - a. garbage in - garbage out
 - b. anger in - anger out
 - c. envy in -- envy out
 - d. bitterness in - bitterness out
 - e. jealousy in - jealousy out, etc.
2. A good man out of a good treasure can bring forth good things -- predicated upon what he has put in. (The opposite is also true.)

- a. We can only put things into the heart through the mind.
 - b. This depends upon the focus of our minds - what we meditate upon.
 - c. We have automatic responses dependent upon what we have in the heart.
3. We build a "belief system" through what we have put into the heart.
- a. This belief system is the sum total of what we believe about any given subject.
 - b. This belief system is a controlling factor from which actions or behavior comes.

III. WE WALK IN THE FLESH OR THE SPIRIT -- BY WHAT OR WHO CONTROLS OUR THOUGHTS. (Study Romans 8:5-8.)

1. We either "mind" fleshly, carnal things -- or "mind" the things of the spirit.
 - a. This is done with the MIND, the focus of our thoughts, deliberations, etc.
 - b. With our mind or thoughts we build a love for the things of the world -- or love for the things of the Spirit.
2. We can be carnally "minded" which brings "death." This comes from the focus of our thought life and what we live for is seen in our basic thought patterns within.

This will be seen in:

- a. envy, jealousy, strife,
 - b. pride, rebellion,
 - c. covetousness after power, things, etc.
 - d. impurities of every kind, sensuality, lust, infidelity, etc.
3. When we meditate upon the things of the Spirit and that is the focus of our thoughts there will be fruit from it. **This will be seen in:**
- a. yieldedness to the Word of God
 - b. love for the things of God
 - c. a personal, real fellowship with the Lord
 - d. a seeking after the will of God

IV. WE ARE IN A MENTAL WARFARE -- AND SATAN DESIRES TO CONTROL: (II Cor. 10:3-5; Eph. 6:10-18)

1. This warfare is in the arena of the thought life. The real battle in the world is the arena of:
 - a. ideologies,
 - b. theories
 - c. philosophies
 - d. psychology
 - e. belief systems
 - f. all "high things" exalted against the knowledge of God
2. Our enemy seeks to defeat us in the arena of the thought life.
3. The warfare is not carnal or made up of material things.

4. The warfare we daily face is in the area of:
 - a. imaginations -- vain things, thoughts, evil, empty, damaging, etc.
 - b. "high things" exalted against the knowledge of God,
 - c. thoughts which are to be brought into obedience to Christ
5. We build a stronghold of habitual sin practices. To practice sin necessitates that we build self- deceptive thoughts within to alleviate our own guilt.
 - a. in the form of defense mechanisms, vain imaginations
 - b. in the form of projectionism, rationalizations, etc.
 - c. in the form of blame-placing, etc.

V. WE MUST MAKE THE CHOICE ABOUT OUR THOUGHTS:

1. We must **choose right thoughts** -- (Phil. 4:8; Prov. 23:7; Rom. 8:5-8)
 - a. make a choice to think upon right things
 - b. make a list of things, memorize that list, work on thinking on these things
2. We must **cleanse our thought live** -- (Psa. 139:23-24; Jere. 17:9; Psa. 19:12-14)
 - a. make a choice to have a pure thought life, (II Cor. 7:1)
 - b. desire and allow the Lord to search the heart and make us aware of our sins,
 - c. desire a heart searching no matter how difficult that might be.
3. We must **fill our hearts with good** -- (Matt. 12:33-35; Psa. 1:1-3; Phil 4:8; Jere. 15:16)
 - a. What we put into the heart is our choice. No one else has any control of what we put into our hearts by means of our thought life.
 - b. We become in character what we put into our hearts. *Character is the sum total of the meditations of our hearts and our actions -- these are the things that manifest character.*

*We sow thoughts -- and reap actions,
We sow actions -- and gradually reap habits,
We sow habits -- and from this we reap character,
We sow character -- and from this we reap destiny -- or
what we will become!*

Considerations for the counselor:

1. We must help the counselee to understand what thoughts are behind their present problems -- actions, behavior, and emotional responses that brought them to us for counsel in the first place.
2. The counselee must do battle with those thoughts. (A thorough study of this whole concept can be found in the book, "*Why Do We Feel as We Feel and Do as We Do?*")

