

THEOLOGY OF COUNSELING

VALLEY BIBLE COUNSELING CENTER
SEMESTER 1

WAYNE ERICK JOHNSTON

SERIES B SYLLABUS

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THEOLOGY OF COUNSELING COURSE INFORMATION

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

A beginning course that takes a thorough look at the biblical teachings on counseling and related theological issues.

**This class meets Sundays from 5:00pm to 6:30pm
at 3347 West Avenue J,
Lancaster, California;
and on-line at www.valleybible.net.**

The course will meet for 13 weeks.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

To understand counseling from a theological and thus biblically accurate perspective and to be able to use these truths in personal spiritual growth and in ministry.

COURSE TEXTS:

- *COUNSELING*, John MacArthur, Nelson, 2005
- *A THEOLOGY OF CHRISTIAN COUNSELING*, Jay Adams, Zondervan, 1979
- *COMPETENT TO COUNSEL*, Jay Adams, Zondervan, 1970
- *SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY*, Wayne Grudem, Zondervan, 1994
- *LOVE TO EAT HATE TO EAT*, Elyse Fitzpatrick, Harvest House 1999
- *A CHRISTIAN GROWTH AND DISCIPLESHIP MANUAL*, Wayne Mack and Wayne Erick Johnston, Focus publishing, 2005
- *PSYCHOBABBLE*, Richard Ganz, Crossway, 1993
- *FROM PRIDE TO HUMILITY (BOOKLET)*, Stuart Scott, Focus Publishing, 2002

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WHY GRADES?

Grades are for the purpose of measuring results. It is helpful for you to know at what level you are learning and working.

POINTS (Students taking class live):

700- Read the weeks syllabus before class (12)

200- In-class projects

700- Reading assignments from texts

300- Writing assignment (1)

600- "Open Discussion" (3)*

500- Class participation

3000 TOTAL

POINTS (On-line students):

700- Read the weeks syllabus before class (12)

700- Reading assignments from texts

500- Writing assignment (1)

1100- "Open Discussion" (3)*

3000 TOTAL

***Open Discussion** entries at livetheword.squarespace.com (3)

On-line students: not required to complete in-class projects: not graded on class participation

GRADES:

A 2700 (90%)

B 2400 (80%)

C 2100 (70%)

D 1800 (60%)

WHAT TO BRING: The Syllabus, your Bible, any assignments due.

PARTNERS:

You are responsible for providing all class information to each of your partners if they are absent. You are responsible for obtaining all class information from your partners if you are absent.

YOUR TEACHER:

Communicate with me.

If you know you will be absent, let me know so I can help you stay current with the class. If you have comments on the teaching or the content of the course, please come and talk with me or email livetheword812@yahoo.com. My purpose is to serve you and benefit you. If you are struggling with the course or are in need of assistance, I am available to provide help or encouragement.

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS:

Homework assignments marked with an asterisk (*), are to be turned in to the instructor during the class meeting of the week due. Other homework will also be greatly beneficial to getting the most from the class meetings and discussions.

NANC CREDIT:

Students who pass this course satisfy the education requirement toward counselor certification from the National Association of Nouthetic Counselors (NANC). After course completion, students who pass the NANC exams and complete mentored supervision will be certified as biblical counselors by NANC.

CALENDAR FOR CLASS MEETINGS

Semester One 2009

Week 1	September 13
Week 2	September 20
Week 3	September 27
Week 4 (Online)	October 4
No Class	October 11
Week 5	October 18
Week 6	October 25
Week 7	November 1
Week 8	November 8
Week 9	November 15
Week 10	November 22
Week 11	November 29
Week 12	December 6
Week 13	December 13

CLASS SUBJECT

Week	Theology of Counseling	Counseling Issues (Semester 1)
1	A New Testament Description of Biblical Counseling (part 1)	Forgiveness Issues in Counseling
2	A New Testament Description of Biblical Counseling (part 2)	Feelings / Emotions
3	Theology Proper	Depression
4	Anthropology	Trials and Suffering
5	Hamartiology	Sin, Disease, or Weakness?
6	Soteriology	Anger
7	Sanctification	Pride
8	Bibliology	Lust
9	Hope from God's Word	Death and Dying
10	Theology of Love	Marital Roles
11	Repentance	Marital Theology (Part 1)
12	Theology of Change	Marital Theology (Part 2)
13	Practical Theology	Marital Theology (Part 3)

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS
Semester 1

Week	Theology of Counseling	Assignment
	All	Read the syllabus for this week prior to attending class; be prepared to discuss all discussion questions
1	A New Testament Description of Biblical Counseling (part 1)	
2	A New Testament Description of Biblical Counseling (part 2)	Read Competent to Counsel, p. 41-56
3	Theology Proper	Read Systematic Theology, p.157-172, 190-202
4	Anthropology	Read Systematic Theology, ch 23
5	Hamartiology	Read Systematic Theology, ch 24
6	Soteriology	Read Systematic Theology, p.722-732 * Write a one-page paper: "Who Am I?"
7	Sanctification	Read Theology of Christian Cnslng, p. 233-249 Read Systematic Theology, p.746-758, 840-847
8	Bibliology	Read Systematic Theology, ch 4-5
9	Hope from God's Word	Write your personal applications in each of the 11 sections of the syllabus Read Counseling, ch 9
10	Theology of Love	In the syllabus, highlight portions of "What is Love?" as directed on the first page of the section. You are not required to answer any of the questions or complete the assignments in the last two sections of this week's syllabus.
11	Repentance	
12	Theology of Change	Read Theology of Christian Counseling, ch 16-18 and p.102-105
13	Practical Theology	
Any		Extra credit: write ½ to 1 page on this: How I used what I learned in this course to help another believer in Christ to grow in sanctification (maximum 3).

**Chart of Online Videos
2008 Edition Semester One**

<http://www.valleybible.net/Counseling/CounselingCenter/course.php>

Session	Title	Description	Video (MOV)	Audio (MP3)
Session 1	Theology of Counseling	Week One Teaching	Movie	MP3
Session 2	Counseling Issues	Week One Teaching	Movie	MP3
Session 3	Counseling Issues	Week One Open Q & A	Movie	MP3
Session 4	Theology of Counseling	Week Two Teaching	Movie	MP3
Session 5	Theology of Counseling	Week Two Direct Q & A	Movie	MP3
Session 6	Counseling Issues	Week Two Teaching	Movie	MP3
Session 7	Theology of Counseling	Week Three Teaching	Movie	MP3
Session 8	Counseling Issues	Week Three Teaching	Movie	MP3
Session 9	Counseling Issues	Week Three Case Studies	Movie	MP3
Session 10	Theology of Counseling	Week Four Teaching	Movie	MP3
Session 11	Theology of Counseling	Week Four Class Discussion	Movie	MP3
Session 12	Counseling Issues	Week Four Teaching	Movie	MP3
Session 13	Counseling Issues	Week Four General Q & A	Movie	MP3
Session 14	Theology of Counseling	Week Five Teaching	Movie	MP3
Session 15	Theology of Counseling	Week Five Discussion Questions	Movie	MP3
Session 16	Counseling Issues	Week Five Teaching	Movie	MP3
Session 17	Theology of Counseling	Week Six Teaching	Movie	MP3
Session 18	Theology of Counseling	Week Six Open Q & A	Movie	MP3
Session 19	Counseling Issues	Week Six Teaching	Movie	MP3
Session 20	Counseling Issues	Week Six Discussion Questions	Movie	MP3
Session 21	Theology of Counseling	Week Seven Teaching	Movie	MP3
Session 22	Theology of Counseling	Week Seven Class Discussion	Movie	MP3
Session 23	Counseling Issues	Week Seven Teaching	Movie	MP3
Session 24	Theology of Counseling	Week Eight Teaching	Movie	MP3
Session 25	Counseling Issues	Week Eight Teaching	Movie	MP3
Session 26	Counseling Issues	Week Eight Case Study	Movie	MP3
Session	Theology of	Week Nine Teaching	Movie	MP3

27	Counseling			
Session 28	Counseling Issues	Week Nine Teaching	Movie	MP3
Session 29	Counseling Issues	Week Nine Class Discussion	Movie	MP3
Session 30	Theology of Counseling	Week Ten Teaching	Movie	MP3
Session 31	Theology of Counseling	Week Ten Open Q & A	Movie	MP3
Session 32	Counseling Issues	Week Ten Teaching	Movie	MP3
Session 33	Theology of Counseling	Week Eleven Teaching	Movie	MP3
Session 34	Theology of Counseling	Week Eleven Case Studies	Movie	MP3
Session 35	Counseling Issues	Week Eleven Teaching	Movie	MP3
Session 36	Theology of Counseling	Week Twelve Teaching	Movie	MP3
Session 37	Theology of Counseling	Week Twelve Questions and Answers	Movie	MP3
Session 38	Counseling Issues	Week Twelve Teaching	Movie	MP3
Session 39	Theology of Counseling	Week Thirteen Teaching	Movie	MP3
Session 40	Counseling Issues	Week Thirteen Teaching	Movie	MP3

Theology of Counseling

Valley Bible Biblical Counseling Center

Biblical Counselor Training Course

Series B

A New Testament Description Of Biblical Counseling

Week 1

Week 2

Theology of Counseling

A NEW TESTAMENT DESCRIPTION OF BIBLICAL COUNSELING

Introduction

The Bible is truth (John 17.17). It is eternal (Matthew 24.35). It is exhaled from the very God of this universe (2 Timothy 3.16). Therefore, the Word of God is the final authority over all matters it addresses. Since this is so, the only important question any Christian can ask about counseling is, "What does the Bible say about counseling?" Nothing else really matters.

Counseling issues are addressed so extensively in the Bible that this class is not nearly large enough to encompass all that the Word has to say about it. Those who claim that the Word is silent about hard times and helping those in need deny this important and obvious fact.

Since the Word of God contains eternal truth, it is our focal point. This course will provide studies on what the Bible teaches about counseling and the resolution of life problems. The Scriptures will show us how to speak and what to say about each important problem. They will equip us for the good work of effectively coming alongside struggling Christians. The Word itself will be God's tool to enable counselees to grow in righteousness. He will use it as the living and active soul changing instrument of His grace.

So, what *does* the Bible say about counseling?

Let's get started by examining some passages from the New Testament.

1. Knowing God / The Gospel

MATTHEW 13.44-46

The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid *again*; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls, and upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

- I will seek to discover if this counselee has ever come to Christ in this way.
- I must find out if this person lives as one who has sold all else to pursue the surpassing value of Christ.
- If so, how does this mindset affect the counselee's interaction with their circumstances?
- If not, what do they desire / pursue most?
- One purpose of this counseling case is for the counselee to live by the motives and actions of Matthew 13.44-46.

LUKE 15.10

In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.

- The response of each soul to the Gospel, positive or negative, is a vital issue in heaven.
- I will ask effective questions to seek to know if each counselee has truly repented of sin.
- I must communicate the Gospel accurately.

I CORINTHIANS 3.5-7

What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave *opportunity* to each one. I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth.

- Never lose this perspective.
- In the salvation of a soul through the Gospel I will remember who God is and who I am.
- When a life is changed in biblical counseling there is the great joy of having seen God do what only He can do. He causes growth and change in hearts.
- My responsibilities end with love and communicating the truth of the Gospel. The final outcome is between the counselee and God.

2 CORINTHIANS 13.5

Test yourselves *to see* if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test?

- Test counselees to determine if salvation has occurred.

2. God's Word

MATTHEW 24.35

Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

- I counsel with words that regard the Bible with this level of honor.

- I share truth directly from the Word with the authority it demands.
- I teach counselees the place of Scripture in relation to life problems.

COLOSSIANS 3.16-17

Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Whatever you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

- The source of wisdom, teaching, and admonishing is the Word of Christ, richly dwelling in the counselor.
- This passage describes biblical counseling.
- What thanks can be given in the difficult stages of counseling?

2 TIMOTHY 3.16-17

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

- The source of all true counsel.
- These four effects of God's Word all involve change toward righteousness. The basic goal of all counsel is to cause change.
- What counsel do I speak that is from a different source than the Word?
- In each counseling case, work and study to answer the question, "What does the Word say about that?"
- What data is needed to understand the counselee's heart well enough to be able to speak pertinent truth of the Word at that level?
- One aspect of biblical ministry is reproof and correcting other Christians with the Scriptures.
- The result of the ministry of God's Word, "to be equipped for every good work," is of supreme value to counselees who are going through the most difficult times of their lives.

3. The Counselor's Heart

MATTHEW 20.25-28

But Jesus called them to Himself and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and *their* great men exercise authority over them. It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

- Am I happy, thankful, and thinking I'm privileged to serve this person in counseling?
- I am not superior to my counselees.
- This passage must describe my heart as I study, prepare and pray for this counselee.

JOHN 12.27-28

"Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name."

- The most difficult day as a biblical counselor gives me the opportunity to have the same purpose and thoughts as Jesus did when He was troubled.
- Could this counselee echo Jesus' words in the midst of their own present storm?
- I will make it clear that this is the goal.

JOHN 13.14-17

If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor *is* one who is sent greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.

- The purpose of the counselor is *to serve and give* no matter the difficulty, discomfort, or humiliation.
- When am I tempted to *not* love and serve others at the level of Christ's service? What should I think and do when I am so tempted?
- Our motive as counselors is to follow the example of Jesus Christ.

I CORINTHIANS 2.2

For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.

- This is a summary of the biblical counselor's mindset.
- If this is the driving force in my soul, what thoughts will I think? What words will I speak?

I CORINTHIANS 16.13-14

Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love.

- Our ministry includes strong faith in God and His Word, the resolve of a Roman warrior, and the gentle love of Christ for each person God brings our way.
- The godly counselor maintains this balance.

2 CORINTHIANS 3.12

Therefore having such a hope, we use great boldness in *our* speech.

- The essence of a biblical counselor's strength is his or her hope in the new covenant we have with God through the Gospel.

2 CORINTHIANS 4.5

For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus' sake.

- We must be clear about our role and Christ's role in relation to counselees.
- If those we serve understand our preaching, the result of our counsel will include a close, much closer bond with Christ than their bond with us.
- If my heart is to obey this Scripture, my motives will be to honor Christ and serve people in my counseling ministry. What words must I speak to communicate the mindset of 2 Corinthians 4.5?

2 CORINTHIANS 12.15

I will most gladly spend and be expended for your souls.

- This desire will result in selfless ministry.

GALATIANS 4.11, 16, 19-20

I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain.
So have I become your enemy by telling you the truth?

My children, with whom I am again in labor until Christ is formed in you— but I could wish to be present with you now and to change my tone, for I am perplexed about you.

- With some counselees, the unanswered questions are those raised by this passage.
- The magnitude of these issues is described profoundly.
- Am I so concerned for the souls of my counselees whose salvation is uncertain that my angst could be compared to childbirth?
- I must not blindly assume someone is a believer.

COLOSSIANS 3.12-13

So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.

- This is an excellent checklist to determine if my thoughts about each counselee are honoring to God.
- Humility encompasses the counselor's view of God in relation to self; and the counselor's view of the counselee as compared to self.
- When have I found it difficult to be gentle? What form would gentleness take at such a moment?
- Patience is often required of the counselor. Change may take time.
- When might a counselor have the opportunity to forgive as God forgives?

1 PETER 4.10-11

As each one has received a *special* gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. Whoever speaks, *is to do so* as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves *is to do so* as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

- I seek to serve.
- I will evaluate counseling sessions by this: did I speak the words of God?
- One day time will end and God will be honored forever. Speak His Word accordingly.

4. How to Counsel

MATTHEW 28.18-20

And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

- Counseling must include discipleship.
- When you are counseling a new or immature Christian, discipleship is crucial.

LUKE 5.16

But Jesus Himself would *often* slip away to the wilderness and pray.

- Prayer must be a priority for one in ministry.
- I need undistracted time to pray for counselees as well as my counsel, discernment, understanding of the Word, love and strength.

2 CORINTHIANS 4.7

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves.

- I will never forget this: in biblical counseling the life transforming jewels of God's Word are served in this common clay pot. This humbling truth reminds me who I am and who my Lord is.
- Rely on the true power source in all aspects of counseling.

2 CORINTHIANS 5.20-21

Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

- A good biblical counselor is an ambassador for Christ.
- God is making an appeal to the heart of this counselee through me. How can I be the most effective agent for this job?

- The outcome must matter this much to me, that I would beg this person on behalf of Christ to be reconciled to God.
- What tone of voice and what words would be used in God-honoring begging a soul to be reconciled to God?

I THESSALONIANS 4.1

Finally then, brethren, we request and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us *instruction* as to how you ought to walk and please God (just as you actually do walk), that you excel still more.

- Here Paul's counsel includes request, exhortation, reference to instruction, reference to God, encouragement and clear direction. How can I follow this pattern with those I am counseling this week?

2 TIMOTHY 2.24-25

The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth.

- Does this describe me?
- Have I sinned in relation to this description?
- What must change?

5. The Counseling Process

ACTS 20.20, 24, 27, 31

How I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house,

²⁴But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so that I may finish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God.

²⁷For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God.

³¹Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears.

- The heart of the biblical counselor is expressed in this passage.
- When I am tempted to shrink from declaring what is profitable, what am I tempted to do instead?

- When I consider my life as dear to myself, what form does that heresy take?
- How could I better counsel for God's glory?
- What would admonishing with tears look like, feel like, sound like? What thoughts would be necessary about God and counselee to do this?
- How can I prepare myself to counsel at this level?

2 CORINTHIANS 1.3-4

Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, ⁴who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

- Our source of comfort and level of comforting counselees is described here.
- This passage describes a vital aspect of biblical counseling.
- Does a counselor need to have walked in the shoes of the counselee (dealt with the same problem)?

2 CORINTHIANS 2.9

For to this end also I wrote, so that I might put you to the test, whether you are obedient in all things.

- Part of counseling is testing counselees, to see whether they will obey the Word in the important life matters discussed.

2 CORINTHIANS 6.11-12

Our mouth has spoken freely to you, O Corinthians, our heart is opened wide. You are not restrained by us, but you are restrained in your own affections.

- Sometimes this is an accurate summary of a counseling case in which one will not obey Christ.

2 CORINTHIANS 7.9-10

I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to *the point of* repentance; for you were made sorrowful according to *the will of* God, so that you might not suffer loss in anything through us. For the sorrow that is according to *the will of* God produces a repentance without regret, *leading* to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death.

- Sometimes this describes the core of a successful counseling case.
- Do I have the courage to stand with God in such times?
- What information is needed before I boldly confront sin?
- Other philosophies of counseling do not call sin, "sin." How do they deal with a person who has, according to the Bible, sinned? What effect does such counsel have on that person's soul?
- Of what is repentance without regret comprised?
- Often a long road must be traveled with a stubborn sinning believer. When he or she ultimately sorrows according to the will of God and repents without regret, there is great rejoicing between counselee, counselor and God. The bond between all three in such moments is deep.

GALATIANS 6.1-3

Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; *each one* looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

- This restoration is the essence of many counseling cases.

I THESSALONIANS 5.14

We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone.

- Figuring out to which category each counselee belongs is essential to be used by God as a counselor.
- What information might be helpful in making such determinations?

I PETER 2.11-12

Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul. Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe *them*, glorify God in the day of visitation.

- Some counseling cases are summarized here.
- The Bible is enough to enable victory in this war.

I JOHN 5.3-5

For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith. And who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

- Christians can be victorious in every important battle (counseling issue) in life!
- The love of God expressed by obeying His commands.
- Do all Christians believe faith in Jesus is necessary to overcome the world? What alternatives does our society suggest?
- Be a biblical counselor who boldly proclaims the absolute truths of God's Word.

6. Change

JOHN 17.17

Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.

- What is sanctification?
- The Word God's tool to accomplish it.
- My counselees must grow in sanctification.
- What am I doing to become more like Christ?

HEBREWS 12.1-3

Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

- What do I think about on difficult days?
- I must fix my eyes on Jesus, considering Him often.
- Consider the hostility Jesus endured.
- I will follow Him. I will remain. I will not grow weary or lose heart. I will measure the day by whether or not I honored Him, not by whether or not it was easy or enjoyable. I will train my counselees to do the same.

MATTHEW 4.1-11

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. And the tempter came and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." But He answered and said, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.'"

Then the devil took Him into the holy city and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down; for it is written,

'HE WILL COMMAND HIS ANGELS CONCERNING YOU';

and

'ON *their* HANDS THEY WILL BEAR YOU UP,

SO THAT YOU WILL NOT STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.'

Jesus said to him, "On the other hand, it is written, 'YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.'"

Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; and he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'" Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and *began* to minister to Him.

- The Word of God is the means to victory over temptation.
- Satan distorts the Scriptures to deceive and influence people for evil.
- The Word is sufficient to answer the most difficult questions in life.

7. Heart, Motives, Priorities

MATTHEW 5.6

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

MATTHEW 5.8

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

- God's desires for hearts and motives are explained in these verses.
- What would it look like if this counselee, in these circumstances, became a doer of the Word as described in Matthew 5.6,8?

MATTHEW 12.34-37

You brood of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart. The good man brings out of *his* good treasure what is good; and the evil man brings out of *his* evil treasure what is evil. But I tell you that every careless word that **23**

people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.

- Words reveal the heart.
- What words does this counselee use to speak to me? To their spouse? During conflict? When wanting something? When happy? When discouraged?
- What ideas and motives from within are the basis of such words?
- I will ask heart-level questions to find out.

ROMANS 8.6, 12-13

For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh— for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

- What, in this counselee's words / motives / actions, demonstrates a mind set on the flesh?
- What, in this counselee's words / motives / actions, is equal to a mind set on honoring the Spirit?
- What further information do I need?
- What questions will I ask to obtain it?
- According to Romans 8, is this counselee likely a believer or a non-Christian?

2 CORINTHIANS 11.20

For you tolerate it if anyone enslaves you, anyone devours you, anyone takes advantage of you, anyone exalts himself, anyone hits you in the face.