Counseling People's Problems

3. They will not do battle with the thoughts, imaginations and high things (belief systems) that are exalted against God unless they understand what these things are.
4. The “*put off and put on*” process can only take place successfully when it includes both actions as well as thoughts. (Col. 3:8-14; Eph. 4:22-24; Rom. 12:2)
5. The counselor must work at the application of these principles in his or her own life so the importance becomes vividly real, or these truths will be ignored or dealt with carelessly or haphazardly if dealt with at all.
6. God wants character or personality change to take place in the life of the counselee (as well as in our own) and this can only happen when we consider the “**heart**” of the matter. What is in the person’s heart?
7. This study brings you to the foundation of the matter -- how God made us -- how we “tick” -- and what is involved in change!

Dealing With Child Sexual Abuse

By Dr. Edward Watke Jr.

Introduction:

- One study revealed that one-fifth to one-third of all women reported that they experienced some sort of childhood sexual encounter with an adult male.
- Yet boys are more likely to be abused than girls.
- It is said that assaulters of boys average 282 victims, while assaulters of girls average 23 victims.

A. We are told that these “red flag” signals may be signs of sexual abuse:

1. fearfulness, extreme reclusiveness, or non-responsiveness to peer interactions;
2. physical and/or emotional difficulties or complaints, such as night mares, phobias, stomach pains, venereal infections, etc.;
3. violent or highly aggressive behavioral responses;
4. low self worth and low self image. The person has a hatred of self, and possibly feels very unclean, undesired, and unwanted;
5. vacillation between being pseudo-adult and ultra-immature in actions and reactions;
6. regressive behaviors (thumb-sucking, clinging, infantile posture, baby talk);
7. bed wetting which is not an organic or developmental problem. (Sheldon, 1984) *Caution: These signs are not necessarily caused by sexual abuse.*

B. Very often, the first contact outside the family reporting sexual abuse is with the family physician or family's pastor.

C. There is little correlation between a person's religious practices and sexual abuse. Many abusers attend fundamental churches.

That should alert pastors and cause us to reconsider five things.

1. Are we using superficial methods of evangelism?
2. Are we emphasizing Biblical progressive sanctification?
3. Are we teaching and preaching the truths that build Christians toward victory as we honestly relate to the things people potentially face?
4. Are we carefully screening those who work with children and youth?
5. Do we allow situations where individuals have long periods of time alone with a child?

D. As leaders we are in strategic positions. We must therefore understand the problem and the need of our help.

I. GENERAL INFORMATION REPORTED: (From those who work with such problems.)

A. How to spot the molester or offender!

1. He:

- is a man you and your children trust, often a relative
- 90% are not in jail
- has completed one or more years of college, (often excellers)
- holds a job
- often is well respected
- was not molested as child -- .40% of boy molesters were .24% of girls molesters were
- may have many normal interests, seems very normal in every way

2. He usually positions himself to get time alone with children. (Or he abuses opportunities he naturally has; may be a camp counselor, teacher, scout leader, etc. Check out history of those who work with children.)

3. He usually not show any antisocial behavior.

4. He is rarely caught unless the child tells.

5. Check out history of those who are hired, who work with children in any way whatsoever.

B. The history of the past, how it may have begun.

1. As a child molester he possibly was molested.

2. By fantasizing, (Became interested through pornography, masturbation, TV programming. Thoughts allowed to linger, fed, etc., and not suppressed and dealt with. Government and church has the **right to deal** with these cases.)

C. Watch for the molester's procedures: (Note if these things are true.)

1. Has excessive amounts of time spent with the child or youth.

2. Seeks opportunities for himself (in camp, a coach, etc.)

3. Manufactures excuses for extra time with the person.

4. Abuses privacy ("skinny dipping," physical contact, traveling, etc.)

5. Hunts for the vulnerable:

- family in financial distress and need
- broken family, one parent family, father ill or gone, etc.

D. If you have reason to suspect:

1. First, assure the person that no matter what anyone has told them, You love them and will and can protect them and yourself.
2. DO NOT first ask about inappropriate touching.

II. ISSUES THE COUNSELOR SHOULD CONSIDER:

- **World's** emphasis is on: "victim" and "perpetrator". This diminishes the sovereignty of God. The world tells the victim to go to court and tell all; get dragged through the mud in the process.
- God is sovereign! He is on the throne, He knows it all; and the abused person is not a victim but has a position as victor in Christ. (Rom. 8:37)

A. Teach God's Sovereignty and power.

1. Life will not, or may not be fair, even in our view.
2. God is not to blame even though there is much inequity in life.
3. God knows how to bring beauty out of ashes, wholeness out of brokenness, joy in the midst of pain. (Study Isaiah 61:1-3.)
4. God will give grace for it all. (II Cor. 12:9; Jas. 1:2-4) (Consider Joseph.)
5. God uses hurts, damage to bring growth, maturity, victory and joy of knowing Him in a new way.
6. God will some day settle all accounts. (Rom. 12:19)

B. Help, don't victimize or help the victim to remain a victim.

1. Victimizing denies God's power, will, and providential workings. (Rom. 8:28-29; I Cor. 10:13; II Cor. 12:9;
2. Give help, and not pity.
 - Don't major on the losses, the failures or the hurts.
 - Major on the positives not the negative. (God is at work!)
 - Don't make implications that deny the power of the Word and the Spirit.
 - Three options:
 - 1) I was treated wrong, but God can and will intervene and give me victory; I can and will forgive.
 - 2) I was horribly hurt; I have a right to be bitter; I won't forgive.
 - 3) I have right to live as I am living; I love to do wrong for life isn't fair anyway.

III. HELPING THE OFFENDED WITH COMMON PROBLEMS:

A. Excessive fears.

1. Expressed by: excesses, vigilance, withdrawal, running away

2. Possible fears: death, more abuse, separation, rejection,
3. Giving help:
 - Get data, get understanding; “What were you told would happen if you told the story?” Identify what the child or person fears.
 - Give the child protection.
 - The court may take the child out of the home.
 - Court may remove father, etc.
4. Teach how to handle fear in a way that pleases God.
 - Can't promise there will be no fear. (Isa 41:10-11; 40:28-31; Josh. 1:7-9; II Tim. 1:7)
 - Can teach how to walk with God.
5. Be compassionate and trustworthy. (honest)
 - Child has been lied to many times.
 - 60% who have been abused once, get abused more than once.
 - Be careful of your own body movements, hands, etc. (touching, etc.)
6. See that the child gets a physical exam.
7. Prepare the child (parents) to deal with the judicial process, if necessary.
 - Do I face the offender? • Should we go to court?
 - Will I go to jail? What if the case is dropped?
 - Why do we have to go through it? -- Offender must face consequences!

B. Problems of anger, hostility, and bitterness.

1. Expressed by:
 - Abused person will manifest aggression and depression.
 - Abused person will be explosive and unpredictable.
 - Abused person may be an emotional basket-case. They will be like a “yo-yo.”
2. Help for:
 - Teach the abused to use the energy of anger to solve problems.
 - Teach the abused to see God in the trial.
 - Teach the person to leave room for God's wrath. (Put away their own.) (Rom. 12:17-21) They can trust God to be enough! He will take care of the offender.
 - Teach the abused not to make room for excuses for their own wrong actions or reactions.
 - Teach the offended to return good for evil.
 - Teach the offended how to truly forgive.
 - Provide loving examples and help the person to apply Ephesians 4:15, 26-27, 2-32..

C. The problem of guilt.

1. Areas in which the child (youth) may express guilt:

Counseling People's Problems

- Believe they were responsible for the abuse or sexual behavior,
- over the disruption of the family,
- over anger, and bitterness toward the offender,
- because of wrong thoughts and behavior,
- because they enjoyed the stimulation or were rewarded for their cooperation.
- because they allowed the abuse to continue,
- because they must tell about the abuse and/or face the abuser.

2. Help for the person:

- Teach what guilt is:
- Offender is 100% wrong for his part of the problem.
- Identify elements of behavior for which the child is responsible.
- Help the offended to see the importance of control of their thoughts.
- Must control thoughts; practice replacement of wrong thoughts, but they can't command emotions.
- Make a ***think list*** of good things -- of blessings from the Lord. (Phil. 4:7-8)

D. Problem of relationship with others.

1. Affected by: fears, personal habits, anger, unsettled life.

- What people know? Who will find out?
- Lessening of social interaction that brings a limitation of building social contact and skills.

2. Teach:

- How to handle fear and anger,
- How to deal with bitterness and give forgiveness,
- Importance of communication,
- Building friendships with the right people,
- Pleasing God more and more, may have to please some people less and less.