- Some counselees deal with the world this way.
- People who value man more than God sometimes do not stand up for what is taught in the Word in the face of an unbelieving spouse who dominates, a boss who demands lying, a manipulating mother, false-guilt-imposing relatives, an angry husband, a possessions-oriented wife or arrogant controlling children.
- What needs to change in their hearts?

LUKE 10.41-42

But the Lord answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; but *only* one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her."

- Is this counselee worried and bothered about many things rather than hearing God's Word? About what are they worried and bothered?
- Does this person view the one most important thing as such? How can I help them change and grow in their thinking in this area?

JOHN 15.8-11

My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and *that* your joy may be made full.

- What is the counselee's purpose in life?
- What commandments do they keep?
- Which ones do they regularly transgress?
- What do they believe is the source of joy or fulfillment?
- Teach this: abiding in Christ + bearing fruit + obeying God = a full joyful life.

I CORINTHIANS 4.7

For who regards you as superior? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?

- Many problems have at their core a misunderstanding of who we are and who God is.
- God does not endorse a high view of self (pride, self-esteem, creating own destiny) as being true.
- Many counselees' problems stem from an improper, inflated view of self.

GALATIANS 6.7-8

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

- These are the options for many counselees.

PHILIPPIANS 1.21

For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

- Will I be content with less than this in the heart of this brother or sister who has come here to learn what the Bible says about their life?
- What would this heart attitude look like in this person, amid this trial, at this time?

8. Principles For Specific Life Problems

MARK 7.8-9

“Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men.” He was saying to them, “You are experts at setting aside the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition.”

- Does this person place personal or family tradition above the Word?
- How so?
- What idols or fears are connected to this framework of worship?
- What truths about God are ignored in the heart of one who holds the traditions of men above the Lord’s commandments?

LUKE 12.15

Then He said to them, “Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not *even* when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions.”

- Possessions do not make one’s life.
- Carefully gather data to understand both how and why this counselee puts hope in money or things.
- The goal is for your counselee to seek obedience to God above possessions.

PHILIPPIANS 4.8

Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.

- How are my counselees to think?

- Is there anything lovely or excellent to think about when a loved one passes on?

9. How To Find Peace

MATTHEW 11.28-30

Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.

- When animals are yoked together with one harness, the weaker yields to and follows the lead of the stronger.
- When animals are yoked together with one harness both expend energy to go the same direction.
- Rest awaits the one who will go the same direction as Jesus.
- Where does this counselee look to find rest?

JOHN 14.27

Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.

- In Christ there are answers to every Christian's needs.
- The inner persons of many counselees are summarized in the terms, "troubled heart," "fear," and "lacking peace."
- Where do other counseling philosophies attempt to find the answers to these problems?

2 CORINTHIANS 13.11

Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

- This is our ministry as biblical counselors.

PHILIPPIANS 4.11-13

Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any **27**

and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

- God has created a way of life that results in being content.
- Is this counselee following His way?
- What does my counselee believe is the way to contentment?

PHILEMON 1.7

For I have come to have much joy and comfort in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother.

- As a biblical counselor, my purpose is to be used by God as was Philemon.

10. Reconciliation With Man, God

MATTHEW 5.23-24

Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering.

- Unresolved sin affects a person's relationship with God.
- Instruct counselees to obey Matthew 5.23-24.
- What level of priority do other forms of counseling place on the counselees' sins? What do they teach concerning the counselee's reconciliation to God and man?

LUKE 15.18-19, 32

"I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men.'" 'But we had to celebrate and rejoice, for this brother of yours was dead and *has begun* to live, and *was lost* and has been found."

- Repentance is God's requirement for the one lost in sin.
- Do I describe repentance accurately and in sufficient detail?
- How would a heart attitude of turning from sin be manifested in this counselee?

11. Prayer

EPHESIANS 3.14-19

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; *and* that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.

- We should pray in this way for our counselees.

Theology of Counseling
Week 2:
Class Q & A

Theology Proper

Week 3

Theology of Counseling

Creation

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

John 1.1-4 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.

God has authority over all He has made (Romans 9.19-21)

He is sovereign over each person, to the point of determining if we continue to live or not (James 4.13-17)

He knows each person completely (Psalm 139.1-4)

One day He will destroy the heavens and earth with intense heat (2 Peter 3.10)

Implications of God being Creator of all things, including each human being:

Counselors exist for His glory

Counselees exist for His glory

Counselors do not control our counselee's destiny, the future, or our circumstances or theirs

Counselees do not control their own destiny, the future, or their circumstances

God created all things for His glory. In his "Systematic Theology," Wayne Grudem explains:

It is very clear that God created his people for his own glory, for he speaks of his sons and daughters as those "whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made" (Isa. 43:7). But it is not only human beings that God created for this purpose. The entire creation is intended to show God's glory. Even the inanimate creation, the stars and sun and moon and sky, testify to God's greatness, "The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge" (Ps. 19:1 – 2). The song of heavenly worship in Revelation 4 connects God's creation of all things with the fact that he is worthy to receive glory from them:

"You are worthy, our Lord and God,
To receive glory and honor and power,
For you have created all things,
And by your will they existed and were created." (Rev. 4:11)

What does creation show about God? Primarily it shows his great power and wisdom, far above anything that could be imagined by any creature. "It is he who made the earth by his power, who established the world by his wisdom, and by his understanding stretched out the heavens" (Jer. 10:12).

As biblical counselors, we must know and understand God as Creator. To do so puts our focus on His honor. We serve Him as we study, pray and prepare. We counsel with the Almighty as our primary audience, not the counselee. Our aim is to speak the Word in a manner that respects God as God. Further, we are clear on the goal for the counselee. Counselees are to change toward godliness so that the Creator will be better honored in their lives.

Discussion Questions

(The first two questions were written by Wayne Grudem, "Systematic Theology," page 309)

1. Are there ways in which you could be more thankful to God for the excellence of his creation? Look around you and give some examples of the goodness of the creation that God has allowed you to enjoy. Are there ways in which you could be a better steward of parts of God's creation of which he has entrusted to your care?
2. When you think about the immensity of the stars, and that God put them in place to show us his power and glory, how does it make you feel about your place in the universe? Is this different from the way a non-Christian would feel?
3. How might a study on God as Creator (and therefore Sovereign Lord) benefit a counselee whose primary problem is pride?
4. How would a fearful counselee, who is being sinned against by one in authority over her, benefit from learning to view God as Creator and Sovereign?

The Doctrine of the Trinity

Within God, there are three individual persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
All are separate persons, with different roles, functions and activities

Each possesses all the attributes of God

Omnipresent: Jeremiah 23.23-24 / Matthew 28.20 / Psalm 139.7-12

Divine: Isaiah 40.14 / Matthew 11.27 / 1 Corinthians 2.10-13

Omnipotent: Genesis 1.3 / Matthew 4.1-11 / Romans 15.19

Love: 1 John 4.8,16 / 1 John 4.7 and 5.3 / Galatians 5.22

Holy: Isaiah 6.3 / Luke 4.34 / Romans 1.4

Participated in creation: Psalm 19.1-6 / Hebrews 1.2 / Isaiah 40.12-13

Each one is God

1 Peter 1.2

Matthew 18.19

Matthew 3.16-17

See "A Theology of Christian Counseling," by Jay Adams, Chapter 7

The Bible teaches that there is only one true and living God (Deut. 6:4; Is. 45:5-7; 1 Cor. 8:4), one in essence and perfect in His attributes. He exists eternally in three Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14). This does not mean that God can merely manifest Himself in different forms or modes (Modalism), nor that some of the persons are subordinate in essence to others (Arianism). Rather, the Bible teaches that each Person of the Godhead has precisely the same nature, attributes, and perfections (Matt. 28:18-19; Mark 12:29; John 1:14; Acts 5:3-4; 2 Cor. 13:14; Hebrews 1:1-3; Revelation 1:4-6), and each deserve worship and obedience.

Specifically, the Father is referred to as God (Rom. 1:7, 1 Cor. 8:6), the Son is called God (John 1:1; 10:30; 14:9, Heb. 1:8-10), and the Holy Spirit is called God (Acts 5:3-4; 2 Cor. 13:14; Heb. 10:15-17). Jesus commanded that His disciples baptize believers in "the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:18). All three Persons can be seen in texts such as John 14:16, where Jesus asks the Father to send the Holy Spirit to indwell believers.

All three persons of the Godhead can be seen in other places as well, such as at the baptism of Jesus (Luke 3:21-22), Paul's discussion of true believers in Romans 8 (Rom. 8:9-11), and in blessings (2 Cor. 13:13).

In today's age when it is common to see the Holy Spirit referred to more as a "force" or even a "feeling," the Scriptures affirm over and over again that He is indeed a person, one with the Father and the Son in essence, power, and deity. He displays many characteristics of personality, such as life (2 Cor. 3:3, Rom. 8:2), intelligence (Is. 11:2, 40:13), freedom and purpose (1 Cor. 12:11), liberty (2 Cor. 3:17), love (Rom. 15:30), and knowledge (1 Cor. 2:11). And He displays actions of personality such as speaking, interceding, commanding, teaching, testifying, reproving, guiding, and praying (Acts 8:29, 10:19, 13:2, Rom. 8:15, 26, 1 Cor. 2:13, John 15:26, 16:8). So while the Scriptures clearly teach that "the LORD our God is one," they also state that the one, true and living God is three in Person: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

....portions contributed by Keith Palmer

Attributes of God

Goodness

Psalms 34:8 O taste and see that the LORD is good;
How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!

Psalms 100:5 For the LORD is good;
His lovingkindness is everlasting
And His faithfulness to all generations.

Luke 18:19 And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone."

Romans 8:28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose.

Hebrews 12:10 For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He *disciplines us* for *our* good, so that we may share His holiness.

James 1:17 Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.

Grace

The Bible uses of the term “grace” to encompass these two ideas: unmerited favor from God and the help He gives to His children. The former is connected to our salvation. God gives us good that we do not deserve (predestination, justification, and new life through Jesus Christ). For the redeemed, He also provides help to grow in sanctification and to deal with hardships in this life.

Exodus 34:6 Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth.

Romans 3:23-24 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;

1 Corinthians 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am.

Ephesians 2:7-9 so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Titus 3:3-7 For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. But when the kindness of God our Savior and *His* love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to *the* hope of eternal life.

Hebrews 4.15-16 For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as *we are*, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Discussion Questions

1. How could you offer encouragement by reminding a counselee that the grace of God caused their salvation?
2. When counselees are facing difficult circumstances, on what do they rely (other than God's grace)?
3. What Scriptures describe the relationship between the difficulty of circumstances and the capacity of God's grace?

Holiness

What is holiness?

What implications does it have for the life of a Christian?

Henry Theissen observes,

The absolute, innate holiness of God means that sinners have to be separated from Him unless a way can be found to constitute them holy. And that way has been provided in the merits of Jesus Christ.

A proper view of the holiness of God should make the believer sensitive to his own sin. (Isa. 6:3, 5; Luke 5:8).

God is absolutely separate from and exalted above all his creatures, and he is equally separate from all moral evil and sin. In the first sense, his holiness is not really an attribute that is a coordinate with the other attributes, but is rather coextensive with them all. It denotes the perfection conformity of his being and his will. In God purity of being is before purity of willing or doing. God does not will the good because it is good, nor is the good good because God wills it; if such were the case, there would be a good above God or the good would be arbitrary and changeable. Instead, God's will is the expression of his nature, which is holy.

Holiness occupies the foremost rank among the attributes of God. It is the attribute by which God wanted to be especially known in the Old Testament times (Lev. 11:44f.; Josh. 24:19; 1 Sam. 6:20; Ps. 22:3; Isa. 40:25; Ezek. 39:7; Hab. 1:12).

It is emphasized by the bounds set about Mt. Sinai when God came down upon it (Exod. 26:33; 1 Kings 6:16, 19), the prescribed offerings that must be brought if an Israelite would approach God (Lev. 1-7), the special priesthood to mediate between God and the people (Lev. 8-10), the many laws about impurity (Lev. 11-15), the feats of Israel (Lev. 23), and the special position of Israel in Palestine (Num. 23:9; Deut. 33:28f.).

Three important things should be learned from the fact that God is holy.

- a. There is a chasm between God and the sinner (Isa. 59:1; Hab. 1:13). Not only is the sinner estranged from God, but God is estranged from the sinner. Before sin came, man and God had fellowship with each other; now that fellowship is broken and impossible.
- b. Man must approach God through the merits of another if he is to approach him at all. Man neither possesses nor is able to acquire the sinlessness which is necessary for access to God. But Christ has made such access possible (Rom. 5:2; Eph. 2:18; Heb. 10:19f.). In God's holiness lies the reason for atonement; what his holiness demanded, his love provided (Rom. 5:6-8; Eph. 2:1-9; Pet. 3:18).
- c. We should approach God "with reverence and awe" (Heb. 12:28). A correct view of the holiness of God leads to a proper view of the sinful self (Ps. 66:18; 1 John 1:5-7). Job (40:3-5), Isaiah (6:5-7), and Peter (Luke 5:8) are striking examples of the relation between the two. Humiliation, contrition and confession flow from a scriptural view of God's holiness.

Millard Erickson adds,

God's perfection is the standard for our moral character and the motivation for religious practice. The whole moral code follows from his holiness. The people of Israel were told, "For I am the Lord your God; consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy."

He (God) is totally separate from all of creation. This is what Louis Berkhof called the "majesty-holiness" of God. The uniqueness of God affirmed in Exodus 15:11: "Who is like thee, O Lord among the gods? Who is like thee, majestic in holiness, terrible in glorious deeds, doing wonders?" Similar expressions of the loftiness, the exaltedness, the splendor of God, are found in 1 Samuel 2:2 and Isaiah 57:15. Isaiah saw the Lord "sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up." The foundations of the thresholds shook and the house was filled with smoke. The seraphim cried out, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts" (Isa. 6:1-4). The Hebrew word for "holy" (qadosh) means "marked off" or "withdrawn from common, ordinary use." The verb from which it is derived suggests "to cut off" or "to separate." Whereas in the religions of the peoples around Israel the adjective holy was freely applied to objects, actions, and personnel involved in the worship, in Israel's covenant worship it was very freely used of the Deity himself.

Holiness is the defining characteristic of God. Sin, or the lack of holiness, is man's greatest problem. Sin separates man from God. Sin will separate the unredeemed from God forever.

The Christian is saved from the penalty of sin and the power of sin at the moment of regeneration. However, the presence of sin is with us until the day we receive our resurrection bodies when we see the Lord face to face. The occupation of the believer from the time of justification until the day of glorification is sanctification: laying aside sin and replacing it with godliness. The true believer can change toward holiness. This very change gives **37**

God's child assurance of salvation. Biblical counseling consists of helping imperfect Christians become more like Christ. Our mission is to help them replace sin with obedience to the Holy God.

Exodus 15:11 Who is like You among the gods, O LORD?
Who is like You, majestic in holiness,
Awesome in praises, working wonders?

Psalms 19:7-9 The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul;
The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.
The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart;
The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.
The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever;
The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether.

Psalms 99:3, 5, 9 Let them praise Your great and awesome name;
Holy is He.
Exalt the LORD our God And worship at His footstool;
Holy is He.
Exalt the LORD our God And worship at His holy hill,
For holy is the LORD our God.

James 1:13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.

1 Peter 1:15 But like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all *your* behavior.

1 John 1:5 This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.

Revelation 4:8 And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within; and day and night they do not cease to say, "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY IS THE LORD GOD, THE ALMIGHTY, WHO WAS AND WHO IS AND WHO IS TO COME."

Immutability

Immutability means that God does not change. He is always the same. Nothing will ever change Him, nor will He change Himself. What else is included in an accurate definition of immutability? What implications does this attribute have for us as counselors and for our counselees? Paul Enns states,

Change is always for better or for worse, but since God is absolute perfection, improvement or deterioration are impossible for Him. Malachi 3:6 teaches the doctrine of immutability: "I, the Lord, do not change." James 1:17 indicates there is no variation or shifting shadow with God. There is change throughout the world from year to year but God does not change in His Person nor in His response to His creatures.

Wayne Grudem adds,

(The biblical doctrine of immutability) also affirms God's unchangeableness or immutability with respect to his purposes. "The counsel of the Lord stands for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations" (Ps. 33:11). This general statement about God's counsel is supported by several specific verses that talk about individual plans or purposes of God that he has had for all eternity (Matt. 13:35; 25:34; Eph. 1:11; 3:9, 11; 2 Tim. 2:19; 1 Peter 1:20; Rev. 13:8). Once God has determined that he will assuredly bring something about, his purpose is unchanging, and will be achieved.

Does God sometimes change his mind? When we talk about God being unchanging in his purposes, we may wonder about places in scripture where God said he would judge his people and then because of prayer or the people's repentance (or both) God relented and did not bring judgment as he had said he would. Examples of such withdrawing from threatened judgment include the successful intervention of Moses in prayer to prevent the destruction of the people of Israel (ex. 32:9-14), the adding of another fifteen years to life of Hezekiah (Isa. 38:1-6), or the failure to bring promised judgment upon Nineveh where the people repented (Jonah 3:4, 10). Are these not the cases where God's purposes in fact did change? Then there are other passages where God is said to be sorry that he had carried out some previous action. One thinks of God being sorry that he had made man upon the earth (Gen. 6:6), or sorry that he had made Saul Isia (1 Sam. 15:10). Did not God's purposes change in those cases?

These instances should all be understood as true expressions of God's present attitude or intention with respect to the situation as it exists at that moment. If the situation changes, then of course God's attitude or expression of intention will also change. This is just saying that God responds differently to different situations.

Millard Erickson concludes the thought with these comments,

1. Some of them are to be understood as anthropomorphisms and anthropopathisms. They are simply descriptions of God's actions and feelings in human terms, and from a human perspective. Included here are representations of God as experiencing pain or regret.
2. What may seem to be changes of mind may actually be new stages in the working out of God's plan. An example of this is the offering of salvation to the

Gentiles. While a part of God's original plan, it represented a rather sharp break with what had preceded.

3. Some apparent changes of mind are changes of orientation resulting from man's move into a different relationship with God. God did not change when Adam sinned; rather, man had moved into God's disfavor. This works the other way as well. Take the case of Ninevah. God said, "Forty days and Nineveh will be destroyed, unless they repent." Nineveh repented and was spared. It was man that had changed, not God's plan.

Some interpretations of the doctrine of divine constancy, expressed as immutability, have actually drawn heavily upon the Greek idea of immutability and sterility. This makes God inactive. But the biblical view is not that God is static but stable. He is active and dynamic, but in a way which is stable and consistent with his nature. What we are dealing with here is the dependability of God. He will be the same tomorrow as he is today. He will act as he has promised. He will fulfill his commitments. The believer can rely upon that (Lam. 3:22-23; 1 John 1:9).

In our day, the idea of an unchanging God has been challenged by the movement known as process theology. Its fundamental thesis is that reality is processive. This is not to say that everything is in process. There are unchanging principles of process and unchanging abstract forms, but to be real is to be in process.

God's immutability makes His promises absolute. This truth gives great hope to His children during times of great physical pain, unrelenting hardship, imminent death, unrepentant family members and persecution. God's statements of love, grace and faithfulness are powerful because He is trustworthy. For the sinning believer, God's immutability causes His promised discipline to be a frightening certainty.

Psalms 33:11 The counsel of the LORD stands forever,
The plans of His heart from generation to generation.

Isaiah 46:9-11 Remember the former things long past,
For I am God, and there is no other;
I am God, and there is no one like Me,
Declaring the end from the beginning,
And from ancient times things which have not been done,
Saying, 'My purpose will be established,
And I will accomplish all My good pleasure';
Calling a bird of prey from the east,
The man of My purpose from a far country.
Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass.
I have planned *it, surely* I will do it.

Lamentations 3:22-23 The LORD'S lovingkindnesses indeed never cease,
For His compassions never fail.
They are new every morning;
Great is Your faithfulness.

James 1:17 Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.

Discussion Questions

1. How can we effectively explain God's immutability to a counselee who does not trust His promises?
2. When do people accuse God of changing or not keeping His word?
3. What should be the mindset and attitude of the counselor who is warning the sinning, unrepentant professing believer when counseling is being terminated?

Justice

God is just. He is fair. We can rely on His righteousness in all His dealings with man. We know that on the judgment day, all whose names are in the book of life will enter eternal life with God, having been declared "justified" through the completeness of the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. All others will be judged by God's justice, based on the evidence of their deeds, written in the other books that will be present on that day (Revelation 20.11-15). Millard Erickson discusses the matter of the ungodly who live easy lives on earth in relation to God's justice:

At times, however, the rule of God does not appear to be just. Those who lead sinful lives are not always punished, and the righteous frequently seem to go unrewarded. Psalm 73 reflects upon the apparent prosperity of the wicked. They are healthy and apparently free from the troubles that other men experience. This observation is frequently ours as well. In the past we often heard the slogan "crime does not pay." But crime frequently does pay, and

sometimes quite handsomely! Leaders in organized crime often accumulate huge amounts of earthly wealth, and may be healthy as well, while some virtuous believers may experience poverty, ill health, or the tragic deaths of loved ones. And this apparent inequity may go on for years. How can a just God allow this?

This problem is a part of the larger problem of evil, which will receive extensive treatment in chapter 19. At this point, however, it will be helpful for us to note what the psalmist discovered. When he went into the sanctuary of God, he perceived the end of the wicked. He saw that they would ultimately be destroyed (Ps. 73:17-20, 27). He himself, on the other hand, would be guided by God's counsel, and would eventually be received to glory (v. 24). The justice of God must not be evaluated on a short-term basis. Within this life it will often be incomplete or imperfect. Earthly life is not all there is, however. There is a life beyond, and in the scope of all eternity, God's justice will be complete.