E. Problem of thinking about self:

1. May **feel** something is wrong with themselves.

2. Help:

- To know who God is!
- Identify with the Lord!
- How to walk with the Lord!
- To put facts over feelings!

F. Problem of boy-girl relationships and understanding of sex:

1. Expressed by:

- sex is ugly, dirty, undesirable.
- and yet have natural God-given drives, may be deeply confused
- easy to have loose morals, standards, *"have already failed so what is the use?"*

2. Help by:

- Teaching difference between godly love and lust.

Counseling People's Problems

- Teaching the importance of purity outside of marriage.
- Teach satisfaction of sexual relationship within marriage. That God made it holy, sacred, pure, and good within marriage. (Heb. 13:4)
- Teaching about the body, the temple and keeping it holy. (I Cor. 6:9-11, 18-20)
- Teaching Biblical love, not an emphasis on passion or infatuation.

G. Problem of role confusion.

1. Role of parent and of the child.
2. Building trust, respect, and honor to those who are trustworthy.

H. Preparation for marriage, if the person is old enough at that point.

1. Counseling, role playing
2. Example of other couples.

I. Dating relationships

1. The physical in the dating process.
2. The abused may be tempted to be sexually involved because --
 - has a habit of sexual activity, enjoying the emotional responses,
 - likes being treated tenderly, physically by a man,
 - likes acceptance of their unsaved peers,
 - feel ugly; like damaged goods, so why bother being pure.
3. May have greater bitterness toward unoffending parent than toward offending parent or relative.

J. Needs Biblical teaching on:

1. Problem solving
2. Building godly relationships,
3. God, His love, acceptance, forgiveness,
4. Restored faith in mankind,
5. Good and evil
6. Thinking biblically,
7. Biblical principles,
8. A pure thought life, putting away idols of the heart,
9. Forgiveness toward the offender,
10. God's providence and sovereign love and care, trusting His grace.

Facing Fears and Anxiety

Introduction:

Fear is a universal problem. From infancy to the grave we experience all kinds of fears and insecurities. Though most of our fears are unfounded, they can gnaw at us day and night.

Fear can:

- weaken our hearts,
- rob our peace of mind,
- sap our energy,
- hinder our work, and
- gradually erode our relationships.

Only Jesus Christ can set us free from the bondage of fear.

Closely connected to fear is anxiety. Anxiety is probably one of Satan's most effective ways to keep people in a form of bondage. Christ came to deliver those who, through fear of death, were subject to slavery all their lives. (Heb. 2:15).

Fear of death can relate to either fear of physical death or fear of the death of self-worth -- a loss of personhood. The sense of rejection can be very strong and very hurtful.

Words "fear not" are often repeated in the Word of God: (Over 300 times I understand)

1. Christ said:
 - a. Matt 8:26; 14:27 _____
 - b. Mark 4:39-40 _____
 - c. Mark 6:50 _____
 - d. Matt. 10:28 _____
 - e. Luke 12:32 _____
2. Paul wrote to Timothy not to fear. (II Tim. 1:7)
3. John wrote a strong admonition about fears. (I John 4:18)
4. The Old Testament has many encouragements not to fear: (Here are two.)
 - a. Isa. 41:10 _____
 - b. Psa. 27:1 _____

But many people are fearful, full of anxiety and dread:

1. Consider the following:
 - a. Gen. 3; who feared? _____
 - b. Gen. 4:14 _____
 - c. Gen. 12:12,13 _____
 - d. Gen. 32:7 _____
 - e. Num. 13 _____
 - f. I Sam. 15:24-25 _____

2. Many move out fear, from job to job, city to city, place to place.
3. Many neglect personal physical care out of fears.
4. Many live in fear and dread, locking themselves in their houses.
5. Some will not travel by air; flee from the unknown and maybe from life itself.
6. Many live in anxiousness over the future; dreading what may happen.
7. Many of God's people are full of fear -- fear of witnessing, serving, etc.

I. WHEN FEAR IS HELPFUL!

Not all fear is wrong, in fact we are taught to live in "reverential fear" or awe of our Holy God. And then many times fear is a God-given emotion to spare us from harms way.