The Scriptures makes clear that sin has definite consequences. These consequences must eventually come to pass, whether sooner or later. In Genesis 2:17 we read God's warning to Adam and Eve: "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die." Similar warnings recur throughout scripture, including Paul's statement that "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). Deuteronomy 7:10, Psalm 58:11, and Romans 12:19 all indicate that God will punish sin, for sin intrinsically deserves to be punished. It is a disruption of the very structure of the divine spiritual economy, and this disruption or imbalance must necessarily be set right. Not only evil, but good as well will ultimately receive its rewards. Deuteronomy 7:9 expresses this clearly: "Know therefore that the Lord your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 2:7-8 To those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation.

2 Thessalonians 1:8 dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

Omniscience

- Psalms 139:1-6 O Lord, You have searched me and known *me*.
You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
You understand my thought from afar.
You scrutinize my path and my lying down,
And are intimately acquainted with all my ways.
Even before there is a word on my tongue,
Behold, O LORD, You know it all.
You have enclosed me behind and before,
And laid Your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
It is *too* high, I cannot attain to it.
- Psalms 139:16 Your eyes have seen my unformed substance;
And in Your book were all written
The days that were ordained *for me*,
When as yet there was not one of them.
- Matthew 6:8 So do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you
ask Him.
- Matthew 10:28-30 “Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but
rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not
two sparrows sold for a cent? And *yet* not one of them will fall to the
ground apart from your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all
numbered.”
- Matthew 11:21 “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had
occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have
repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.”
- 1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and
God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are
able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that
you will be able to endure it.
- Hebrews 4:13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open
and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

The Omniscience of God and the Issue of "Open Theism"

Omniscience means that God is infinite in knowledge. More specifically, He knows himself and all other things perfectly from all eternity, whether they be actual or merely possible, whether they be past, present or future. God's omniscience and omnipresence are interrelated as seen in Proverbs 15:3, "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, watching the evil and the good." Isaiah 46:10 declares God's infinite understanding, and nothing is hidden from His sight (Ps. 147:5; Heb. 4:13). God says that even the hairs on our heads are numbered (Matt. 10:30).

Open theism, also called openness and the open view, is a theological position dealing with human free will and its relationship to God and the nature of the future. It is the teaching that God has granted to humanity free will and that in order for the free will to be truly free, the future free will choices of individuals cannot be known ahead of time by God, contrary to theism. In open theism, the future is either knowable or not knowable.

Open theists reject the idea that God is sovereign over all and knows everything, including the future, because this is said to contradict the "doctrine" of free will. Open theists also reject the doctrine of predestination. However, this "new" doctrine is really just the same Arminian errors taken to the next level of logical thought. In the end, open theism grossly alters the classical doctrines of God's sovereignty, of human responsibility, and God's omniscience. God knows all things: past, present, and future; and that he is sovereign over all. Psalm 139 states that "even before there is a word on my tongue, behold, O LORD, you know it all" (v. 4), and that all of a person's days were "ordained" even before there was one (v. 16). These verses clearly teach that God not only knows all things, including the future, but that he has sovereignly planned all things. The teaching of "open theism" or the "openness of God" is a theological position dealing with human free will and its relationship to God and the nature of the future. Gregory Boyd, advocate for open theism says, "To whatever degree the future is yet open to be decided by free agents, it is unsettled." In other words, God does not know the outcome or chooses not to know until future events take place. Open theists also claim they do not deny God's omniscience, yet they say that God can only know what is knowable, hence since the future has not yet happened, it cannot be exhaustively known by God. Open theism also claims that God can make mistakes because He does not know all things that occur in the future.

Contrary to open theism God also knows all possible things. He knew Keilah would betray David to Saul if David remained in that vicinity (1 Sam. 23:11f.). Jesus knew that Tyre and Sidon would have repented had they seen the miracles done in Bethsaida and Chorazin (Matt. 11:21).

God also knows the future. He foreknew the future in general (Dan. 2, 7; Matt 24, 25; Acts 15:18), the course Israel would (Deut. 31:20f.), the coming of Christ (Micah 5:2), and his crucifixion (Acts 2:23; 3:18). Contrary to open theism, God's foreknowledge itself is not causative. Free actions do not take place because they are foreseen, but they are foreseen because they take place. Also, just because something morally evil has been predicted it does not remove human responsibility from the perpetrator (Matt. 18:7; Jn. 13:27; Acts. 2:23; Ex. 4:21).

The open theist not only misunderstands God's omniscience, but also His sovereignty which is clearly linked to his omniscience. The God of the Scriptures is loving, involved and even interacts with us on a level we can understand. Our response is simply to worship Him (Rom. 11:33-36).

...portions contributed by Tom Aylward

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Lectures in Systematic Theology, Thiessen / Doerksen; Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1949 / 1977
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Theology of Counseling
Week 3:
Class Teaching: Theology Proper

God is Omnipotent

Genesis 17:1 The LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; Walk before Me, and be blameless."

Applications:

Consider God as Almighty

Because He is Almighty and Holy, strive to not sin

Teach counselees to fear, respect, and love God

Take time regularly to consider God's power...and worship Him

Ephesians 1:11 also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,

Applications:

Predestination is true for every believer

Teach counselees this perspective

God works all things after the counsel of His will

View hardship believing Ephesians 1.11, Philippians 3.10 and James 1.2-4,9

God is Love

1 John 4:10 - 11 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

Applications:

I will love, serve and give to love as God loved

Married counselees must love like this to honor God regardless of the actions of their spouse

Theology of Counseling: Theology Proper
Week 3
Group Project

Group 1

God as Creator: pages 32-33

As a group, discuss your answers to the 4 questions on page 33

Compile a list of 7 more applications of the theology of God as Creator in relation to life problems, counseling issues, and personal discipleship for Christians

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

Group 2

God's Grace: pages 35-36

As a group, discuss your answers to the 3 questions on page 36

Compile a list of 7 more applications of the theology of God's grace in relation to life problems, counseling issues, and personal discipleship for Christians

1

2

3

4

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6

7

Anthropology

Week 4

Theology of Counseling

WEEK 4: ANTHROPOLOGY: THE THEOLOGY OF MAN

God created man (Genesis 1.26-27). This establishes God's authority over every person. He is the Creator and we are the created, so He has final authority over each of us (Romans 9.20-21). The fact that man is made in the image and likeness of God means that man is like God and represents God in some way. The image of God in man is realized in several aspects, including moral aspects, spiritual aspects, mental aspects, and relational aspects (Grudem, 445-447). We were created to bring glory to God (1 Corinthians 10.31). Man was created perfect, or sinless. But when Adam sinned, death and sin entered the world (Genesis 3, Romans 5). God judged sin. The results of the fall of man were that all were born with a sin nature and that each human being chose to sin also. Man is dead in sin (Ephesians 2.1-3) unless and until made alive with Christ by the gift of saving faith in Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2.1-10).

Man is made up of two basic parts, the "inner man" and the "outer man." The former is referred to with the following interchangeable terms: the mind, soul, spirit and heart. These identify each person's ability to reason, to desire, to choose, to think, and to believe. The latter is the physical body. The inner man will live forever, connected to a mortal body while on earth and bound to an eternal body in the life to come. The inner man can be redeemed through the blood of Christ and it is this part of man that begins a new life with God when justified by grace through faith.

The Bible teaches that God created man, male and female (Genesis 1.27, 1 Corinthians 11.8-9). He made man out of dust (Genesis 1.26, Psalm 100.3, Psalm 103.14). God distinguished mankind from other living flesh (1 Corinthians 15.39). Man is a material and spiritual living being.

Scripture tells us man's original condition was "in the image of God" (Genesis 1.26-27). That image or likeness is not a physical one since God is Spirit. However, man was created with a mental likeness. Man was given abilities to reason and to work, as implied by the commands to cultivate and keep the garden (Genesis 2.15) and to exercise dominion over the earth and creatures (Genesis 1.26, 28). We are similar to God in that we can also reason, choose, love and create, though each to a far lesser degree.

Man also bears a moral likeness to God. He was created with the capacity to choose either to do right or wrong (Genesis 2.16-17). Unique from other creatures, God breathed life into Adam, reflecting man's spiritual nature (Ecclesiastes 12.7). He has a conscience, a witness within him telling him what he ought to do (Acts 23.1).

Man also bears a social likeness to God. As God reflects the objects of His love in the trinity, He endowed man with the capacity to commune with Him (Genesis 3.8) and others (Genesis 2.18, 24). This intimate fellowship designed by God for man and woman was consummated through marriage (Genesis 2.18-25), (Thiessen, 153-156).

Because of the fall, man is sinful, totally depraved and needs salvation (Romans 3.23). After the fall, God continued to seek out man for fellowship with Him through faith. God provided a solution to man's sinful condition, salvation through faith in Jesus Christ (Acts 4.12). Each person who believes in Christ is forgiven their sins, born again and declared righteous before God, thus restoring fellowship with Him. Each is given everything pertaining to life and godliness (2 Peter 1.2-11), and the regenerate man "...in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of truth" (Ephesians 4.24), (Aylward, 2).

Through general revelation (what God has shown about Himself in Creation) all men realize that God exists. They understand enough truth about Him that they are responsible for their sins against Him (Romans 1.18-21). Through special revelation, the Bible, the Lord supplies the message of the Gospel and the means to be born again (1 Peter 1.23-25). The soul redeemed by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ enjoys forgiveness and a personal relationship with God. This person is no longer a slave to sin, but can overcome sin through the Scriptures (1 Peter 2.1-3) and with the help of the indwelling Holy Spirit (Romans 8.13).

How people perceive life problems and solutions is directly connected to their beliefs about man. Many in our culture teach that man is basically good. Thus, they do not believe a person's problems could be connected to their own sins. We who believe the Bible's descriptions of man see the unsaved as guilty of sin, enslaved to sin, and in need of forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

Man in relation to God

Psalm 103.15-16 As for man, his days are like grass;
As a flower of the field, so he flourishes.
When the wind has passed over it, it is no more,
And its place acknowledges it no longer.

Psalm 139.13-16 For You formed my inward parts;
You wove me in my mother's womb.
I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
Wonderful are Your works,
And my soul knows it very well.
My frame was not hidden from you,
When I was made in secret,
And skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth;
Your eyes have seen my unformed substance;
And in Your book they were written,
The days that were ordained for me,
When as yet there was not one of them.

Proverbs 17.3 The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold,
But the LORD tests hearts.

Acts 17.24-28 The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all *people* life and breath and all things; and He made from one *man* every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined *their* appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, "For we also are His children"

Job 1.21 He said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb,
And naked I shall return there.
The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away.
Blessed be the name of the LORD."

God has authority over each person. He is our Creator. He chose when and where we would live. He set a number of days for life in this body before we entered the world. God has an intimate connection with each person. He fashioned each of us while we were only beginning to develop in our mother's wombs.

The counselor should have a self-view that is based on these realities about God. My goal is to live for His glory. He has prepared me for this time. Since He made me, He is aware of how I understand this counselee and His Word today. My objective is to effectively communicate the Scriptures that are pertinent to this person in regard to their current circumstances.

We must view each counselee according to these truths. Each precious soul is here on earth for a season. Their purpose is to know and honor the Maker. The Lord desires for them to be saved. He seeks for their heart to be His alone. He carefully and personally formed each facet of their being. I will view this soul based on these facts. This counselor will boldly teach these things about God. I am confident that God will work faithfully to convict the counselee of sin and enable growth in righteousness through His use of His Word.

The Role of the Word

We counsel from the Bible because it is God's created tool to equip His children for every situation (2 Timothy 3.16-17). The Word is totally sufficient to enable the saved soul to grow in respect to salvation (1 Peter 2.1-3). For this reason, the only question that really matters in counseling is, "What does the Word say about that?"

Man cannot judge the heart (will, motives, desires) of another man, according to Romans 14.4-5. But the Word of God is able to do so. Only the Word, caused to be living and active by a loving God, can reach such a deep part of the soul (Hebrews 4.11-13). The goal of all counseling is change. Only the Bible can cause growth at the level of the will of the heart.

Emotions

Genesis 4.6-7 Then the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it."

Emotions follow after the decisions we make, good or bad. Consider God's counsel to Cain in Genesis 4.6-7. Cain had become angry then depressed after God had no regard for his incorrect offering. The Lord explains that feelings are a result of choices. Obedience to God brings peace and contentment. If he had done well in obeying God, Cain's anger and depression would have ended. His countenance would have been lifted up. Disobedience results in being overcome by sin, which is followed by unpleasant feelings. Cain's rejection of God's counsel kept him guilty of the sin of not obeying the Lord's directions about the offering and led to further sin (killing his brother, Abel). The results were feelings of guilt and shame, along with the emptiness of being apart from God.

Psalms 32.3-4 When I kept silent *about my sin*, my body wasted away
Through my groaning all day long.
For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me;
My vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer.

John 15.10-11 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and *that* your joy may be made full.

These two passages further demonstrate the principle that feelings result from obedience or disobedience to God. Failing to repent of sin brings groaning and the weight of God's hand upon a soul. Keeping His commandments results in abiding in His love and having full joy. Jesus is the example of obedience resulting in abiding in the father's love.

We must be clear on the relationship of obedience to feelings in our counsel. A significant number of counselees measure their days by how they feel rather than how well they obeyed God (see “Obeying God versus Obeying Feelings,” study and journal #23 in “Chronicles of Transformation,” livetheword.squarespace.com).

The world teaches that feelings are a source of truth and can be trusted. The Scriptures say that the Word of God is the source of truth (John 17.17). The core issue of many counseling cases is the counselee’s need to change from obeying feelings to obeying God. Sometimes the wrong belief that feelings are to be followed comes from a wrong view of self (thinking that the inner child is pure), in other cases it is tied to an incorrect view of how God leads His children (belief that God guides through feelings, “the still, small voice,” or signs). These matters are covered in more detail elsewhere in this course.

Pride

Isaiah 14.13-14 But you said in your heart,
 “I will ascend to heaven;
 I will raise my throne above the stars of God,
 And I will sit on the mount of assembly
 In the recesses of the north.
 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;
 I will make myself like the Most High.”

Luke 18.9-11 And He also told this parable to some people who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with contempt: “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector’.”

Pride was the original sin in the universe. Isaiah 14.13-14 describes the day Lucifer changed from an angel to the devil. Pride was the sin that caused him to be expelled from the presence of God.

Pride is also a common sin of people. It is a denial of who we are and who is God. The powerful example of Luke 18.9-11 indicates the utter sinfulness of pride. There is no place for pride in man. God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble (James 5.6). We are sinners saved by grace; nothing more. Our counsel should reflect no pride, but rather an accurate working view of who God and ourselves. We may often counsel souls that have been deceived by the sin of pride. Sometimes it is the central point of an entire case, the greatest obstacle to be overcome.

Conscience

Greek, “*SUNEIDASIS*,” *literally*, “knowing with”

What it is and does:

Romans 2.15 Thoughts which accuse or defend

Romans 9.1 It bears witness to the truth with the Holy Spirit

What can happen in the conscience:

Hebrews 10.22 Cleansed by the Holy Spirit

1 Timothy 1.19	Can be rejected
1 Timothy 3.9	Can be kept clear
Titus 1.15	Can be defiled
1 Timothy 4.2	Can be seared

The importance of a proper conscience is demonstrated by the apostle Paul: "I also do my best to maintain always a blameless conscience both before God and before men." Acts 24.16

"Conscience is knowledge of oneself and one's duty as compared to and dictated by an outside source of authority. Conscience is the unique ability of the soul to reflect back on itself." (Dolezal, 3). Therefore, it is crucial to develop and maintain an accurate view of all matters of life according to the Scriptures. The conscience is only as accurate as one's understanding of the Word. The Bible strengthens the conscience because it empowers it with right judgment. It enables judgment of self based on what God has defined as truth (Psalm 19.7-9).

Inaccurate or faulty consciences of unbelievers can be so trained in error that they do not believe they have sinned (Luke 18.20-21), may think that killing Christians honors God (John 16.2), and can be rightly described as having zeal but not knowledge (Romans 10.2).

The believers' conscience can be obstructed by sin, habits of wrong thinking or a lack of biblical truth. When not in accord with the standard of God's Word, faulty consciences can result in excusing sin, condemning what is not sin, legalism (adhering to non-biblical rules as if they held the authority of God), guilt over sin that has been forgiven ("but I can't forgive myself"), or a focus on one's own legitimate sin that is so intense that the grace of God is forgotten. These errant beliefs of right and wrong can be applied to self or to others.

A good and properly functioning conscience is based on the standards and teachings of the Bible. It promotes obedience to God. The good conscience looks intently at the soul of oneself to discover sin, then deals with it biblically. The goal of the good conscience is obedience to God. The result of keeping a good conscience is peace with God that is true and based on truth. The biblical counselor can help counselees with inaccurate consciences by teaching pertinent truths of the Scriptures and advocating repentance in regard to sin. The certainty of the forgiveness of God for sins properly dealt with in regard to God and man is part of the result of a good conscience.

Man's Destiny

Hebrews 9:27-28 And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this *comes* judgment, so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without *reference to* sin, to those who eagerly await Him.

Revelation 20:11-15 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is *the book of life*; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one *of them* according to their deeds. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Revelation 21:1-7 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer *any* sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from

the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be *any* death; there will no longer be *any* mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away." And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true."
Then He said to me, "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. "He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son.

After life on earth each human being will go into God's presence or away from Him forever. All will be given eternal bodies to go with their eternal souls. It is good to occasionally reflect on each of the three passages above. Doing so may result in thanks for your own salvation by God's grace and thanks for God's redemption of your family, friends and counselees. It also might bring us to a consideration of the unbelievers we know. Unless they come to Christ, they will be in the group described in Revelation 20.11-15. May these Scriptures push each of us to more zealous prayers for the unsaved (1 Timothy 2.1-8) and also a more active communication of the Gospel (1 Corinthians 9.16).

Every biblical counselor should have a variety of tools to communicate the Gospel. It is not unusual for unbelievers to seek biblical counseling either in their quest for salvation or because God has shown them their need for him through their own failures or hardships. Some have never heard the Gospel, others have gone to church for 30 years. Some have heard an inaccurate presentation of the Gospel and others are wrestling with the life decision of whether to obey Jesus Christ as Lord or not. Each of these souls requires different truths from the Scriptures.

The Heart

An Old Testament Introduction to the Heart

Why should we focus on the heart? God does. He evaluates the motives, desires, purposes and objectives. He looks intently at the hearts of men. God knows why we do things and understands what we are trying to accomplish when we speak or act.

1 Samuel 16.7

For man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.

Proverbs 16.2

All the ways of a man are clean in his own sight,
But the Lord weighs the motives.

Proverbs 17.3

The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold,
But the Lord tests hearts.

What is God looking for in the hearts of men? How does He respond?

2 Chronicles 16.9

For the eyes of the Lord move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose hearts is completely His.

Good things can occur in the heart.

Proverbs 3.5

Trust in the Lord with all your heart
And do not lean on your own understanding.

Proverbs 15.9

The way of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord,
But He loves him who pursues righteousness.

Proverbs 23.12

Apply your heart to discipline
And you ears to words of knowledge.

Bad things can occur in the heart. Notice how God views the high self esteem of one who has pride and trusts their own heart. Those in our society who endorse such a view do not respect the Lord or His Word. They teach people to be fools and to oppose God.

Proverbs 6.18

A heart that devises wicked plans,
Feet that run rapidly to evil.

Proverbs 16.5

Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord;
Assuredly, he will not be unpunished.

Proverbs 28.26

He who trusts in his own heart is a fool,
But he who walks wisely will be delivered.

New Testament Theology of the Heart

The following is a partial list of New Testament uses of the most common word translated "heart," the Greek "kardia." As you read through these references, use a highlighter or underline important things about the heart:

2588. Greek: kardia

heart

- Matthew 5:8 "Blessed are the pure in *heart*, for they shall see God.
- Matthew 5:28 but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his *heart*.
- Matthew 6:21 for where your treasure is, there your *heart* will be also.
- Matthew 11:29 "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in *heart*, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.
- Matthew 15:8 'THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR *HEART* IS FAR AWAY FROM ME.
- Matthew 15:18 "But the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the *heart*, and those defile the man.
- Matthew 15:19 "For out of the *heart* come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders.

- Mark 3:5 After looking around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of *heart*, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored.
- Mark 12:30 AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR *HEART*, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.'
- Luke 1:51 "He has done mighty deeds with His arm; He has scattered those who were proud in the thoughts of their *heart*.
- Luke 6:45 "The good man out of the good treasure of his *heart* brings forth what is good; and the evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth what is evil; for his mouth speaks from that which fills his *heart*.
- Luke 12:34 "For where your treasure is, there your *heart* will be also.
- Luke 24:32 They said to one another, "Were not our *hearts* burning within us while He was speaking to us on the road, while He was explaining the Scriptures to us?"
- Luke 24:38 And He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your *hearts*?"
- John 13:2 During supper, the devil having already put into the *heart* of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray Him,
- John 14:1 "Do not let your *heart* be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.
- John 14:27 "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your *heart* be troubled, nor let it be fearful.
- John 16:6 "But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your *heart*.
- John 16:22 "Therefore you too have grief now; but I will see you again, and your *heart* will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you.
- Acts 1:24 And they prayed and said, "You, Lord, who know the *hearts* of all men, show which one of these two You have chosen
- Acts 2:37 Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the *heart*, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?"
- Acts 4:32 And the congregation of those who believed were of one *heart* and soul; and not one of them claimed that anything belonging to him was his own, but all things were common property to them.
- Acts 8:22 "Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours, and pray the Lord that, if possible, the intention of your *heart* may be forgiven you.
- Acts 11:23 Then when he arrived and witnessed the grace of God, he rejoiced and began to encourage them all with resolute *heart* to remain true to the Lord;
- Acts 21:13 Then Paul answered, "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my *heart*? For I am ready not only to be bound, but even to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

- Romans 1:21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish *heart* was darkened.
- Romans 1:24 Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their *hearts* to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them.
- Romans 2:15 in that they show the work of the Law written in their *hearts*, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them,
- Romans 9:2 that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my *heart*.
- Romans 10:1 Brethren, my *heart's* desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation.
- Romans 10:9 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your *heart* that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;
- Romans 10:10 for with the *heart* a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.
- 1 Corinthians 4:5 Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's *hearts*; and then each man's praise will come to him from God.
- 2 Corinthians 1:22 who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our *hearts* as a pledge.
- 2 Corinthians 9:7 Let each one do just as he has purposed in his *heart*, not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver.
- Ephesians 1:18 I pray that the eyes of your *heart* may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,
- Ephesians 6:5 Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your *heart*, as to Christ;
- Ephesians 6:22 I have sent him to you for this very purpose, so that you may know about us, and that he may comfort your *hearts*.
- Philippians 1:7 For it is only right for me to feel this way about you all, because I have you in my *heart*, since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers of grace with me.
- Philippians 4:7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your *hearts* and your minds in Christ Jesus.
- Colossians 2:2 that their *hearts* may be encouraged, having been knit together in love, and attaining to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, resulting in a true knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ Himself,
- Colossians 3:15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your *hearts*, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful.

- Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your *hearts* to God.
- 1 Thessalonians 2:4 but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who examines our *hearts*.
- 1 Timothy 1:5 But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure *heart* and a good conscience and a sincere faith.
- 2 Timothy 2:22 Now flee youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure *heart*.
- Philemon 1:7 For I have come to have much joy and comfort in your love, because the *hearts* of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother.
- Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the *heart*.
- Hebrews 10:22 let us draw near with a sincere *heart* in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.
- James 1:26 If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own *heart*, this man's religion is worthless.
- James 3:14 But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your *heart*, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth.
- James 4:8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your *hearts*, you double-minded.
- James 5:8 You too be patient; strengthen your *hearts*, for the coming of the Lord is near.
- 1 Peter 1:22 Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the *heart*.
- 1 Peter 3:4 but let it be the hidden person of the *heart*, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.
- 1 Peter 3:15 but sanctify Christ as Lord in your *hearts*, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;
- 1 John 3:17 But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his *heart* against him, how does the love of God abide in him?
- 1 John 3:19 We will know by this that we are of the truth, and will assure our *heart* before Him
- 1 John 3:20 in whatever our *heart* condemns us; for God is greater than our *heart* and knows all things.

Theology of Counseling
Week 4
Class Teaching: Anthropology and Counseling

Pride

Our culture exalts pride; Scriptures teach that pride opposes God

James 4.6

But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, "GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE."

James 4.1-5

Pride is the essence of sin

"Lust," "envy," "wrong motives" produce "quarrels and conflicts," "murder," and "fighting."
Friendship with the world is hostility toward God

James 4.7-10

Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

The counsel to the proud

How does a biblical counselor confront pride?

Learn the motives of the heart

Questions: data gathering

Journals

Questions in relation to Scripture

Show God to be Holy, Sovereign, Authoritative

Speak truth humbly and directly

Explain what repentance must occur, using Scripture as your basis

Settle for nothing less than repentance

Help your counselee to develop a lifestyle of humility and obedience

Incorrect Anthropologies that may Influence Your Counselees

Believe in self

Accept all people as they are, value them

"Christian coaching:" God wants you to accomplish your dream

Victimhood

Live for pleasure

The Conscience

Man As A Created Being Who Will Be Saved or Judges

Hebrews 9.27-28

Colossians 3.1-4

Theology of Counseling

Week 4:

Questions For Class Discussion on the Heart of Man:

1. How does the New Testament theology of the heart differ from popular cultural views?
2. What heart attitudes/thoughts/motives are necessary to be an effective biblical counselor? Why? (Include Scripture references)
3. What must occur in the counselee's heart if he or she is to change by growing in sanctification?

Our purpose is to view ourselves and all other human beings based on the Bible's theology of man.

Hamartiology

Week 5

Theology of Counseling

WEEK 5: HAMARTIOLOGY: THE THEOLOGY OF SIN

Isaiah 14:12-15

But you said in your heart,
"I will ascend to heaven;
I will raise my throne above the stars of God,
And I will sit on the mount of assembly
In the recesses of the north.
I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;
I will make myself like the Most High."
Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol,
To the recesses of the pit.

This passage describes the origin of sin into the universe. Lucifer was an angel of God in heaven. His sin was the ultimate pride. He had self esteem like no other being before or since. The motive of his heart was displayed in the words that expelled him from the presence of the Lord. This self-exaltation is the essence of sin. This angel, because of his sin, became the devil when God threw him out of heaven.

Sin entered into the world when Adam sinned (Genesis 3.1-10). Adam and Eve disobeyed the one command God had given them (Genesis 2.16-17). Through the one transgression, sin entered every man and death came as the result of sin. Condemnation for all resulted from the one sin (Romans 5.12-21).

All people have sinned and fallen short of God's Holy standard (Romans 3.23, 1 John 1.8, Galatians 3.22). Every soul is born with the problem of being a slave to sin (Romans 6.17). The unsaved person does not always sin in the worst way or on every occasion, but they are not able to choose to never sin.

Salvation is essential for a person to have victory over sin. The unbeliever is opposed to God and cannot please Him (Romans 8.6-8). The remedy for slavery to sin and the corresponding separation from God is forgiveness through the blood of Jesus Christ. By His sacrifice, we can be redeemed (Isaiah 53.5-10). Atonement for sins is accomplished on the cross (Colossians 2.13-15). For those who believe in Jesus as their propitiation and make a decision to turn away from sin (repent) and live to God, new life begins (Romans 6.4-7). On the basis of Jesus' death, God declares the believer "not guilty," or justified, before Him (Ephesians 2.8-9, Romans 3.24-26). The result for those who, with Christ, have died to sin is that they also, with Christ, have a new life with God (Romans 6.4-9). Such souls have their names written in the book of life and will spend eternity in heaven with God (Revelation 20.11-21.6).

The penalty for sin is eternal separation from God. After life on earth, comes death and then judgment (Hebrews 9.27). The ominous fate for those who have not been redeemed by Christ is that they will be judged by their sinful deeds, which have been recorded in books. The price for those sins is being cast into the lake of fire forever (Revelation 20.11-15).

New life in Christ creates the ability for a soul to have victory over sin (Romans 6.10-12). The Christian, through the power of the Scriptures (1 Peter 2.1-3) and the indwelling Spirit (John 14.26), is able to overcome temptation and sin (1 John 5.3-5). Sanctification, or changing from sin toward righteousness, is the occupation of every believer until we go home to be with Christ (Romans 8.13).

Repentance

Repentance is the biblical remedy for a Christian in regard to his or her own sin. In Revelation 3:19 Jesus, speaking to saved people who had sinned, instructs them to, "Be zealous and repent." In Luke 17.3-4 Jesus identifies the repenting sinner as "your brother." In 2 Corinthians 7.9-10, Paul endorses "repentance without regret" for believers who sin.

The eternal salvation of Christians is not put in jeopardy by acts of sin (1 Peter 1:3-5). Repentance from sin by true believers does not keep them saved, rather it removes them from a place of inviting God's discipline and restores them to a full relationship with their Father (Hebrews 12.5-11).

What is necessary for a Christian to repent of sin? By definition, the Greek word, "metanoia," is a change in thought, the re-thinking of an issue. Repentance is best defined in Psalms 32 and 51. It could be summarized in this statement, "I intend to not sin against You in this way again." These words express the understanding that sin is first and foremost an opposition to the Holy God. Also expressed is the motive of the will, the commitment to strive to resist all further temptation to sin in the same way.

God enables such alteration in thought through His Word. He teaches, reproves, corrects and trains in righteousness, according to 2 Timothy 3:16-17. All four actions describe a portion of the process of repentance: seeing sin as sin, being convicted of sin, and then being given the direction and practical instruction needed to go the other way.

2 Corinthians 7.9-11 describes two kinds of sorrow. The sorrow of the world regrets getting caught and the consequences. It leads to death. The sorrow that is according to the will of God produces repentance without regret. This sorrow is remorseful because sin has opposed our Lord. The result is a repentance that does not regret choosing to turn away from that sin. Such a decision results in not providing oneself with circumstances where further similar sin can be accomplished (Romans 13.14).

Repentance is a decision of the will. Often this is not a brief time of prayer. The Christian may be turning from a sin committed just minutes ago, or from a sin repeated for years. This act of volition, this submission of one's will to the will of a Holy God, is the essence of repentance.

Some people say, "If I repent of the same sin over and over but go back to it, I'm being a hypocrite. I must not really mean it. So I won't repent unless I know I can stick with it." The largest problem with this mindset is the focus on oneself rather than God. God does not qualify "repent" with "if you know you'll never sin again," so no one else should either. Secondly, if the premise were true, all Christians would be hypocrites because all sin in some way (1 John 1:8, Romans 7:14-25). A true believer is saved by faith, not works; he or she is forgiven eternally and the relationship with God is secured by His power (John 10:27-30) and the intercession of the Savior (Hebrews 7:25). So His children should obey Him by repenting of sin and requesting His help to follow through with repentance. The two things sought in such a prayer (mercy and grace to help in time of need) will certainly be granted (Hebrews 4:15-16).

Repent every day if you sin every day. If you need the help of mature believers or those who know the Word more effectively for you to be able to follow through, seek it and get it. But do not disobey God's directive of how to deal with sin ("repent").

If you will pursue, as a course of life, dealing with sin by repenting, you have wonderful days ahead. Your intimate heart-level interaction with God will be honoring to Him. Sanctification efforts (becoming more like Christ, changing toward holiness, putting off sin and putting on righteousness) will be more effective. Understanding of the sinfulness of sin will increase. Realization of the depth of God's grace will expand. Thanksgiving for the work of Jesus Christ on the cross will be more intense.

The Fact That Believers Sin

All who are truly saved do sin. We cannot grow in sanctification to the point of perfection while on earth. 1 John 1.8, addressed to believers, says, "If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Three verses later, 1 John 2.1 provides hope for the intercession of our Advocate, Jesus Christ, when we do sin.

In Revelation, the letters to the churches (truly saved people in actual churches the apostle John had served in Asia Minor) provide direction for what believers are to do when they sin. In Ephesus, Christians had "left (their) first love." The solution: "Remember therefore from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first," Revelation 2.4-5. The church at Laodicea was "lukewarm." Jesus warned, "Because you say, 'I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,' and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked." His solution: "Those whom I love I reprove and discipline; be zealous therefore, and repent," Revelation 3.16-17, 19. Believers in serious sin invite God's discipline (Hebrews 12.5-11). If they repent of sin they can be restored in their relationship with the Father. The truly saved do repent and are restored.

The doctrine of sanctification shows that all Christians do sin. Ephesians 4.22-24 explains the dynamic of putting off sin and replacing it with righteousness. This growth toward holiness never ceases on earth. Further, the role of the Word in the life of the redeemed includes enabling the same change. In John 17.17 Jesus says that the Word is God's means to cause us to make progress in sanctification. All four functions of the Scriptures in 2 Timothy 3.16-17 imply that we have sin to eliminate: teaching (truth we don't know and thus are not submitting to), reproof (God convicting us of our current sins), correction (The Lord showing us what to put on in place of sin) and training in righteousness (practicing thinking according to the Word so that when we are tempted we can choose to obey God).

Our security of salvation stands true, even in spite of the fact that we as Christians do sin. Although the children of God sin, they also bear fruit in overcoming sin. The truly saved have a life pattern of becoming more like Christ. No believer ever faces temptation that cannot be defeated.

Later it will be discussed that some true believers, although eternally secure in their salvation, forfeit their assurance by sinning as a pattern of life or in an extreme manner (section 20). That study also addresses what the Scriptures do and do not say about discerning between sinning Christians and professing believers who have never been born again.

Victory over Sin

The completion of the process of putting off a particular sin and replacing it with righteousness provides assurance that one is truly a believer in the Gospel.

1 John 5.3-5 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and his commandments are not burdensome. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world, and this is the victory that has overcome the world-our faith. Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes That Jesus is the Son of God?

Romans 6.12-14 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

Corinthians 1.28-31 and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, so that no man may boast before God. But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, so that, just as it is written, "Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord."

1 John 2.6-7 If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us all from sin.

The true believer overcomes sin. Millard Erickson says, "The genuineness of the faith that leads to justification becomes apparent in the results which issue from it. If there are no good works, there has been no real faith nor justification," (Erickson, 228). The Christian is indwelt by the Holy Spirit and by Jesus Christ, enabling victory over temptation.

Long Term or Serious Sin Forfeits Assurance

Many who have made decisions of faith in the Gospel have given in to the same temptation for many years. They have sought to put off sin and put on righteousness, but continue to habitually sin in the same way. Often they wonder, "Am I really a Christian?"

Professing Christians who do not have a track record of growth in sanctification, good works / bearing fruit or victories over specific sins do not have assurance of their salvation. Others who have believed in the Gospel but now have committed serious sins also question their salvation. "How could I be a Christian and do that? I never thought I could ever sin in such a horrible way."

The Bible offers no comfort for such persons. They stand as those who profess faith in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, but they have no biblical assurance that they are truly saved. How should we counsel those in long term or serious sin? The Word of God has clear answers. We call on them to repent of sin (Proverbs 28.13, Revelation 3.19), make restitution to ones wronged (Matthew 5.24) and ask forgiveness from those they have sinned against (Luke 15.18-19). Dealing with sin according to the directives of Scripture results in restoration to a right relationship with God. This is the heart and purpose of church discipline (Matthew 18.15-17). We can help those who have repented by coming alongside and assisting them in making that decision to forsake sin into a pattern of life (Galatians 6.1-2). God has provided an adequate tool for such a task: His Word (Psalm 119.9, 2 Timothy 3.16-17). Through the sufficient Word, God can strengthen every true believer to lay aside sin. Through study (1 Peter 2.1-3), memorization (Psalm 119.11), effort to obey (Psalm 119.56, 67) and prayer for help (Hebrews 4.15-16) one believer can disciple another (1 Thessalonians 2.10-12) through the powerful Word of God (John 17.17).

When this effective ministry results in victory over sin, then the changed soul has the assurance of salvation that comes with the defeat of sin. They also have a template for pursuing maturity in Christ by attacking the next sin with the help of the adequate Word.

A common question regarding the sinning believer is, "How can we know if he is truly saved or not?" The Scriptures answer that question. We cannot know. God knows, because He searches the hearts of every living person every day (Psalm 139.1-6, 2 Chronicles 16.9); He even tests the hearts of men (Proverbs 16.2, 17.3). But we cannot know (Romans 14.4, 13; James 4.11-12). It is neither our place to judge hearts or to say we know the spiritual status of one without the biblical assurance of salvation.

What should we say to a person in long term or serious sin, who claims to believe in the Gospel, but is not sure if he is actually redeemed or not? "Only God knows the status of your soul right now. But if you wish to repent of sin and honor God as your Lord, you can pray—telling Him of your decision right now. After that, through the Word and by God's grace you can have victory over future temptations to return to this sin. I'd be honored to come alongside and help you honor God in this way."

Theology of Counseling

Week 5:

Class Teaching: Sin and Biblical Counseling

Sin and Biblical Counseling

The Biblical Counselor must battle his or her own sins

View all sin in light of God's holiness, His authority, and eternity

Salvation

Does the person understand the facts of the Gospel?

Did they repent of sin and commit themselves to living for Jesus Christ as Lord as part of their conversion?

What proof of fruit exists in this person's life?

For professing Christians:

If there is sin connected to the problem, what is true about it?

It is viewed as sin?

How long has it been going on?

What desires, fears, pleasures, or pride are connected to the sin?

What help does the counselee seek?

Is preconditioning a factor?

What actions, places, relationships, media, and other practices enhance temptation?

Why is this sin desired?

What does the counselee know about how the Scriptures address this sin?

Confronting sin

Find out facts through good data gathering

The Word in the counseling session (Hebrews 4.12)

Homework that can be used to gather data and to help the counselee to interact with God's Word regarding motives, temptation, how they deal with temptation, and how they fight the battle

Call for repentance

The privilege of walking alongside this precious soul

Philippians 1.8

Galatians 4.19

1 Thessalonians 2.19

1 Thessalonians 3.1-2

1 Thessalonians 3.5

1 Thessalonians 3.8-9

1 Thessalonians 3.12-13

Theology of Counseling
Week 5:
Class Questions to Discuss or Consider

What new truths about sin did you learn in this study?

As you consider what God has revealed about mankind in general and about your own life in particular, for what are you thankful? How might the truths about man that God reveals in His Word increase our worship of Him?

How can a more accurate view of man, according to the teachings of the Word of God, improve the counsel you give to people struggling with life problems?

In your household, do you currently practice the Bible's teachings on how to deal with sin? If not, how can you go about implementing them?

What did you learn about the place for repentance in the life of believers?

Soteriology

Week 6

Theology of Counseling

WEEK 6: SOTERIOLOGY: THE STUDY OF SALVATION

1. The Gospel

The accuracy of the Gospel message is of utmost importance. To be useful to the Master in the field of evangelism, we must communicate in a manner that results in salvation for those who respond to the Gospel we proclaim. Our mission is to make disciples (Matthew 28.19-20). True regeneration is the first step toward that end.

Wayne Grudem, in his Systematic Theology, speaks of the essential components of the Gospel,

1. Explanation of the Fact Concerning Salvation. Anyone who comes to Christ for salvation must have at least a basic understanding of who Christ is and how he meets our needs for salvation. Therefore an explanation of the facts concerning salvation must include at least the following:

1. All people have sinned (Rom. 3:23)
2. The penalty for sin is death (Rom. 6:23)
3. Jesus Christ died to pay the penalty for our sins (Rom. 5:8)

2. Invitation to Respond to Christ Personally in Repentance and Faith

It is sufficient to note here that if we come to Christ and trust him to save us from our sin, we cannot any longer cling to sin but must willingly renounce it in genuine repentance. In some cases in Scripture both repentance and faith are mentioned together when referring to someone's initial conversion (Paul said that he spent his time "testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of *repentance* to God and of *faith* in our Lord Jesus Christ," Acts 20:21). But at other times only repentance of sins is named and saving faith is assumed as an accompanying factor ("that *repentance* and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all nations" [Luke 24:47; cf. Acts 2:37-38; 3:19; 5:31; 17:30; Rom. 2:4; 2 Cor. 7:10; et al.]) Therefore, any genuine gospel proclamation must include an invitation to make a conscious decision to forsake one's sins and come to Christ in faith, asking Christ for forgiveness of sins. If either the need to repent of sins or the need to trust in Christ for forgiveness is neglected, there is not a full and true proclamation of the gospel.

In our time, many people who have not repented of sin believe they are Christians. They have heard a Gospel that does not include dying to sin and the old self being crucified with Christ (Romans 6.4-14). Many trust in the idea that if they only believe that they have the free gift of forgiveness through the blood of Christ, they are free to sin in any way they wish and will be saved from hell. For this reason, it is vital to gather good data early in the counseling process. Ask Gospel related questions such as, "What did you believe when you came to Christ for salvation?" "If you died and God asked you, 'Why should I let you into heaven?,' what would you say?" (from Discipleship Evangelism), or, "How did your life change after you became a Christian?" We have often read through Romans 6.4-14 with counselees and asked, "Have you ever come to Christ in the way described here?" With others, we have read Romans 8.6-13 and then asked, "Which one are you?," referring to the passage's clear description of those who live in the flesh and those who live by the Spirit.

2. The Cross of Jesus Christ

The cross of Christ is the focal point of our salvation. Sin required the penalty of death and only the sinless Son of God could pay that price for others (Romans 6.23 and Hebrews 2.9-15). At

once it is the picture of the ultimate obedience of Jesus Christ and also the very definition of love (Philippians 2.8 and 1 John 3.16).

Charles Ryrie speaks about the cross in his book, *Basic Theology*,

The primary thing that is promised in the gospel message is the promise of forgiveness of sins and eternal life with God. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him *should not perish but have eternal life*" (John 3:16). And in Peter's preaching of the gospel he says, "Repent therefore, and turn again, *that your sins may be blotted out*" (Acts 3:19; cf. 2:38).

Because of man's sinfulness and helplessness, someone else has to step in and aid him if he was to find acceptance and fellowship with a holy God. Sin brought and brings estrangement from God, and depravity means that nothing man can do will merit any favor or consideration from God as far as salvation is concerned.

Everyone born into this world stands condemned because of (a) his relation to Adam's sin (Rom. 5:12) and (b) because of the sin nature with which everyone is born (Eph. 2:3). In addition, (c) all commit sin, which is the inevitable fruit of the sin nature (Rom. 3:9-23). This not only means universal condemnation but also establishes a universal need that all have to be saved from sin's penalty.

Atonement for the sins of all who would believe is what was accomplished on the cross by Jesus Christ. Wayne Grudem writes,

The meaning of substitutionary atonement. Substitutionary or vicarious atonement simply means that Christ suffered as a substitute for us, that is, instead of us, resulting in the advantage to us of paying for our sins.

Man could atone for his sins personally only if he could suffer eternally the penalty that sin incurred. Man, of course, could never do this, so in His love and compassion, God stepped into a hopeless situation and provided Vicar in Jesus Christ who did provide an eternal satisfaction for sin.

We may define the atonement as follows: *The atonement is the work Christ did in his life and death to earn our salvation.* This definition indicates that we are using the word *atonement* in a broader sense than it is sometimes used. Sometimes it is used to refer only to Jesus' dying and paying for our sins on the cross. But, as will be seen below, since saving benefits also come to us from Christ's life, we have included that in our definition as well.

What was the ultimate cause that led to Christ's coming to earth and dying for our sins? To find this we must trace the question back to something in the character of God himself. And here Scripture points to two things: the *love* and *justice* of God.

The love of God as a cause of the atonement is seen in the most familiar passage in the Bible: "For God *so loved the world* that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). But the justice of God also required that God find a way that the penalty due to us for our sins would be paid (for he could not accept us into fellowship with himself unless the penalty was paid). Paul explains that this was why God sent Christ to be a "propitiation" (Rom. 3:25 NASB) (that is, a sacrifice that bears God's wrath so that God becomes "propitious" or favorably disposed toward us): it was "*to show God's righteousness*, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins" (Rom 3:25).