A. When it is a healthy respect for the unknown.

1. Job. 41:1, 33; Psa. 54:1-3
2. As a protection from danger, fear is good.
3. As a preoccupation fear becomes sin, for it is a lack of trust in our great God. (Consider: **thoughts**, *might get hurt, oh, what will happen, etc.*) (I Pet. 5:8; Heb. 13:5-6)

B. When it is a wholesome fear of God.

1. Found 160 times in the Word of God.
2. These refer to an "*awesome respect*" of a Holy God. Eccl. 12:13; Prov. 1:7, 9, 10; *fear God, keep His commandments*
3. God delights in our having a reverential fear and trust in Him.

II. WHEN FEAR IS HARMFUL!

A. Fear of man and not God.

1. Afraid to live for what is right (principles) for Christ and His glory.
 - a. John 12:42-43 _____
 - b. Luke 22:54-62 _____
 - c. I Jh 4:17-18 _____
2. Withdrawal from people, isolation, maybe afraid of man's ridicule?
 - a. Prov. 29:25 _____
 - b. Psa. 119:39 _____

B. Fear of temporal things more than that which is eternal.

1. Phobias: (Are habits built mostly on past unpleasant experiences.)

Counseling People's Problems

- a. Identify the fear: Undefined fears alert us. What is it you fear?
 - b. Identify what causes it. How dealt with? Occurs as a result of past habits.
 - c. Identify what is worst thing that could happen. Is it really bad, or has the mind enlarged a frightening but impotent monster?
 - d. Identify how serious it is: Is it a monster or just a mouse?
2. Panic attacks? (Fear of fear, fear of bad feelings, etc.) Often it is because of mental habits of life!

Luke 12:4-5; Gen. 26:7

- C. Fear of things we cannot change so often keeps us from things we can change!
1. Prov. 3:25 _____ 2. Isa. 8:12-13 _____
 3. Gen. 4:14 _____ 4. Prov. 28:1 _____
- D. Fear that hinders us from meeting God's goals.
1. So people become a one talent person out of fear. (Luke 19:20-21)
 2. So people find it hard to do God's will out of fear. (Cf. II Tim. 1:7; Eph. 6:6)
 3. So people need encouragement as Joshua did. (Josh. 1:7-9)
- E. Out of fear people manipulate others or they use fear to bring it about.
- F. Inappropriate fears -- anxiety -- (sinful) includes fear of failure,
- rejection, disapproval, put-downs, criticism, and so on.
 - Anxiety means we are trying to reach into the future to control it, thus playing God.
 - Furthermore, anxiety will produce the same kind of physiological responses as fears.
 - The Greek word for anxiety means to be distracted or divided in mind, to be drawn mentally in different directions.
 - Anxiety is a distracting emotion, an unrealistic fear that paralyzes us and prevents us from doing God's will.
 - Most fears are unfounded and are based on thoughts, mental habits, and upon sinful belief systems that are full of lies and not founded on truth.

III. UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE OF FEAR!

- A. Fear began in Eden when Adam and Eve sinned. Since then there has been no such thing as -- "*No fear!*"
1. Gen. 3:8 _____ b. Matt. 25:25 _____
- B. It is lack of a wholesome fear of God. Consider the book of Proverbs.
- Psa. 112:1, 7- 8 _____
- Eph. 5:21 _____

C. It is an absence of God's love maturing in us. (I Jh. 4:17-20)

Eph. 3:17-19 _____

Eph. 5:1,2 _____

The focus of our fears is -- my HURT or my LOSS!

Fear:

Self-protecting
What will I lose?
What will happen to me?
Tries to move away from problem
Withdraws, secludes self
Hesitates, rejects opportunities
Should be cast out (I Jh 4:8)

Love: (opposite)

Self-giving (Jh 3:14-17)
What can I give?
What can I do for others?
Moves to conquer problem
Risks itself, reaches out to others
Looks for opportunities to serve
Can cast out our fears (I Jh 4:17-18)

D. Man's greatest fear is death and judgment. Heb. 2:14-15

IV. HOW TO OVERCOME FEAR AND ANXIETY:

A. Deal with any evident guilt that may be a cause of our fears.

Prov. 18:1 _____

I Jh 3: 20-23 _____

1. If unsaved, the person needs to come to Christ, for He alone is the answer for fear.
2. If the person is saved he needs to memorize the promises, deal with any guilt over sin, learn to take everything to the Lord in prayer and then trust with a whole heart. Phil. 4:6-9; I Pet. 5:7; Phil 2:13; Rom. 8:28-29; Prov. 3:5-6; Isa. 40:28-31; 41:10
 - a. Confess the sin of worry to God and any appropriate people.
 - b. Identify the promises (II Cor. 1:20) and their sources.
 - What? • Why? • When? • Where?
 - c. Recognize fear for what it is -- Doubt and distrust of the Heavenly Father.
 - d. "Put on" the positive qualities of the Christian life.
 - e. Recognize that withdrawal, immobility, etc., is the result of the effects of the sin of worry. The sin of omission is taking its toll.