These truths of salvation are useful in communicating the Gospel to those who are not already Christians.

They may also be helpful for believers who are struggling with sin. The reminder of what Christ did on the cross and the necessity of such a price for sin puts the present sins of the counselee into perspective.

The Scriptures use the cross of Jesus Christ to teach many truths which are essential for the growth of counselees in sanctification. How do you handle unfair treatment by those in authority? The answer is found at the cross (1 Peter 2.18-25). What is love and what must you do to love others? The cross holds the answer (1 John 3.16-18). How can you overcome temptation? How can you endure hardship and not grow weary or lose heart? Fix your eyes on Jesus Christ and what He accomplished on the cross (Hebrews 12.1-3).

3. Election

Romans 8.28-30

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good for those who love Him, for those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren; and whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

Henry Theissen, in Lectures in Systematic Theology, explains election:

Election is a sovereign act of God; he is under no obligation to elect anyone, since all have lost their standing before God. Even after Christ died, God was not obligated to apply that salvation, except as he owed it to Christ to keep the agreement with him as to man's salvation. Thus, election is a sovereign act because it is not due to any constraint laid upon God. It is an act of grace, in that he chose those who were utterly unworthy of salvation. Man deserved the exact opposite, but in his grace God chose to save some. He chose them "in Christ" (Eph. 1:4). He could not choose them in themselves because they deserved judgment, so he chose them in the merits of another. Furthermore, he chose those whom he foreknew.

4. Repentance

Ezekiel 18:32

"For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies," declares the Lord GOD. "Therefore, repent and live."

Luke 15:10

"In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

Luke 19:5-9

"When Jesus came to the place, He looked up and said to him, "'Zaccheus, hurry and come down, for today I must stay at your house.'" And he hurried and came down and received Him gladly. When they saw it, they all began to grumble, saying, "He has gone to be the guest of a man who is a sinner." Zaccheus stopped and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, half of my possessions I will give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will give back four times as much." And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he, too, is a son of Abraham."

Acts 2:38

Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Acts 11:18

When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, "Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life."

2 Corinthians 7:9-10

I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to the point of repentance; for you were made sorrowful according to the will of God, so that you might not suffer loss in anything through us. For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death.

2 Peter 3:9

The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.

Revelation 9:20-21

And the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk; and they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts.

Repentance connected to salvation is the one-time event of a person turning from a life direction of sin to a life direction of obeying God. Perhaps this ultimate expression of faith is most clearly seen in Zaccheus. In Luke 19 this tax-gatherer, known to be unfair, welcomed the opportunity to host a dinner with Jesus as his guest with a statement of repentance: "Half of my possessions I will give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone anything, I will give back four times as much." This serious commitment marked an extreme change for a man who had gained riches by defrauding citizens. Jesus, knowing the hearts of men, knew this change in purpose was evidence of his saving faith. He replied, "Today, salvation has come to this house."

Wayne Grudem offers this definition of repentance in regard to salvation,

We may define repentance as follows: *Repentance is a heartfelt sorrow for sin, a renouncing of it, and a sincere commitment to forsake it and walk in obedience to Christ.*

This definition indicates that repentance is something that can occur at a specific point in time, and is not equivalent to a demonstration of change in a person's pattern of life. Repentance, like faith, is an intellectual *understanding* (that sin is wrong), an emotional *approval* of the teachings of Scripture regarding sin (a sorrow for sin and a hatred of it), and a *personal decision* to turn from it (a renouncing of sin and a decision of the will to forsake it and lead a life of obedience to Christ instead). We cannot say that someone has to actually *live* that changed life over a period of time before repentance can be genuine, or else repentance would be turned into a kind of obedience that we could *do* to merit salvation for ourselves. Of course, genuine repentance will result in a changed life. In fact, a truly repentant person will begin at once to live a changed life, and we can call that changed life the fruit of repentance.

Repentance is not a source of salvation apart from the Gospel but rather is part of the response of faith in one receiving the Gospel. No one is saved by works, including the work of repentance. True believers are saved by grace through faith. Yet true saving faith is described as having died to sin and now being alive to God (Romans 6:4-14). Further, believers present themselves as instruments of righteousness; they are no longer slaves to sin (Romans 6:4-14). Unfortunately some in our era preach the Gospel as receiving forgiveness but not turning from sin; such teaching ignores the Romans 6 truth of Jesus and His followers dying to sin and living to God. Clearly, repentance is part of the saving faith that results in forgiveness of sins. **72**

Repentance is essential in salvation. This is clear from other New Testament truths as well. Jesus, in John 15:8-11, taught that keeping His commandments results in abiding in His love. This is a statement of the general direction of the life of believers after repentance and the exhibiting of saving faith in the Gospel. If one could be saved by faith without repenting these statements of Jesus could not be correct. The Lordship of Christ, as taught in Galatians 1:10 and 2:20 for example, implies repentance is part of saving faith. Also, the book of 1 John has this truth as its theme.

In Scripture the connection of repentance to salvation is a recurring theme. The Old Testament selections on the previous pages demonstrate it. It was the theme of the preaching of John the Baptist (Mark 1:4, Luke 3:8). Jesus made it clear that repentance is an essential part of salvation (Luke 5:32, 15:10). After Jesus' death and resurrection, the Gospel again included repentance (Acts 2:38, 26:20, 2 Peter 3:9).

Repentance is a vital component in salvation.

Do you include the topics of sin and repentance when you preach the Gospel? To do so is an important application of studying repentance. To omit sin and repentance from the Gospel is to give only a partial description of the truths of salvation.

If you understand the biblical teachings on repentance you also have a more accurate perspective of one's response to the Gospel. When a person bears fruit in keeping with repentance, there is assurance of salvation (John 15:8-11, 2 Peter 1:8-11, 1 John 5:15). You can encourage true brothers and sisters whose lives have changed with these passages. The Word of God is silent regarding one who proclaims faith in Christ but as far as can be seen does not exhibit a life marked by repentance. Is he a weak Christian or a tare among wheat? God knows the heart; we do not.

5. Regeneration

Henry Theissen defines regeneration:

Regeneration may be defined as the communication of divine life to the soul (John 3:5; 10:10, 28; 1 John 5:11f.), as the impartation of a new nature (2 Pet. 1:4) or heart (Jer. 24:7; Ezek. 11:19; 36:26), and the production of a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 2:10; 4:24). This new spiritual life affects the believer's intellect (1 Cor. 2:14; Eph. 1:18; Col. 3:10), will (Phil. 2:13; 2 Thess. 3:5; Heb. 13:21), and emotions (Matt. 5:4; 1 Pet. 1:8).

Scripture repeatedly declares that a man must be regenerated before he can see God.

Holiness is the indispensable condition to acceptance into fellowship with God. But all humanity is by nature depraved, and when it arrives at moral consciousness, becomes guilty of actual transgression. In its condition by nature, therefore, mankind cannot have fellowship with God. Now this moral change in man can be brought about only by an act of the Spirit of God. He regenerates the heart and communicates to it the life and nature of God. The Scriptures represent this experience as a new birth, whereby a man becomes a child of God.

6. Justification

Romans 3:23-26

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. *This was* to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; for the demonstration, *I say*, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Romans 5:1-2

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

Justification is a legal term that is equivalent to declaring one “not guilty” in a courtroom. The Bible teaches that all who are forgiven for sin through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ are justified. The Greek word that is rendered “justified” 31 times in the New Testament (dikaioo) is also translated, “acquitted,” “freed” and “vindicated,” elsewhere. Justification occurs at the point in time when regeneration occurs. Salvation consists of justification (the imputation of the righteousness of Christ to those who come to saving faith), sanctification (the process of growing in righteousness during the remainder of life on earth) and glorification (the end point of time, when believers are given new bodies and arrive in heaven for eternal life without the possibility of sin). The doctrine of justification is a major theme in Romans.

In the New Testament, justification is the declarative act of God by which, on the basis of the sufficiency of Christ’s atoning death, he pronounces believers to have fulfilled all of the requirements of the law which pertain to them. Justification is a forensic act imputing the righteousness of Christ to the believer; it is not an actual infusing of holiness into the individual. It is a matter of declaring the person righteous, as a judge does in acquitting the accused. (Erickson)

Sinful men cannot be justified by their own good works. No one is justified by the Law of God since that only reveals sin in each one (Romans 3.10-23). The declaration of righteousness is only possible through faith in the propitiatory sacrifice of Jesus Christ, whose payment of the full price for sins is effective for all who believe in Him (Romans 3.24-26, 5.1-2; 8.1-11, 8.28-30). The doctrine of justification necessitates the security of the salvation of all who are saved. The proclamation of absolution carries with it forgiveness, pardon and dismissal of charges. This free gift is given to those who believe. The judgment is not based on the works of man or his own merit. God is the one who causes it. He, as the final authority in the eternal court, declares people to be justified solely on the basis of the holiness of Jesus Christ and upon the payment of the price for sins by the Savior. Since these things are so, justification can never be revoked.

7. Adoption

Ephesians 1:5

He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will.

Galatians 4:4-6

But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”

The adoption of believers as God's children is explained in Ephesians 1.1-14 (especially 5), Galatians 4.1-7 and Romans 8.15-17.

Millard Erickson describes the doctrine of adoption in relation to justification:

The effect of justification is primarily negative: the cancellation of the judgment against us. Unfortunately, it is possible to be pardoned without simultaneously acquiring positive standing. Such is not the case with justification, however: For not only are we released from liability to punishment, but we are restored to a position of favor with God. This transfer from a status of alienation and hostility to one of acceptance and favor is termed adoption.⁹

Wayne Grudem comments on other aspects of adoption in his "Systematic Theology," Ephesians 1.5 connects this adoption with predestination, His decision before the foundation of the world. Verses 11-14 of the same chapter connect predestination with the final destination of believers, the consummation of salvation. Romans 8.15-17 also joins the ideas of the act of God adopting the saved as His children with the certainty of glorification with Him in heaven. The biblical teaching regarding adoption is another way that God communicates the security of salvation.

It should be noted that the word, "adoption," also appears in Romans 9.4 in relation to Israel. The use of the same term in association with Israel (not all of whom will be in heaven) does not diminish the impact of the implication that the adoption of believers is irrevocable. As is clear from the balance of Romans 9-11, all the souls of Israel who were chosen for salvation before they were born will be in heaven (9.11-20 and 27), the redemption of many Gentiles was part of God's plan (9.24-26, 10.19-21, 11.11-25 and 11.33-36) and the day will come when all those from the nation of Israel who are alive on earth will believe (11.26-32). So, all who are predestined for adoption do come to saving faith and the adoption is permanent and eternal.

8. Union With Christ

Every redeemed soul has a union with Christ. The term "Union with Christ" encompasses all of salvation, from God's election of the saints in eternity past, to the redemption at the point of faith in the Gospel, to the certain destiny of believers in God's presence forever. Wayne Grudem explains our union with Christ in four theological terms, "Union with Christ is a phrase used to summarize several different relationships between believers and Christ, through which Christians receive every benefit of salvation. Their relationships include the fact that we are in Christ, Christ is in us, we are like Christ, and we are with Christ."¹

The Scriptures teach that all believers are "in Christ:" John 15.5-8, Romans 8.1 and 1 John 2.6.

Also, He dwells "in us," according to John 15.4-5, Romans 8.10, Galatians 2.20 and Colossians 1.27.

We told to be like Christ (1 Corinthians 11.1). True believers, in some sense, do walk as He walked (1 John 2.6). Christians are also like Him in that we suffer with Him and will be glorified with Him (Romans 8.17). We are to grow to become increasingly more like Christ (Ephesians 4.13, 15, 2 Corinthians 3.18, Romans 8.29).

We are with Christ because He is with us to the end of the age (Matthew 28.20). He comforts us (2 Thessalonians 2.16-17) and teaches us (Matthew 11.29). We live in His presence (1 Timothy 5.21 and 6.13-14, 2 Timothy 4.1).

Union with Christ can be viewed in terms of the biblical definition of our relationship with Jesus Christ at each of the three stages of salvation. The union with Christ begins at justification (2 Corinthians 5.17-18, Ephesians 1.9-12), continues throughout the sanctification phase of salvation during our days as believers while on earth (Ephesians 2.10) and goes on after our bodies die (1 Corinthians 15.22, 1 Thessalonians 4.16).

At the moment a person is saved, they are baptized into Jesus' death (Romans 6.3-4). This union with Christ includes being united with Him in His dying to sin, to the point that "our old self

was crucified with Him that our body of sin might be done away with,” Romans 6.6. This union results in freedom from sin and the end of sin’s reign in our bodies (Romans 6.7, 12). Our union with Christ frees us from the power of sin and the penalty for sin.

Next, the union with Christ immediately moves into its ramifications for the days of our sanctification. Now saved, we live on in these bodies as Christians on earth, but now in Christ and with Christ in us. We can rightly regard ourselves as having been united with Christ as He died to sin and now, as Jesus does, we live to God (Romans 6.10-11). We have been freed from sin. We are slaves of righteousness, resulting in the ability to have victories over sin as long as we are on earth (Romans 6.18-19, 22).

Ultimately, our union with Christ will become complete. When we are home in heaven we will be in resurrected bodies, free from the presence of sin. Our union with Christ will consist of living with Him in person, forever (Revelation 21.5-7).

The doctrine of our union with Christ is another biblical proof of the security of our salvation.

9. Progress in Sanctification

The Scriptures teach progressive sanctification for believers.

Romans 12:1-2

Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is* your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Ephesians 4:22-24

That, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in *the likeness of* God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

1 Peter 2:2-3

like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord.

Philippians 1:6

For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.

Colossians 3:9-10

Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the self with its *evil* practices, and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him—

Sanctification is being transformed by the renewing of our minds. Romans 12.2 uses the Greek word, "metamorphoo," to describe this change. This change of growing in holiness is so bold that it is similar to the water-dwelling to air-breathing change of tadpole to frog.

Sanctification is replacing sin with righteousness. It is an ongoing process. As long as we live on earth, there will always be the next sin to overcome. But we face each such challenge with the assurance that victory can be won (1 John 5.3-5).

Millard Erickson defines sanctification this way,

Sanctification is the continuing work of God in the life of the believer, making him or her actually holy. By "holy" here is meant "bearing an actual likeness to God." Sanctification is a process by which one's moral condition is brought into conformity with one's legal status before God. It is a continuation of what was begun in regeneration, when a newness of life was conferred upon and instilled within the believer: In particular; sanctification is the Holy Spirit's applying to the life of the believer the work done by Jesus Christ.⁶

Both God and the Christian have roles in the process of a believer growing in sanctification. Notice how both are apparent in these Scriptures.

Philippians 2.12-13

Romans 8.13

Galatians 2.20

1 Peter 4.10-11

Galatians 5.16-17

Ultimately, sanctification occurs because God causes it (1 Thessalonians 5.23). We are only even seeking sanctification because God first redeemed us (Titus 3.14).

In day to day progress in sanctification, God the Father is at work in us to cause growth in holiness. The indwelling Spirit is also working, opposing the desire of the flesh to sin. Christ in us is also expending energy to overcome sin.

Our part is to work out our salvation. We make decisions of the will to put the deeds of the body to death. We live for Christ, not ourselves. We expend energy to use the spiritual gifts God has given us. We are involved in the war of flesh versus Spirit inside of us. The battle includes the will, the motives, faith, energy and sacrifice.

When each victory over sin is won, the glory is God's (Luke 17.5-10).

One who is making progress in being conformed to the image of Christ (Romans 8.29) has assurance of his or her salvation (John 15.9). Millard Erickson comments:

The aim of this divine working is likeness to Christ himself. This was God's intention from all eternity: "For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the first-born among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29). The word translated "to be conformed to" (summorphous) indicates a likeness to Christ which is not just an external or superficial resemblance. it signifies the whole set of characteristics or qualities which makes something what it is.⁵

We, as Christians were justified at the point in time we believed in the Gospel. The blood of Christ redeemed us. We died to sin and to ourselves; we were crucified with Him. We were declared righteous because Jesus Christ was sinless. No longer slaves to sin, our master became the Holy God.

At a point in the future we will be free from sin altogether. We will live in new bodies that do not carry the residue and corruption of sin. Time will end and we will be in God's presence.

Today we are in between justification and glorification. But life is not stationary. Sanctification is moving progressively away from the sinful life we once lived and toward the holy life that awaits us in heaven. Our mission today is to become more like Christ, to grow in holiness, to replace one more sin with righteousness. This is our occupation for the time between the two points of justification and glorification.

Erickson states that, "The Principle of salvation by grace brings us to the question of the relationship of faith to works. It is apparent that works do not produce salvation. Yet the biblical witness also indicates that while it's faith that leads to justification, justification must and will invariably produce works appropriate to the nature of the new creature that has come into being. James puts it forcefully "So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead" (James 2:17)." ⁷

Every move away from sin and toward God brings further assurance that we are the Lord's.

Wayne Grudem, in his "Systematic Theology," concluded, "The Genuineness of the faith that leads to justification becomes apparent in the results will issue from it. If there are no good works, there has been no real faith nor justification."

10. Perseverance of the Saints

"Perseverance of the Saints" is the fifth point of Calvinism. It states that believers "can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved." Scripture certainly supports this belief.

Wayne Grudem comments,

The Perseverance of the saints means that all those who are truly born again will be kept by God's power and will persevere as Christians until the end of their lives, and that only those who persevere until the end have been truly born again.
4

John 14:21

"He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him."

John 15:8-11

"My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and *that* your joy may be made full."

1 John 2:4-6

The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.

1 John 5:3-5

For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

Revelation 2:10-11

Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death.

Revelation 3:21

He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

Grudem further says,

Since God has elected certain individuals out of the mass of fallen humanity to receive eternal life, and those so chosen will necessarily come to receive eternal life, it follows that there must be a permanence to their salvation. If the elect could at some point lose their salvation, God's election of them to eternal life would not be truly effectual. Thus, the doctrine of election as understood by the Calvinist requires perseverance as well. As Lorraine Boettner puts it: This doctrine [Perseverance] does not stand alone but is a necessary part of the Calvinistic system of theology. The doctrines of Election and Efficacious Grace logically imply the certain salvation of those who receive these blessings, if God has chosen men absolutely and unconditionally to eternal life, and if His Spirit effectively applies to them the benefits of redemption, the inescapable conclusion is that these persons shall be saved.¹¹

Some non-Reformed theologians who agree with the truth of this doctrine disagree with its emphasis. Yes, the Word teaches that Christians bear fruit, produce works that are in accord with their faith, love God by obeying Him as a life pattern and pass the test of 1 John for assurance of salvation. However, they contend, the focus should be on God. It is He whose activity guarantees the security of salvation. It is only because of the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit that perseverance is possible. Yet, Reformed theologians do present the perseverance of the saints in the context of the doctrines of election and irresistible grace, not an idea that stands alone.

Grudem concludes,

The Doctrine of the perseverance of the saints will be a tremendously comforting doctrine. No one who has such assurance will ever wonder, "Will I be able to persevere to the end of my life and therefore be saved?" Everyone who gains assurance through such a self-examination should rather think, "I am truly born again; therefore, I will certainly persevere to the end, because I am being guarded 'by God's power' working through my faith (1 Peter 1:5) and therefore I will never be lost. Jesus will raise me up at the last day and I will enter into his kingdom forever" (John 6:40)³

As Christians, we focus on the promises of God in regard to the battle with temptation: Psalm 119:9-11: Through the Word we can refuse sin; John 16:33: We have hope because Jesus overcame the world; Romans 6:11-14:

We are dead to sin and alive to God, sin shall not be master over us; Romans 12:1-2: We can be transformed to prove the will of God; 1 Corinthians 10:13: We will not be tempted beyond what we are able; Hebrews 4:14-16: We can receive sufficient grace to help in our battle against temptation. Our confidence regarding the certain perseverance of the truly saved only exists because of the faithful promises of God, as revealed in the Scriptures. As we fight against temptation, we think primarily about the Master and His Word, not about ourselves as those who will persevere.

Another related truth of the Word of God is that Christians continue in the faith. It is illustrated in Matthew 10:22, John 15:4-6, Colossians 1:22-23 and Hebrews 3:13.

11. Glorification

The final stage of salvation is glorification.

Wayne Grudem writes,

When Christ redeemed us he did not just redeem our spirits (or souls) – he redeemed us as whole persons, and this includes the redemption of our bodies. Therefore the application of Christ’s work of redemption to us will not be complete until our bodies are entirely set free from the effects of the fall and brought to that state of perfection for which God created them. In fact, the redemption of our bodies will only occur when Christ returns and raises our bodies from the dead. But at this present time, Paul says that we wait for “*the redemption of our bodies,*” and then adds, “for in this hope we were saved” (Rom. 8:23-24). The stage in the application of redemption when we receive resurrection bodies is called *glorification*.

Theology of Counseling
Week 6
Class Teaching: Soteriology

1. The Gospel and Counseling

Review the quote on page 69

A significant problem in our day: A distorted Gospel

The counselor's use of Romans 6.4-14 and Romans 8.6-13

One teen-aged counselee

2. The Cross and Salvation

Preach Jesus Christ

Isaiah 53.4-10

The price of sin

The sinfulness of sin

John 3.16, 1 John 4.10

The love of God

2 Corinthians 5.14-15

His love controls us; we live for Him

Theology of Counseling
Week 6:
Open Q & A

Sanctification

Week 7

Theology of Counseling

What Is Sanctification?

Sanctification is changing toward holiness. It is a course of events that produces a purer level of living. It is a series of actions to achieve a God-honoring The word “sanctification” describes what this series of studies is all about change in a Godward direction.

Look at this: 1 Thessalonians 4.3 “For this is the will of God, your sanctification.”

That is a strong statement! The idea conveyed in the original language is that this is God’s desire for us as His children. Sanctification is His purpose for what would occur in our lives. It is His will that we be involved in this change that is sanctification.

The concept is amplified in other texts. Romans 12.2, the verse that describes transformation toward holiness as “metamorphosis,” gives us a goal at which to aim: “prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.” Sounds like sanctification, doesn’t it? And again, that idea is connected with the powerful phrase, the “will of God.”

1 John 2.17 contrasts sanctification with the lusts of the world under the heading of the “will of God.” It reads: “And the world is passing away, and also its lusts, but the one who does the will of God abides forever.” Sanctification is evidence of fruit in the believer’s life. To do God’s will as a pattern of life, to do well in changing toward holiness, is what we are to be about as Christians. Since this the desire of our Father in heaven, it is my desire, too. I *must* pursue sanctification.

The root of the Greek word translated “sanctification” (hagiasmos) is the word translated “Holy” (hagios). This term that signifies the sacred is defined by New Testament usages. The third person of the trinity is identified as the *Holy Spirit* (John 14.26). Jesus prayed to His “Holy Father,” John 17.11. 1 Peter includes this quote of the Lord: “I am Holy.” In heaven God accepts worship in this form: “Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come.” Thus, the idea of sanctification is, indeed, changing toward holiness.

“Sanctify” and “sanctification” are sometimes used in different and specific ways. 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7, “sanctification” refers to the completion of the process overcoming a particular sin (sexual immorality). In Hebrews 10:10 and 14, “sanctified” communicates the passing into the Christian life through faith in Christ. There, it means entering the process of changing toward holiness. All the forms of “sanctification” identify, in general or in specific terms, part of the ongoing transformation toward Christlikeness which is the occupation of all believers while on earth.

Justification--Sanctification--Glorification

There is a trio of theological terms that identifies the stages of salvation. Justification, sanctification and glorification are the three segments that, combined, comprise salvation.

Justification occurs the day a person becomes a Christian. When by faith a soul embraces the gospel, a lifetime of sin is forgiven and the one separated from Holy God begins a new life (Romans 5.1-2: “Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace through God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.”). Reconciliation to God takes place (Romans 5.10-11: “For if while we were

enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.”). We are justified and forgiven (Romans 8.1: “There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”). Justification is not earned (Galatians 2.16: “a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus”). Justification is permanent (Titus 3.7 “that being justified by His grace we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life”). Justification is an event. It is the beginning of all that is encompassed in the term “salvation” in the Bible.

Sanctification refers to all the time in between the precise points of justification and glorification. It is the putting off of sin and putting on of righteousness (Ephesians 4.22-24: “that, in reference to your former life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.”) It is the transition from being slaves of unrighteousness to being slaves of God the purpose of righteousness (Romans 6.10-13: “For the death that He died, He died to sin, once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Even so, consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey its lusts.”).

Sanctification is our occupation during our time on earth. It is what Christians are given to do from the day of salvation began until the day we see Christ face to face.

Glorification will come to pass when the believer is in the presence of the Lord in heaven (Revelation 21.1-7: “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, I heard a voice from the throne, saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people...and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death; there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain;’ and He said to me, ‘It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. He who overcomes shall inherit these things, and I will be His God and he will be My son’.”). Sin will no longer be a temptation or an option (1 John 3.1-3: “See how great a love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope purifies himself, just as He is pure.”).

Glorification is the end of time, the point when believers in new bodies are in the presence of God forever. It is the final event of the salvation process. Each stage signifies a specific point or an era in time. Each also relates to the believer’s place in regard to sin.

Contemplating sanctification as one of the three stages of salvation puts our lives today in perspective. We gained our introduction by faith into this life with God. For the first time we were forgiven, clean and not guilty. We were justified. One day we will reach our destiny, holiness in heaven. There will be neither sin nor the option of sin at that time. We will be glorified. Consequently, it only makes sense that in between we are to be moving toward holiness, progressing in relation to salvation and changing: being sanctified.

Sanctification Is a Process, Not An Event

Sanctification is a journey, not a place. It is an ongoing labor, a work in progress. It is not a finished one-time act. For us as Christians it is our vocation, our purpose, and our calling. To be pursuing sanctification is to submit our will to the Lord’s.

In John 17.17 Jesus prays for future believers, those who would receive the Gospel through the words of the apostles. He asks the Father to sanctify us in truth; He states that His Word is truth. This identifies sanctification as a process since the work God accomplishes in believers through the Word involves progress in relation to salvation (1 Peter 2.1-3). Jesus is asking the Father to act to change us toward holiness through His Word.

Ephesians 5.26 also shows sanctification to be an ongoing process. There it is said that part of the Christian husband's responsibility is to be used by God to help his wife grow spiritually. He is to "sanctify her". No human being is sinless (except Jesus). Part of the husband's service to his wife is active involvement in her becoming more like Christ. This defines sanctification as a lifelong function.

Philippians 1.6 assures us of God's ongoing work in modifying who we are. He began this good work in us; He will continue bringing us toward perfection until the day we see Christ (glorification). There is great refreshment in this assurance that the Lord Himself will be actively involved in this work of sanctification in us.

Paul exemplifies this explanation of sanctification as a process in Philippians 3.14. He is not perfect now. But he presses on toward that goal. The effort includes forgetting what lies behind (bondage to sin before salvation) and reaching forward to what lies ahead (perfection in heaven). He understands this day in his life in relation to the three stages of salvation. He also sees sanctification as an ongoing progression, one in which he is diligent to participate.

Three Important Greek Word Studies

Each study lists a vital Greek word, its definition, its usages in the New Testament (with the number of times each is found in the NT), and then the actual New Testament references. Such studies help us better understand how God used these terms as He inspired the original texts of the Bible.

37. hagiazo

to make holy, consecrate, sanctify

hallowed (2), keep holy (1), sanctify (25)

sanctified

- Matthew 23:17 "You fools and blind men! Which is more important, the gold or the temple that *sanctified* the gold
- Matthew 23:19 "You blind men, which is more important, the offering, or the altar that *sanctifies* the offering?
- John 10:36 do you say of Him, whom the Father *sanctified* and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, I am the Son of God'?
- John 17:17 *Sanctify* them in the truth; Your word is truth.
- John 17:19 "For their sakes I *sanctify* Myself, that they themselves also may be *sanctified* in truth.
- Acts 20:32 "And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are *sanctified*.
- Acts 26:18 to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been *sanctified* by faith in Me.'
- Romans 15:16 to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, ministering as a priest the gospel of God, so that my offering of the Gentiles may become acceptable, *sanctified* by the Holy Spirit.
- 1 Corinthians 1:2 To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been *sanctified* in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours:
- 1 Corinthians 6:11 Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were *sanctified*, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.
- 1 Corinthians 7:14 For the unbelieving husband is *sanctified* through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified through her believing husband; for otherwise your children are unclean, but now they are holy.
- Ephesians 5:26 so that He might *sanctify* her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,
- 1 Thessalonians 5:23 Now may the God of peace Himself *sanctify* you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 1 Timothy 4:5 for it is *sanctified* by means of the word of God and prayer.
- 2 Timothy 2:21 Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, *sanctified*, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work.
- Hebrews 2:11 For both He who *sanctifies* and those who are *sanctified* are all from one Father; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren,
- Hebrews 9:13 For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled *sanctify* for the cleansing of the flesh,
- Hebrews 10:10 By this will we have been *sanctified* through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.
- Hebrews 10:14 For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are *sanctified*.

- Hebrews 10:29 How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was *sanctified*, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?
- Hebrews 13:12 Therefore Jesus also, that He might *sanctify* the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate.
- 1 Peter 3:15 but *sanctify* Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;

38.

hagiasmos

pure, holy, sanctify; from 40: hagios (holy)

- Romans 6:19 I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in *sanctification*.
- Romans 6:22 But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in *sanctification*, and the outcome, eternal life.
- 1 Corinthians 1:30 But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and *sanctification*, and redemption,
- 1 Thessalonians 4:3 For this is the will of God, your *sanctification*; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality;
- 1 Thessalonians 4:4 that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in *sanctification* and honor,
- 1 Thessalonians 4:7 For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in *sanctification*.
- 2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through *sanctification* by the Spirit and faith in the truth.
- 1 Timothy 2:15 But women will be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and *sanctity* with self-restraint.
- Hebrews 12:14 Pursue peace with all men, and the *sanctification* without which no one will see the Lord.
- 1 Peter 1:2 according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the *sanctifying* work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: may grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure.

3339.

metamorphoo

3326 Meta: after + 3445 Morpho: to form

Transfigured (2), Transformed (2)

metamorphosis: caterpillar to butterfly, tadpole to frog

- Matthew 17:2 And He was *transfigured* before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light.
- Mark 9:2 Six days later, Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John, and brought them up on a high mountain by themselves. And He was *transfigured* before them;
- Romans 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be *transformed* by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.
- 2 Corinthians 3:18 But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being *transformed* into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord...
-

Theology of Counseling
Week 7:
Class Teaching: Sanctification

Introduction: The most overlooked aspect of theology in recent decades

The theology of sanctification teaches counselees the right purposes in life

1 Peter 1.6-9

The doctrine of sanctification gives counselees hope that sin can be overcome

Romans 6.10-11

Romans 6.12, 14

Sanctification taught accurately gives Christians a practical understanding of how to put off sin and put on righteousness

Ephesians 4.31-32

Hebrews 12.1-3

The biblical truth about our "Union with Christ" in relation to salvation brings a perspective that focuses on Jesus Christ and helps us place our hope in His victories over sin, temptations to depression, and temptations to give up

John 16.33

Our union with Christ has three phases:

At justification

During sanctification

At glorification

The doctrine of "Union with Christ" also shows believers:

You are not alone

There is hope for those approaching death

Theology of Counseling
Week 7:
Class Discussion

Two crucial passages:

ROMANS 12.1-2

Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is* your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

- How do these truths relate to biblical counseling?
- What ideas and purposes must one have in their heart if they are to be successful in becoming doers of the passage?
- To do the things described in Romans 12.1-2, how must one view sin? God?

I THESSALONIANS 4.1-8

Finally then, brethren, we request and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us *instruction* as to how you ought to walk and please God (just as you actually do walk), that you excel still more. ²For you know what commandments we gave you by *the authority* of the Lord Jesus. ³For this is the will of God, your sanctification; *that is*, that you abstain from sexual immorality; ⁴that each of you know how to possess his own [□]vessel in sanctification and honor, ⁵not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; ⁶*and* that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because the Lord is *the* avenger in all these things, just as we also told you before and solemnly warned *you*. ⁷For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification. ⁸So, he who rejects *this* is not rejecting man but the God who gives His Holy Spirit to you.

- What are the positive consequences of sanctification in this specific passage?
- What are the negative consequences of neglecting sanctification in this example?
- How is the idea of 'sanctification' presented here?
- To whom is Paul writing? What do we know about the recipients?

To Consider:

Q:

Sanctification is said to be past, present and future. Discuss, including the idea of "union with Christ."

(NANC Theological Exam, Soteriology, q2)

A:

*"Sanctification" is *hagiasmos*, a word with the root of "holiness"

*We were set apart to be God's through Christ before creation (Ephesians 1)(past)

*We stand by grace in our union with Christ as God's children (Romans 5)(past)

*The day we came to Christ we became holy via forgiveness (Romans 6.22, 1 Corinthians 1.30)(past)

*We are working to put off sin and put on righteousness, to become more holy in our day to day living (Ephesians 4.22-24)(present)

*We put the Word into practice to become more like Christ (James 1.22-25)(present)

*This, "progressive sanctification" is our occupation until the return of Christ (1 Peter 1.2, 1 Thessalonians 4.7, Philippians 3.12-14)(present)

*The Word is our means to undergo such change (John 17.17, 1 Peter 2.1-3)(present)

*Our union with Christ is complete at the resurrection (1 Corinthians 15)(future)

*Future sanctification is the completion of our change, when holiness is complete in heaven (Revelation 21-22)(future)

*see "A Theology of Christian Counseling," chapters 14-18 (Jay Adams)

Bibliology

Week 8

Theology of Counseling

WEEK 8: BIBLIOLOGY: THE THEOLOGY OF THE WORD OF GOD

The inspiration and origin of the Scriptures

2 TIMOTHY 3.16

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;

“Inspired by God” Greek: (Theopneustos):
2316 (Theos) God + 4154 (Pneo) blow
literally, “God breathed out” or “God exhaled”.

2 PETER 1.20-21

But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Spirit spoke from God.

The bases of bibliology are these statements of inspiration (the words and ideas of Scripture emanated from within the very being of God) and origin (the Word of God did not come from the will or mind of man, but were initiated by God Himself). Since these things are true, the Word must be the final source of all counsel of God’s children. No other teachings can claim to be from God in the same way. Further, because of their origin, only the Scriptures can be trusted as true and revered as authoritative.

The authority of the Scriptures

The Bible has ultimate authority over all matters it addresses. Wayne Grudem, in his “Systematic Theology,” explains it this way: “The authority of Scripture means that all the words in Scripture are God’s words in such a way that to disbelieve or disobey any word of Scripture is to disbelieve or disobey God.”

The authority of the Bible is communicated in many ways. Foremost are the claims within the Scriptures that they originate from the Almighty God. Also, Jesus and the New Testament writers regarded the Old Testament as the Holy Word of God. Similarly, New Testament writers viewed their own inspired writings, and those of each other, as the Word of God. The accuracy and fulfillment of prophecy verify the authenticity of the Bible. Also, the miracles of God that correlated with seasons of divine activity (Creation, the giving of the Law, prophecies, Elijah / Elijah, the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ and the founding of the church) showed the Bible to have the authority of the Eternal God.

The authority of God’s Word makes it the focal point of all good counsel. The Scriptures are above all other sources of thought because of their authority. Since we can know the words of God on each matter, no other counsel is of value. The philosophies of man are rendered inconsequential. In the biblical counseling room, counselor and counselee submit their wills and thoughts to the authority of the God-breathed Scriptures.

The Bible's unique incision to the depth of the soul

HEBREWS 4.12-13

For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. ¹³And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

Every counselor would like to understand the thoughts and intentions of their counselee's hearts. How much easier it would be to counsel if the desires, fears and reasonings of each inner person could be understood. God did not give people the ability to know the hearts of each other (Romans 14.4), except in the case of the sign gift of prophecy during the apostolic era (1 Corinthians 14.25). In our times, we are instructed that to understand the plans of a heart may be drawn out, but to do so is difficult.

God knows the thoughts and intentions of every heart (Psalm 139.1-4). He is intimately acquainted with the ways of every person. What's more, He weighs the motives of each human being every day (2 Chronicles 16.9).

God has chosen one specific tool to disclose the contents of the motives of men's hearts: the Bible. No other person or thing can reach the depth of a soul with judgment and truth. For this reason, the Scriptures must be the focal point of biblical counseling. If the purpose is change toward godliness, only the Word of God can get to the level of the inner person of the counselee to cause change there.

The sufficiency of the Word: It enables believers to change toward godliness

JOHN 17.17

Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.

1 PETER 2.1-3

Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, ²like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, ³if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord.

PSALM 119.9-11

How can a young man keep his way pure?
By keeping *it* according to Your word.

¹⁰ With all my heart I have sought You;
Do not let me wander from Your commandments.

¹¹ Your word I have treasured in my heart,
That I may not sin against You.

Obeying the Word results in God's blessing

PSALM 1.1-3

How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked,
Nor stand in the path of sinners,
Nor sit in the seat of scoffers!

² But his delight is in the law of the LORD,
And in His law he meditates day and night.

³ He will be like a tree *firmly* planted by streams of water,
Which yields its fruit in its season

And its leaf does not wither;
And in whatever he does, he prospers.

JAMES 1.22-25

But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. ²³For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; ²⁴for *once* he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. ²⁵But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the *law* of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.

Each of these Scriptures demonstrates the capability of the Word of God to enable Christians to change.

The sufficiency of the Bible: It equips us for every situation in life

2 TIMOTHY 3.16-17

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; ¹⁷so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

PROVERBS 16.20

He who gives attention to the word will find good,
And blessed is he who trusts in the LORD.

MATTHEW 7.24-27

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵"And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and *yet* it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. ²⁶"Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. ²⁷"The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell—and great was its fall."

The Bible is complete in its teachings so as to provide adequate counsel for every situation possible in the human experience. The Word can equip believers for God's chosen good works in every situation. Hearing the Word and trusting in it brings the blessing of the Almighty. Those hearing and acting on the teachings of the Scriptures will stand strong during every storm of life that can besiege the soul.

Theology of Counseling
Week 8:
Class Teaching

Five applications of the doctrine of bibliology

Subject your own will to the authority of the Bible.

Teach the Word of God with authority.

Study the Scriptures diligently in your personal studies and in preparing for counseling

Explain advice in counseling as non-authoritative

Confidence in the sufficiency of God's Word is vital in the counseling room

The Five Bibliology Questions from the NANC Theology Exam
(with notes from Wayne Erick Johnston)

1. The Bible is spoken of as “inspired.” What does this mean?

Inspiration:

2 Timothy 3.16-17 “inspired” = “theopneustos,” literally, “God breathed out”...this is the passage where the idea concept originates

Other truths:

2 Peter 1.20-21

1 Corinthians 14.37

Hebrews 4.12

1 Peter 1.22-25

Implications:

Psalm 1.2-3

James 1.25

Psalm 119.9-11

Inspiration applies to original texts only.

God incorporated the personalities and writing styles of human authors but every word and idea was completely inspired by God.

Inspiration guarantees inerrancy and infallibility.

2. What is the relationship between infallibility and authority?

Since the Bible is infallible, therefore it has complete authority

God is infallible (holy, unchanging, eternal)

Isaiah 14.24, Malachi 3.6, Hebrews 13.17, James 1.17

His Word: John 10.34, Matthew 5.18-19, Psalm 119.4 and 105

God cannot lie: Titus 1.2, Numbers 23.19

God has ultimate and complete authority

Genesis 1, Job 36-42, Revelation 20-22

The Word has authority: John 1.1-4, Matthew 24.34-35, John 17.17, 1 Peter 1.23

Implications: the Word must be the source of all preaching and counseling. It is infallible: always true, cannot be wrong. It has complete authority: it contains the final word on all matters of life and practice

3. What is the Bible’s authority on theological controversies?

Theological controversies may be debates over doctrines of the Bible between Christians and those who do not believe in the Gospel. We must stand for the truth of the Word, the authority of the Scriptures, and the integrity of the Gospel in our time.

Theological controversies are also differing views held by Christians who each appeal to the Scriptures as their authority. In such matters, each scholar should respectfully present their reasoning, with the Bible as the final source of truth.

4. Compare and contrast the Bible and its authority to general revelation and its authority.

General revelation (Creation) has authority for final judgment (Romans 1.19-21). It is enough information about God to hold people accountable for their sin.

Special revelation (the Scriptures) includes the Gospel and everything God chooses to reveal about Himself and life. It is eternal, it is true. The Bible is God’s tool to equip His children for every good work, including sanctification. Special revelation, the Word of God, is the final truth and ultimate authority about all matters upon which it comments.

5. Many Christians today speak of continuing revelation. Relate this concept to inspiration and sufficiency of the Scripture. Relate this concept to the issue of miracles, prophecy and tongues.

Continuing revelation contains the following unbiblical ideas:

Misuse of wisdom and interpretation gifts

Inner peace and feelings are seen as God’s way of communicating or confirming truth

Dreams, urges, and perceived signs from God are viewed as God’s direction

Open doors / closed doors seen as God's way of guiding Christians

Many of these wrong ways of seeking truth are addressed biblically in Gary Friessen's, "Decision Making and the Will of God"

In Christian psychology, "truth" from secular society is said to be from God, therefore equal to Scripture

These beliefs shift focus away from the Word as the source of truth and toward one's own goals
Inspiration

2 Timothy 3.16-17

Is it acceptable to add to Scripture? No: Revelation 22.18

Sufficiency

2 Timothy 3.16-17, John 17.17, Hebrews 4.12

The Biblical Foundation of Counseling: Hermeneutics

What is hermeneutics?

- The Evangelical Dictionary of Theology: "The study of the principles of interpretation"
- James Rosscup: "Hermeneutics determines the methods, techniques, rules, or principles that will best serve in determining the proper interpretation of any portion of Scripture."
- Roy Zuck: "It is the science and the art by which the meaning of a biblical text is determined."

What are the purposes of hermeneutics?

To know Scripture thoroughly and accurately

To know theology and understand the application of its principles

To enable accurate teaching of the Word of God

To reach well reasoned conclusions regarding theological questions

To enable the refuting of false teaching

To increase discernment of proper application of the Scriptures to real life matters

Pertinent bibliography

The authority and truth of the Bible:

JOHN 5.39-42

"You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; ⁴⁰and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life. ⁴¹I do not receive glory from men; ⁴²but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves."

The priority and origin of the Word of God:

2 PETER 2.1, 12-19

Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ,

To those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ: ¹²Therefore, I will always be ready to remind you of these things, even though you *already* know *them*, and have been established in the truth which is present with *you*.

¹³I consider it right, as long as I am in this *earthly* dwelling, to stir you up by way of reminder,

¹⁴knowing that the laying aside of my *earthly* dwelling is imminent, as also our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. ¹⁵And I will also be diligent that at any time after my departure you will be able to call these things to mind.

¹⁶For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. ¹⁷For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, “This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased”— ¹⁸and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.

¹⁹So we have the prophetic word *made* more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.

The sufficiency of the Word for defending the faith, for salvation, and for ministry

The sufficiency of the Bible for teaching, for sanctification, and for equipping Christians for every situation in life:

2 Timothy 3:13-17

But evil men and impostors will proceed *from bad* to worse, deceiving and being deceived. ¹⁴You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*, ¹⁵and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; ¹⁷so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

The Scriptures as the only legitimate source for preaching, counseling, and sound doctrine:

2 Timothy 2.1-5

¹I solemnly charge *you* in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: ²preach the word; be ready in season *and* out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. ³For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but *wanting* to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, ⁴and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. ⁵But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

Guard and defend the treasure of the truth of theology and proper doctrine in your generation:

1 TIMOTHY 6.20-21

O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding worldly *and* empty chatter *and* the opposing arguments of what is falsely called “knowledge”— ²¹which some have professed and thus gone astray from the faith.