B. Develop a proper fear of God.

1. This is the fear that should replace all other fears. (Psa. 112:1, 7, 8)
2. Believe God's promises personally (II Cor. 1:20) and obey the Word.

Is it not strange that people will give mystical powers to the number 13 and yet ignore the power of God's Word. Or they will spend great sums on food fads and will not fasten the seat belt. In many ways man's priorities are strange.

3. The reverential fear and awe of our great God can deliver the mind from many fears in this world.
- C. Develop a proper love for the Lord and spiritual things.
1. Perfect love casts out fears! (I Jh 4:17-18; 3:18) If we have fears then we are not living in the power of His love. (Jude 21)
 2. Practice loving actions. (Eph. 5:1-2) Even lost people under common grace practice some loving actions. Those who are bound up in fears will do the things they fear when some greater need is apparent -- such as illness, death, losses, etc.
 3. Study Ephesians 3:17-19 and enter into the power of Christ's love, by faith.
- D. Embrace the promises of God's Word. (Jh 8:32)

When you fear:

Claim

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. New responsibilities, challenges | Joshua 1:5-9; Psalm 34:1-4 |
| 2. Enemies and dangerous situations | Psalms 23:4; 27:1-3, 14 |
| 3. Natural disasters, war, etc. | Psalm 46; Romans 8:31 |
| 4. Spiritual battles | Ephesians 6:10-18; I Peter 5:8-9 |
| 5. Interpersonal relationships | II Timothy 1:6-7 |
| 6. Death | I Corinthians 15:54-57 |
| | II Corinthians 5:8 |
| 7. The unknown | Psalm 23; Isaiah 40:28-31; |
| | 41:10 |

- E. The saved have a great opportunity to walk biblically. I Jh. 3:18
1. We need not fear people, things, etc. (II Cor. 5:9-11)
 2. Realize that in Christ we are dead unto sin, and alive unto Him. (Rom. 6:1-11)
 3. We now have the power of the resurrection operative in our lives. (Eph. 1:18-23)
We can walk in the light, face our problems and carry out biblical loving solutions.
 5. God has not given us the spirit of fear again unto bondage, but the power of a sound mind. (Rom. 8:15; II Tim. 1:7)
 6. We now cry "abba, Father", which means in strong endearing terms, that God is our heavenly Father. He would never want us to fear. (Rom. 8:15)
 7. We are heirs and joint-heirs in Christ. Everything that belongs to the Son belongs to us! (Rom. 8:17; I Cor. 3: 21-23)
 8. Fear does not come from God, but He has given us all we need in Him. (Isa 41:10)

So, HOW CAN WE FEAR?

Additional helps for the counselee:

1. What is the emotion Satan has effectively used in robbing people of the freedom and wholeness God wants them to enjoy?
2. Observe Matthew 6:30-31: Note the last phrase of verse 30 and the first in verse 31, what is lacking in our thinking processes when we are fearful and anxious?
3. From Philippians. 4:6-9, 13 list a three-step plan for dealing with fears as suggested by Paul in these verses. Can you identify each step?
verse 6
verse 7
verse 9, 13
4. What is the blessing we will experience when we deal biblically with our fears, anxieties? as seen in Philippians 4:7?
5. Make a list of the promises that help you the most and memorize at least four of them.

Personal Project for Victory Over Fears

Matthew 6:25

Key word or phrase _____

Practical insight or application _____

Matthew 6:26

Key word or phrase _____

Practical insight or application _____

Matthew 6:27

Key word or phrase _____

Practical insight or application _____

Matthew 6:28

Key word or phrase _____

Practical insight or application _____

Matthew 6:29

Key word or phrase _____

Practical insight or application _____