Grace be with you.

General Principles of Hermeneutics

Context is essential

- Who wrote this, to whom, and why?
- What is the main idea of the paragraph, the chapter?
- What do the adjacent words and sentences say about this word, this phrase, this area of truth?

The Bible is its own best commentary

- What do other passages say about the same topic?
- What do all the teachings of Scripture, when combined, say about this issue?
- Where else is the same (original language) word used?

What do the original language (Hebrew and Greek) words in this verse mean?

- What truths can be learned from tense, word sequence and grammatical factors?

What words are used most frequently in this text?

- What is said about them?
- What is their significance?

Important elements / factors in hermeneutics

- The interpretive process: what is the point of each passage?
- If the literal sense makes good sense seek no other sense
- Consider the writer, audience and literary form
- Making applications
- Evaluate implementation for yourself and for your counselees carefully

Importance of consistent study of God's Word

- For your own life (James 1.25)
- Understand, live and teach (Romans 12.1-2)
- Right view of change, sin and God's power

Tools for study and how to use them

- Chapter study sheet (A Christian Growth and Discipleship Manual, p. 110-112)
- Exhaustive Concordance
- Vine's Concordance
- Theological Dictionary of New Testament -Bromiley
- Commentaries
- Systematic Theologies (use at least two for studies)

Christian Theology, Millard Erickson; Baker, Grand Rapids; 1983

Basic Theology, Charles C.Ryrie; Moody, Chicago; 1986

Systematic Theology, Wayne Grudem; Zondervan, Grand Rapids; 1994

Lectures in Systematic Theology, Thiessen / Doerksen, Eerdmans, 1990

The Moody Handbook of Theology, Paul Enns; Moody, Chicago; 1989

Systematic Theology, Augustus H. Strong; Griffith and Rowland, Philadelphia; 1907

Systematic Theology, Louis Berkhof; Eerdmans, Grand Rapids; 1932 / 1996

- Topical Theological Studies
 - Evaluate how each book uses the Word
 - Is It the basis of truth and the final authority?
 - If not, what is the source of truth?
 - Does the author use the Word only to validate his point?
 - Is the Word used accurately?
- Study Bibles
- Programs for personal computers

Application

Consider a format of study that allows you to add your previous study notes.

Include the use of solid systematic theology books in your research.

Use commentaries only after your own personal study.

All the study must include personal application, meditation and prayer

**Adapted from Dr. Wayne Mack's course: BC503 Biblical Hermeneutics*

THE WORD OF GOD: PSALM 119

- The Attitude of the Righteous Man Toward the Word

Psalm 119:2 How blessed are those who observe His testimonies,
Who seek Him with all their heart.

Psalm 119:4 You have ordained Your precepts,
That we should keep them diligently.

Psalm 119:10 With all my heart I have sought You;
Do not let me wander from Your commandments.

Psalm 119:15 I will meditate on Your precepts
And regard Your ways.

Psalm 119:18 Open my eyes, that I may behold
Wonderful things from Your law.

Psalm 119:25 My soul cleaves to the dust;
Revive me according to Your word.

Psalm 119:33 Teach me, O Lord, the way of Your statutes,
And I shall observe it to the end.

Psalm 119:34 Give me understanding, that I may observe Your law
And keep it with all my heart.

Psalm 119:38 Establish Your word to Your servant,
As that which produces reverence for You.

Psalm 119:47 I shall delight in Your commandments,
Which I love.

Psalm 119:57 The Lord is my portion;
I have promised to keep Your words.

Psalm 119:67 Before I was afflicted I went astray,
But now I keep Your word.

Psalm 119:71 It is good for me that I was afflicted,
That I may learn Your statutes.

Psalm 119:80 May my heart be blameless in Your statutes,
So that I will not be ashamed.

Psalm 119:97 O how I love Your law!
It is my meditation all the day.

Psalm 119:112 I have inclined my heart to perform Your statutes
Forever, even to the end.

Psalm 119:114 You are my hiding place and my shield;
I wait for Your word.

Psalm 119:127 Therefore I love Your commandments
Above gold, yes, above fine gold.

Psalm 119:131 I opened my mouth wide and panted,
For I longed for Your commandments.

Psalm 119:143 Trouble and anguish have come upon me,
Yet Your commandments are my delight.

Psalm 119:147 I rise before dawn and cry for help;
I wait for Your words.

Psalm 119:159 Consider how I love Your precepts;
Revive me, O Lord, according to Your lovingkindness.

Psalm 119:163 I hate and despise falsehood,
But I love Your law.

Psalm 119:166 I hope for Your salvation, O Lord,
And do Your commandments.

Psalm 119:168 I keep Your precepts and Your testimonies,
For all my ways are before You.

Highlight the words that describe the heart of the righteous man toward the Word of God in the verses above.

Are you willing to become such a person?
If so, how will you study the Word?
What will you do in response to the Word every day?

What changes will you make in what you think about your circumstances?
What will be different in your effort level in obeying God and in your reverence for God?

What will you do to become one who consistently lives by God's Word?

- What is True About God's Word

Psalm 119:89 Forever, O Lord,
Your word is settled in heaven.

Psalm 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet
And a light to my path.

Psalm 119:129 Your testimonies are wonderful;
Therefore my soul observes them.

Psalm 119:137 Righteous are You, O Lord,
And upright are Your judgments.

Psalm 119:140 Your word is very pure,
Therefore Your servant loves it.

Psalm 119:142 Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness,
And Your law is truth.

Psalm 119:144 Your testimonies are righteous forever;
Give me understanding that I may live.

Psalm 119:151 You are near, O Lord,
And all Your commandments are truth.

Psalm 119:160 The sum of Your word is truth,
And every one of Your righteous ordinances is everlasting.

Psalm 119:172 Let my tongue sing of Your word,
For all Your commandments are righteousness.

What is true about the Scriptures, according to these 10 verses from Psalm 119?

Since these things are true, what place should the Word of God have in your life?
What will you do to live accordingly?

- Relationships of One Who Obeys God's Word

Psalm 119:61 The cords of the wicked have encircled me,
But I have not forgotten Your law.

Psalm 119:63 I am a companion of all those who fear You,
And of those who keep Your precepts.

Psalm 119:69 The arrogant have forged a lie against me;
With all my heart I will observe Your precepts.

Psalm 119:74 May those who fear You see me and be glad,
Because I wait for Your word.

Psalm 119:78 May the arrogant be ashamed, for they subvert me with a lie;
But I shall meditate on Your precepts.

Psalm 119:79 May those who fear You turn to me,
Even those who know Your testimonies.

Psalm 119:113 I hate those who are double-minded,
But I love Your law.

Psalm 119:155 Salvation is far from the wicked,
For they do not seek Your statutes.

Psalm 119:158 I behold the treacherous and loathe them,
Because they do not keep Your word.

What relationships in your life must be limited or eliminated?
What should change in your thoughts about those who do not love God and your
relationships with them?

How can you become a blessing to others who fear God?
How can you become one who is turned to and rejoiced over, by those who love God?
What will you do?

How will you pursue the companionship of the few who truly fear God and keep His commands?
What benefits might result from friendships with those who fear and obey God?

- The Results of Consistent Time and Effort in the Word

Psalm 119:6 Then I shall not be ashamed
When I look upon all Your commandments.

Psalm 119:9 How can a young man keep his way pure?
By keeping it according to Your word.

Psalm 119:11 Your word I have treasured in my heart,
That I may not sin against You.

Psalm 119:50 This is my comfort in my affliction,
That Your word has revived me.

Psalm 119:56 This has become mine,
That I observe Your precepts.

Psalm 119:93 I will never forget Your precepts,
For by them You have revived me.

Psalm 119:100 I understand more than the aged,
Because I have observed Your precepts.

Psalm 119:102 I have not turned aside from Your ordinances,
For You Yourself have taught me.

Psalm 119:104 From Your precepts I get understanding;
Therefore I hate every false way.

Psalm 119:148 My eyes anticipate the night watches,
That I may meditate on Your word.

Psalm 119:165 Those who love Your law have great peace,
And nothing causes them to stumble.

I have known people whose lives are described in these verses. These tremendous men and women brought glory to God by loving His Word and putting forth daily effort to know it and obey it over a long period of time. The purity, the victory over sin, the comfort, the sustenance, the obedience, the wisdom, the humility, the steadfastness, the heart for God, the peace and the strength recounted in Psalm 119 were visible in their lives. They enjoyed a close bond with God.

Choose to honor your Lord by going this way.
Commit yourself to putting quality time in God's Word as the top priority in your life: the one thing that you will *always* do every day.
Express you heart and your plan to the Lord here.

Hope from God's Word

Week 9

Theology of Counseling

WEEK 9: HOPE FROM GOD'S WORD

After you read and consider each section, record, in detail how these principles apply to your life on the lines provided.

1. *There is a Purpose for This Day*

Ephesians 2:10

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

John 12:27-28a

"Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name."

Psalms 1:1-3

How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked,
Nor stand in the path of sinners,
Nor sit in the seat of scoffers!
But his delight is in the law of the LORD,
And in His law he meditates day and night.
He will be like a tree *firmly* planted by streams of water,
Which yields its fruit in its season And its leaf does not wither;
And in whatever he does, he prospers.

Psalms 139:16

Your eyes have seen my unformed substance;
And in Your book were all written
The days that were ordained *for me*,
When as yet there was not one of them.

2. *Important Facts About Difficult Times (Part 1)*

1 Corinthians 10:13

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

1 Peter 5:6-7 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.

1 Thessalonians 5:18 In everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

3. *Important Facts About Difficult Times (Part 2)*

2 Corinthians 12:9-10 *And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.*

2 Peter 1:2-3 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

John 17:17 Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.

4. *The Living God has Said This*

John 16:33 These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.

Philippians 1:6

For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.

Psalm 62:8

Trust in Him at all times, O people;
Pour out your heart before Him;
God is a refuge for us.

5. Hope From God's Word Views Today in Light of the Day of Seeing God Face to Face

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

2 Timothy 4:6-8

For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

Hebrews 11:24-27

By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward. By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen.

6. *God is Aware of Your Circumstance and has a Good Plan for Their Outcome*

Genesis 50:20 As for you, you meant evil against me, *but* God meant it for good

James 1:2-4 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have *its* perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

Romans 8:28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose.

7. *God Can Provide All You Need to Obey*

2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

Hebrews 4:15-16 For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we *are, yet* without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Philippians 4:6-7 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

8. *The Desire of Hearts That Possess Hope: To Honor the Lord (Part 1)*

- 1 Peter 1:6-9 In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, *being* more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.
- 2 Timothy 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.
- Philippians 1:20-21 ...according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I will not be put to shame in anything, but *that* with all boldness Christ will even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.
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9. *The Desire of Hearts That Possess Hope: To Honor the Lord (Part 2)*

- 1 Peter 4:10-11 As each one has received a *special* gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. Whoever speaks, *is to do so* as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves *is to do so* as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.
- Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
- Hebrews 12:1-3 Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

10. *You Can Change (Part 1)*

- 1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
- Colossians 3:1-4 Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.
When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.
- Ephesians 4:22-24 In reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in *the likeness of God* has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

11. *You Can Change (Part 2)*

- 1 John 5:3-4 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.
- Galatians 5:16-17 You may not do the things you please But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.

James 1:25

But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the *law* of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.

Week 9:
Class Notes from Video:

Theology of Love

Week 10

Theology of Counseling

A Theology of Love and Counseling in the New Testament

The following three studies detail the theology of love in three ways: 1) What is *love*?; 2) God is love; and 3) biblical love for one another.

What is *love*?

In the following five (5) pages:

- Highlight ideas that describe the role of God's love toward His children.
- Using a different color, highlight important truths about how we as believers are to love each other.
- With still another color, highlight truths about love that define how Christians are to love God.

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love

- Luke 6:27 But I say to you who hear, *love* your enemies, do good to those who hate you...
- Luke 6:32 If you *love* those who *love* you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners *love* those who *love* them.
- Luke 6:35 But *love* your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men.
- John 3:16 For God so *loved* the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.
- John 13:34 A new commandment I give to you, that you *love* one another, even as I have loved you, that you also *love* one another.
- John 13:35 By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have *love* for one another.
- John 14:15 If you *love* Me, you will keep My commandments.
- John 14:21 He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will *love* him and will disclose Myself to him.
- John 15:9 Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My *love*.
- John 15:10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My *love*; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His *love*.
- John 15:12 This is My commandment, that you *love* one another, just as I have loved you.
- John 15:13 Greater *love* has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.

- John 15:17 This I command you, that you *love* one another.
- Romans 5:5 ...and hope does not disappoint, because the *love* of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.
- Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates His own *love* toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
- Romans 8:28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who *love* God, to those who are called according to His purpose.
- Romans 8:35 Who will separate us from the *love* of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?
- Romans 8:37 But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who *loved* us.
- Romans 8:39 nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the *love* of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- Romans 12:9 Let *love* be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good.
- Romans 13:8 Owe nothing to anyone except to *love* one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.
- Romans 13:10 *Love* does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore *love* is the fulfillment of the law.
- 1 Corinthians 13:1 If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have *love*, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.
- 1 Corinthians 13:2 If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have *love*, I am nothing.
- 1 Corinthians 13:3 And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have *love*, it profits me nothing.
- 1 Corinthians 13:4 *Love* is patient, *love* is kind and is not jealous; *love* does not brag and is not arrogant...
- 1 Corinthians 13:8 *Love* never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away.
- 1 Corinthians 13:13 But now faith, hope, *love*, abide these three; but the greatest of these is *love*.
- 2 Corinthians 5:14 For the *love* of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died...
- Galatians 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is *love*, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness...
- Ephesians 5:2 ...and walk in *love*, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

- Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, *love* your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her...
- Ephesians 5:28 So husbands ought also to *love* their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself...
- Ephesians 5:33 Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to *love* his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband.
- Philippians 1:9 And this I pray, that your *love* may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment...
- 1 Timothy 4:12 Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, *love*, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.
- 2 Timothy 2:22 Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, *love* and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.
- Philemon 1:5 ...because I hear of your *love* and of the faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints...
- Philemon 1:7 For I have come to have much joy and comfort in your *love*, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother.
- Hebrews 10:24 ...and let us consider how to stimulate one another to *love* and good deeds...
- James 1:12 Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who *love* Him.
- 1 Peter 1:22 Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently *love* one another from the heart...
- 1 Peter 2:17 Honor all people, *love* the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.
- 1 Peter 4:8 Above all, keep fervent in your *love* for one another, because *love* covers a multitude of sins.
- 1 John 2:15 Do not *love* the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the *love* of the Father is not in him.
- 1 John 3:1 See how great a *love* the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.
- 1 John 3:14 We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we *love* the brethren. He who does not *love* abides in death.
- 1 John 3:16 We know *love* by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.
- 1 John 3:17 But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the *love* of God abide in him? **119**

- 1 John 3:18 Little children, let us not *love* with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.
- 1 John 4:7 Beloved, let us *love* one another, for *love* is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.
- 1 John 4:8 The one who does not *love* does not know God, for God is *love*.
- 1 John 4:10 In this is *love*, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.
- 1 John 4:11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to *love* one another.
- 1 John 4:12 No one has seen God at any time; if we *love* one another, God abides in us, and His *love* is perfected in us.
- 1 John 4:16 We have come to know and have believed the *love* which God has for us. God is *love*, and the one who abides in *love* abides in God, and God abides in him.
- 1 John 4:17 By this, *love* is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world.
- 1 John 4:18 There is no fear in *love*; but perfect *love* casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in *love*.
- 1 John 4:19 We *love*, because He first loved us.
- 1 John 5:3 For this is the *love* of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.
- Revelation 2:4 But I have this against you, that you have left your first *love*.

27.

agapetos
beloved, very dear

- Mark 1:11 and a voice came out of the heavens, "You are My *beloved* Son, in You I am well pleased."
- 1 Thessalonians 2:8 Having so fond an affection for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become *very dear* to us.

4698.

splagchnon

the inward parts, the emotions

affection (3), affections (1), bowels (1), heart (4), hearts (1), tender (1)

- Acts 1:18 (Now this man acquired a field with the price of his wickedness, and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his *intestines* gushed out.
- 2 Corinthians 6:12 You are not restrained by us, you are restrained in your own *affections*.
- Philippians 1:8 For God is my witness, how I long for you all with the *affection* of Christ Jesus.
- Colossians 3:12 So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a *heart* of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience...
- Philemon 1:7 For I have come to have much joy and comfort in your love, because the *hearts* of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother.
- Philemon 1:12 I have sent him back to you in person, that is, sending my very *heart*...
- Philemon 1:20 Yes, brother, let me benefit from you in the Lord; refresh my *heart* in Christ.
- 1 John 3:17 But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his *heart* against him, how does the love of God abide in him?

****Read the following two studies ("God is Love" and "Biblical Love"). You are *not* assigned to answer the questions or complete the exercises.

GOD IS LOVE
1 John 4:8 “God is love”

- Considering God’s love for His children
Complete 2 or 3 sections each day. For each passage, write down the words from Scripture or a summary of the ideas that describe the facet of God’s love illustrated in that section. At the end of each section, write down your prayer of thanks and praise for God’s great love (1 Thessalonians 5:18 – ...in everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus; Hebrews 13:15 - Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.)

- God’s love is seen in His causing us to be saved
John 3:16
Ephesians 1:4-8
Ephesians 2:8-9
Colossians 2:13-14

- God’s love is demonstrated by His pursuit of a close, personal bond with us
Psalm 62:8
John 15:9
Hebrews 13:5-6
1 John 3:1

- God’s love is expressed in the provision of His Word
Psalm 1:2-3
2 Timothy 3:16-17
1 Peter 2:1-3

- God’s love is exhibited by the grace that caused us to become His children
Romans 5:8
James 1:18
1 John 4:10

- God’s love is demonstrated by His expenditure of energy to maintain His relationship with us
Romans 8:35, 37
Hebrews 7:25
1 Peter 1:3-5

- God’s love includes the supplying of purpose for each day in life
Psalm 139:13, 16
Romans 5:3-5
Ephesians 2:10

- God's love is observed in the unchangeableness of His character
 - Romans 8:31-32
 - Hebrews 13:8
 - 1 John 1:5
- God's love is exemplified in His ongoing grace
 - Romans 8:28
 - 2 Corinthians 12:9
 - Hebrews 4:15-16
- God's love is revealed in His kindness, giving good things to His children
 - Ephesians 1:18-21
 - 1 Timothy 6:17
 - James 1:17
- God's love envelops His children as He provides our needs
 - Philippians 4:19
 - 2 Timothy 4:16-17
 - Hebrews 2:18
- God's love is shown by giving us a new and full life
 - John 10:10
 - Romans 6:4
 - Philippians 1:21
 - Colossians 3:2-4
- God's love is exhibited in His supply of all we need to overcome sin
 - Romans 6:10-12, 14
 - 1 John 4:4
 - 1 John 5:3-5
- God's love is described by His action of giving us peace
 - John 14:27
 - John 16:33
 - Romans 5:1
 - Philippians 4:11-13
- God's love is clearly evident in that He gives His children a life of joy
 - Philippians 4:4
 - 1 Thessalonians 3:8-9
 - James 1:2-4
 - 1 Peter 1:6-9

- God's love is manifested by His making of the new heaven, our upcoming home

John 14:2-3

1 John 3:2

Revelation 22:1-6

- The Response of the Child of God

Each day for the next 3 weeks, take 15 minutes to pray: specifically give thanks for God's love. Consider the past 24 hours; review the different aspects of God's love in this study. Consider how God's love was demonstrated, how it related to the issues and events of your life. Praise Him for His incredible love. Worship your Lord. Give thanks for the many way God's love has touched your life.

BIBLICAL LOVE

- *Personal compassion, care, forgiveness*

- Romans 12:15-16 Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.
- I Corinthians 13:3a And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.
- Philippians 1:8 For God is my witness, how I long for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.
- Colossians 3:12-14 And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. And beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.
- Ephesians 4:32 And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.
- I Thessalonians 2:7 But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her own children.
- I Thessalonians 2:8-9 Having thus a fond affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us. For you recall, brethren, our labor and hardship, how working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God.
- Hebrews 13:1-3 Let love of the brethren continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember the prisoners, as though in prison with them, and those who are ill-treated, since you yourselves also are in the body.

What are your opportunities to put these verses into practice? Record actions you can take to faithfully obey God in compassion, giving, caring, forgiving, being kind, being gentle, and being hospitable in the relationships God has given you. _____

- *Biblical love includes truth and may include exhorting, rebuking, or confronting sin*

Proverbs 10:17 He is on the path of life who heeds instruction,
But he who ignores reproof goes astray.

Proverbs 17:17 A friend loves at all times,
And a brother is born for adversity.

Proverbs 27:6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend,
But deceitful are the kisses of an enemy.

Proverbs 27:17 Iron sharpens iron,
So one man sharpens another.

I Corinthians 13:6b Love...rejoices with the truth;

Galatians 6:1-2 Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted.
Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ.

Colossians 1:28-29 And we proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom that we may present every man complete in Christ.
And for this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.

I Thessalonians 2:11-12 ...just as you know how we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father would his own children, so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

I Thessalonians 5:14 And we urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with all men.

When have you held back from confronting sin, either due to fear of man or lack of love for the one who needs to be restored? Are there those in your life now who must be exhorted or admonished? Plan a course of action which includes gentleness, examining yourself, and love as the driving force. Then boldly speak truth which God can use to restore, help, strengthen and complete your brothers and sisters. _____

• *Jesus is the ultimate pattern, example of love*

Hebrews 4:15-16 For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.
Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

John 15:13 "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends."

Hebrews 7:25 Hence, also, He is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

Consider Jesus' love for you when He was on earth, when He resisted temptation every day of His life, when He went to the cross, and now interceding for you and enabling you to receive mercy and grace when in need. Give thanks at length and be committed to loving in the same way He does. _____

- *Sacrifice, selfless, puts others above oneself*

Galatians 4:19 My children, with whom I am again in labor until Christ is formed in you...

Philippians 2:3-4 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

Romans 9:1-5 I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons, and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises, whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

John 15:12-13 “This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you.”
“Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.”

2 Corinthians 12:15a And I will most gladly spend and be expended for your souls.

I Corinthians 13:5 Love...does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered...

Think about those God has put in your life. How have you sinned against them by being selfish and seeking your own way? Repent. Ask forgiveness of those people. What can you do to regard them as more important? Will you gladly give? What can you do to love with the quality of Jesus' love? _____

- *The importance of love*

Proverbs 10:12 Hatred stirs up strife,
But love covers all transgressions.

Proverbs 15:17 Better is a dish of vegetables where love is
Than a fattened ox served with hatred.

I Corinthians 13:1-3 If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.

John 13:34-35 "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another."
"By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

I Timothy 1:5 But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

When have you pursued knowledge or faith or good deeds without the accompanying motives of love for your Lord and agape love for people? Commit yourself today to a course of love as the goal and love as the driving force behind what you say and do. _____

• *Servanthood, service*

Mark 10:43-45 "But it is not so among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant;
and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all.
"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

2 Corinthians 4:5 For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bondservants for Jesus' sake.

Matthew 25:34-40 "Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.
'For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.'
"Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink? 'And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You?

'When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?'
"The King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.'

Romans 12:9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good.

Romans 15:2 Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to his edification.

I Thessalonians 2:8 Having so fond an affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us.

Titus 3:14 And let our people also learn to engage in good deeds to meet pressing needs, that they may not be unfruitful.

Hebrews 13:16 And do not neglect doing good and sharing; for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

In these verses, what words describe servanthood? What words describe its opposite? What actions will you take and what words will you say to live life in Jesus' way, being this type of servant? _____

- *You loving others biblically necessarily involves God, the Word, and the work of the Holy Spirit*

John 17:17 "Sanctify them in the truth; Your Word is truth."

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort; who comforts us in all our affliction so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

2 Corinthians 4:5 For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bondservants for Jesus' sake.

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

Philemon 1:7 For I have come to have much joy and comfort in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother. (Benefits others spiritually)

Philemon 1:20 Yes, brother, let me benefit from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in Christ.

1 Peter 2:1-3 Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord.

What clear-cut actions could you take to be working with the forces of God, His Word and His Spirit in your efforts to love others in a Christian fashion? How would that differ from what you have been doing? What are the ultimate goals of God when He expresses His love to people? _____

- *Love remembers and recognizes God's work in another*

Philippians 1:3-5 I thank my God in all my remembrances of you, always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all, in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now.

- 2 Thessalonians 1:3-5 We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brethren, as is only fitting, because your faith is greatly enlarged, and the love each one of you toward one another grows ever greater; therefore, we ourselves speak proudly of you among the churches of God for your perseverance and faith in the midst of all your persecutions and afflictions which you endure. This is a plain indication of God's righteous judgment so that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which indeed you are suffering.
- 1 Thessalonians 4:1 Finally then, brethren, we request and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that, as you received from us instruction as to how you ought to walk and please God (just as you actually do walk), that you may excel still more.
- Philemon 1:4-5 I thank my God always, making mention of you in my prayers, because I hear of your love, and of the faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all the saints...

What might you choose to do to love those in your life according to this custom of remembering God's work in others? _____

- *Love has as the #1 goal/motive: to please God*

- 1 Peter 4:10-11 As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.
- 1 John 3:16-18 We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has the world's goods, and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.
- Matthew 22:35-40 One of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" And He said to him, "'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.' "This is the great and foremost commandment. "The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' "On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets."

John 15:16-17 “You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask of the Father in My name, He may give to you.
“This I command you, that you love one another.

1 Thessalonians 3:12-13 ...and may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all men, just as we also do for you; so that He may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

Hebrews 10:22-25 ...let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.
Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful;
and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,
not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.

Philemon 1:21 Having confidence in your obedience, I write to you, since I know that you will do even more than what I say.

When you care for others with a primary purpose other than pleasing God, what is your goal? What do you think and do on those occasions? When your motive for loving others is God's glory, what thoughts run through your mind? What can you do to better take these verses to heart, actively loving others with the conscious objective of pleasing God?

Theology of Counseling
Week 10
Class Teaching: Theology of Love

How to Use the "God is Love" study (pages 122-124)

To counsel the one sinned against in a serious, long term, or life changing way

To counsel one who does not love others

1 John 4.11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

1 John 4.19 We love because He first loved us

To explain the nature of God to an unsaved person with whom you are speaking the Gospel

To counsel one who is grieving because of loss, pain, or extreme adversity

"Biblical Love" (pages 125-126) as the standard of motive and conduct for the biblical counselor

Personal compassion, care, and forgiveness

Biblical love and truth, exhorting, rebuking, or confronting sin

Theology of Counseling
Week 10
Open Q & A

Repentance

Week 11

Theology of Counseling

Introduction

The word "repentance" occurs once in the Old Testament and twenty-two times in the New. The Greek word used for all NT references is metanoia. Another Greek word with the same root, metaneo, is used for all thirty-four New Testament occurrences of "repent," "repented," and "repents". These three English words appear a total of eleven times in the Old Testament. Metaneo means to change one's mind or purpose; metanoia identifies the act of a change of mind or repentance, according to the Greek dictionary of the NASB Exhaustive Concordance.

This study will outline the two different ways people are to repent according to the Bible. Also presented will be the practical applications of the truth to real life for each.

Part I: Repentance and Salvation

The Scriptures

Psalm 7:12,15-16 "If a man does not repent, He will sharpen His sword; He has bent His bow and made it ready. He has dug a pit and hollowed it out, And has fallen into the hole which he made. His mischief will return upon his own head, And his violence will descend upon his own pate."

Ezekiel 18:30 "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, each according to his conduct," declares the Lord GOD. "Repent and turn away from all your transgressions, so that iniquity may not become a stumbling block to you."

Ezekiel 18:32 "For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies," declares the Lord GOD. "Therefore, repent and live."

Matthew 3:11 "As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."

Mark 1:4 John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

Luke 3:8 "Therefore bear fruits in keeping with repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father,' for I say to you that from these stones God is able to raise up children to Abraham."

Luke 13:3 "I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."

Luke 15:10 "In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

Luke 15:18-20 "I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men.'" "So he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him and kissed him."

Luke 19:5-9 "When Jesus came to the place, He looked up and said to him, "Zaccheus, hurry and come down, for today I must stay at your house." And he hurried and came down and received Him gladly. When they saw it, they all began to grumble, saying, "He has gone to be the guest of a man who is a sinner." Zaccheus stopped and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, half of my possessions I will give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will give back four times as much." And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he, too, is a son of Abraham."

Luke 24:47 ...and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

Acts 2:38 Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Acts 11:18 When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, "Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life."

Acts 20:21 "...solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ."

Acts 26:20 "...but kept declaring both to those of Damascus first, and also at Jerusalem and then throughout all the region of Judea, and even to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance."

2 Corinthians 7:9-10 "I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to the point of repentance; for you were made sorrowful according to the will of God, so that you might not suffer loss in anything through us. For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death."

2 Timothy 2:25 "...with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth"

Titus 3:3-5 "For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit"

2 Peter 3:9 "The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance."

Revelation 9:20-21 "And the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk; and they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts."

Revelation 16:9 "Men were scorched with fierce heat; and they blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues, and they did not repent so as to give Him glory."

Observations

Repentance connected to salvation is the one-time event of a person turning from a life direction of sin to a life direction of obeying God. Perhaps this ultimate expression of faith is most clearly seen in Zaccheus. In Luke 19 this tax-gatherer, known to be unfair, welcomed the opportunity to host a dinner with Jesus as his guest with a statement of repentance: "Half of my possessions I

will give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone anything, I will give back four times as much." This serious commitment marked an extreme change for a man who had gained riches by defrauding citizens. Jesus, knowing the hearts of men, knew this change in purpose was evidence of his saving faith. He replied, "Today, salvation has come to this house."

Repentance is not a source of salvation apart from the Gospel but rather is part of the response of faith in one receiving the Gospel. No one is saved by works, including the work of repentance. True believers are saved by grace through faith. Yet true saving faith is described as having died to sin and now being alive to God (Romans 6:3-14). Further, believers present themselves as instruments of righteousness; they are no longer slaves to sin (Romans 6:3-14). Unfortunately some in our era preach the Gospel as receiving forgiveness but not turning from sin; such teaching ignores the Romans 6 truth of Jesus and His followers dying to sin and living to God. Clearly, repentance is part of the saving faith that results in forgiveness of sins.

That repentance is essential in salvation is clear from other New Testament truths as well. Jesus, in John 15:8-11, taught that keeping His commandments results in abiding in His love. This is a statement of the general direction of the life of believers after repentance and the exhibiting of saving faith in the Gospel. If one could be saved by faith without repenting these statements of Jesus could not be correct. The Lordship of Christ, as taught in Galatians 1:10 and 2:20 for example, implies repentance is part of saving faith. Also, the book of 1 John has this truth as its theme.

In Scripture the connection of repentance to salvation is a recurring theme. The Old Testament selections on the previous pages demonstrate it. It was the theme of the preaching of John the Baptist (Mark 1:4, Luke 3:8). Jesus made it clear that repentance is an essential part of salvation (Luke 5:32, 15:10). After Jesus' death and resurrection, the Gospel again included repentance (Acts 2:38, 26:20, 2 Peter 3:9).

Repentance is a vital component in salvation.

Application

Remember the biblical teaching on repentance in regard to your own salvation, if you are a Christian. Recall the manifestations of your former pursuit of sin. Remember the change in direction when you believed in the Gospel. Call to mind your new life and new goal of obedience. Return to that purpose today. Energetically seek to bear fruit in keeping with repentance in all the specific opportunities before you today.

If you never turned away from sin as a primary direction of life, today is the day to do so. Choose to believe God sent His Son to pay the price for your sin on the cross. Choose to believe He offers forgiveness to those who receive it by faith. Choose also to believe that Jesus was Holy and that He died to defeat sin. Choose to repent: to turn away from a life of sin and to pursue a life of obedience. God will give you eternal life with Him and will enable you to be effective in bearing fruit in keeping with repentance.

Do you include the topics of sin and repentance when you preach the Gospel? To do so is an important application of studying repentance. Review the following verses (printed at the beginning of the study). Notice that repentance was part of the saving faith called for by John the Baptist (Matthew 3:11, Luke 3:8), by Jesus Himself (Matthew 4:17, 11:20), and by those who preached the Gospel after His death and resurrection (Luke 24:4-7, Acts 20:21, 2 Timothy 2:25). To omit sin and repentance from the Gospel is to give only a partial description of the truths of salvation.

If you understand the biblical teachings on repentance you also have a more accurate perspective of one's response to the Gospel. When a person bears fruit in keeping with repentance, there is assurance of salvation (John 15:8-11, 2 Peter 1:8-11, 1 John 5:15). You can encourage true brothers and sisters whose lives have changed with these passages. The Word of God is silent regarding one who proclaims faith in Christ but as far as can be seen does not exhibit a life marked by repentance. Is he a weak Christian or a tare among wheat? God Knows the heart; we do not.

Part II: Repentance and Restoration

The Scriptures

Job 42:4-6 'Hear, now, and I will speak; I will ask You, and You instruct me.' 'I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; But now my eye sees You; Therefore I retract, And I repent in dust and ashes.'

Psalm 32:3-6 When I kept silent about my sin, my body wasted away Through my groaning all the day long. For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer. I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I did not hide; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord"; And You did forgive the guilt of my sin. Therefore, let everyone who is godly pray to You in a time when You may be found.

Psalm 51:1-4, 7-12 Be gracious to me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; According to the greatness of Your compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, And my sin is ever before me. Against You, You only I have sinned, And done what is evil in your sight, So that You are justified when You speak, And blameless when You judge.

Purify me with hyssop and I shall be clean, Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me to hear joy and gladness, Let the bones which You have broken rejoice. Hide Your face from my sins, And blot out my iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And sustain me with a willing spirit.

Proverbs 28:13 "He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, But he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion."

Luke 17:3-4 "Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. And if he sins against you seven times a day, and returns to you seven times, saying, 'I repent,' forgive him."

2 Corinthians 7:9-10 "I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to the point of repentance; for you were made sorrowful according to the will of God, so that you might not suffer loss in anything through us. For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death."

2 Corinthians 12:21 "I am afraid that when I come again my God may humiliate me before you, and I may mourn over many of those who have sinned in the past and not repented of the impurity, immorality and sensuality which they have practiced."

Revelation 2:5 "Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place—unless you repent."

Revelation 2:22 "Behold, I will throw her on a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds."

Revelation 3:3 "So remember what you have received and heard; and keep it, and repent. Therefore if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you."

Revelation 3:19 "Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent."

Observations

Repentance is the biblical response of a Christian to his or her own sin. In Revelation 3:19 Jesus is speaking to saved people who have sinned. We know this because He loves them and because He is currently reproofing and disciplining them. How are they to respond? "Be zealous and repent."

In the passages cited in this section, salvation is not the topic. The one-time change in life direction associated with salvation is not the subject either. Job already had saving faith before chapter 42. In Psalm 51 David had the Holy Spirit (which was proof of salvation, but indwelling of the Spirit was not lifelong in the old covenant). In Luke 17 Jesus identifies the offending sinner as "your brother." In 2 Corinthians 12 Paul is speaking to people in a church. As stated above, Jesus' calls to repentance in Revelation are addressed to believers.

Further, the eternal salvation of Christians is not put in jeopardy by acts of sin (∴ Peter 1:3-5). This repentance from sin by true believers does not keep them saved, rather it removes them from a place of inviting God's discipline. It produces a clear conscience. It restores them to a full relationship with their Father on a day-to-day basis.

What is necessary for a Christian to repent of sin? By definition, it is a change in thought, a re-thinking of an issue. God causes such alteration in thought through His Word. He teaches, reproves, corrects and trains in righteousness, according to 2 Timothy 3:16-17. All four actions have to do with repentance: seeing sin as sin, being convicted of sin, and then being given the direction and practical instruction needed to go the other way.

2 Corinthians 7, like Psalms 32 and 51, describe the time between sin and repentance as "sorrowful," "groaning," "guilt" and "broken bones." The accurate conscience knows sin is wrong and is aware of the opposition to God that has been chosen. The greater the severity of sin, the more powerful the weight of it. Such sorrow is good. There is a different sorrow, one that regrets getting caught and the consequences, but not that sin was against God. That is the selfish sorrow, the sorrow of the world. That sorrow is not the same; it is not good; it compounds the sin. The sorrow that is borne of love for God and regret over sinning against Him is good. It is part of the process of dealing with sin biblically. "The sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret."

Repentance is a decision of the will. It is a time of prayer that does not conclude until the person can say to God honestly from the heart, "I intend to not sin against You in this way again." Often this is not a brief time of prayer. The Christian may be turning from a sin committed just minutes ago, or from a sin repeated for years. This act of volition, this submission of one's will to the will of a Holy God, is the essence of repentance.

God's response to the repenting Christian is clear in 1 John 1:9. God hates sin; the repenting child agrees (homologeo, translated "confess"). Since the believer hates his or her sin also, the intent is to not ever go back to it. God's reaction is filled with grace, love and the kind of forgiveness the Christian first received on an eternal basis when receiving the Gospel. He forgives His child's sin and cleanses him or her from all unrighteousness. The Father not only restores but also does what only He can - He cleanses as well. My friend, take time to consider God's great love in this matter and give thanks. Choose to repent of sin as a practice of life.

Some people say, "If I repent of the same sin over and over but go back to it, I'm being a hypocrite. I must not really mean it. So I won't repent unless I know I can stick with it." The largest problem with this mindset is the focus on oneself rather than God. God does not qualify "repent" with "if you know you'll never sin again," so no one else should either. Also, if the premise were true, all Christians would be hypocrites because all sin in some way (1 John 1:8-10, Romans 7:14-25). No, a true believer is saved by faith, not works; he or she is forgiven eternally and the relationship with God is secured by His power (John 10:27-30) and the intercession of the Savior (Hebrews 7:25). So obey Him by repenting of sin and requesting His help to follow through with repentance. The two things sought in such a prayer (mercy and grace to help in time of need) will certainly be granted in answer to the prayer (Hebrews 4:15-16). Repent every day if you sin every day. If you need the help of mature believers or those who

know the Word more effectively, for you to be able to follow through in putting off sin and putting on righteousness, seek it and get it. But do not disobey God's directive of how to deal with sin ("repent") by focusing on yourself.

Application

If you will pursue, as a course of life, dealing with sin by repenting, you have wonderful days ahead. Your intimate heart-level interaction with God will be honoring to Him. Your sanctification efforts (becoming more like Christ, changing toward holiness, putting off sin and putting on righteousness) will be more effective. Your understanding of the sinfulness of sin will increase. Your realization of the depth of God's grace will expand. Your thanksgiving for the work of Jesus Christ on the cross will be more intense.

You also have the great opportunity to use these biblical truths about repentance in your ministry to others. If you hold onto these truths you will deal with the sins of others in a God-glorifying fashion. You will not make or receive excuses, You will not be angry or respond to sin as if it is primarily against you. Rather, *you* will direct others to repentance, resulting in God's glory. They will enjoy Forgiveness, restoration, a clear conscience and God's grace to help in continuing on in the same direction. In doing so, you will be a true friend who loves in a Christlike manner.

A friend was going through a difficult time. His wife had left, filing for divorce. He was hurt and angry. The man focused on his wife's sins, which included seeking divorce without biblical causes. As we took inventory of his life in relation to the Word, we discovered he had sinned in many ways also. He had not laid down his life for his wife, nor had he sought to be involved in her sanctification. He had not been a spiritual leader (Ephesians 5:22-31). His anger and lack of forgiveness were not what the Bible says to do. The man chose to repent of his sin. He informed his wife of this and asked her to forgive him. Rather than expressing anger and hurt when he saw her, he had new purposes: love and serving. His other previous focus (the painful humiliation of being rejected) was replaced as well with thanks for God's forgiveness and a heart seeking to honor Him.

Another couple struggled with sin. When they had a conflict, typically they spoke harsh words, then did not speak to each other at all for a few days. When the two began to see their sin as sin against God, change occurred. They became consistent at repentance, followed by confessing sin to each other and subsequently forgiving each other as God does (Ephesians 4:32). God forgave them and cleansed them from unrighteousness. They no longer held sin against each other. Instead of conflicts ending in division and hurt, the result became closeness to God and to each other.

In such situations, it is a privilege to travel the long and painful road with others for whom Jesus died. It is a blessing to be able to love and to be involved. To see, firsthand, God change the human heart through His Word, as a person prays a prayer of repentance, is an honor. To help brothers and sisters understand and then live out the truths of the Word after repentance is joy. The conclusions of such journeys are worship of God by all and the bond of fellowship among all.

Conclusion

The Scriptures teach that repentance is a one-time redirection of a person's will (from sin to God) when they exhibit saving faith in the facts of the Gospel. The Bible also says that the right response to sin for a believer is to repent. Both aspects of repentance relate to sin. Both are met by God's grace. One believing in the Gospel and repenting is saved by faith. The Christian repenting of sin receives restoration and forgiveness as well as God's grace to enable bearing fruit by keeping with repentance.

The following is a five part series on the Gospel:

The Gospel and Its Practical Implications

Study 1: The Gospel Message

Hebrews 9.27 states the sobering truth about the destiny of everyone who ever lives: “It is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment.”

What must happen for the eternal judgment of God will go well for a person?

The Gospel is the plan that God has revealed in His eternal Word, the Bible, to answer this question.

Wayne Grudem, in his Systematic Theology, identifies three essential components of the Gospel:

- 1 All people have sinned (Romans 3.23)
- 2 The penalty for sin is death (Romans 6.23)
- 3 Jesus Christ died to pay the penalty for our sins (Romans 5.8)

What response to the Gospel is necessary to receive the gift of forgiveness of sins through the death of Jesus Christ?

- 1 Faith (Ephesians 2.8)
- 2 Repentance (Luke 24.47)

Questions for Discussion and Application

Read Romans 5.1. “Justified” is a legal term, which means being declared “not guilty.” If you believe in the Gospel, what do you appreciate most about Romans 5.1?

1 John 3.16 gives us one implication of Jesus’ work on the cross. How did He love you? What must you do to love to that degree?

If you have not responded to the Gospel in faith and repentance, what do you choose to hold onto rather than yielding your soul to Jesus Christ?

Open Questions and Answers

For Further Study

Read Isaiah 53.3-10. This prophecy describes what Jesus did to pay the price for your sins. What details can be learned about Jesus and about the Holy Father in this description of Jesus’ crucifixion and death? Take time to give thanks to Jesus Christ and to worship Him because of what He chose to do.

Read Romans 3.22-24. If you do believe in the Gospel, what benefits are yours through faith? Give thanks for these gifts.

Read Revelation 20.11-15 and 21.1-6. Everyone who ever lives on the earth will one day experience one of these things or the other. Since this is true, what will you want, think, and do?

The Gospel and Its Practical Implications

Study 2: The Cross of Jesus Christ

The Price.

Jesus Christ died on the cross to pay the price for all of your sins. If you believe in Him, you are forgiven for a lifetime of sins by His sacrifice. Jesus loved despite suffering great pain. Throughout His scourging and crucifixion, Jesus' love for the Father continued---He obeyed Him (John 14.31).

Read Psalm 22.14-19.

By examining Jesus on the cross, we see the ultimate in love and faithfulness. All who are redeemed through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ worship Him. He submitted to the will of the Father despite the physical agony. He is now our Lord and our Savior.

The Result.

Read Titus 3.3-7.

No man or woman is saved on the basis of their good deeds (verse 5).

What words describe the source of salvation for all who will one day be in heaven?

The Implication.

Read Hebrews 12.3.

This Scripture shows that by considering Jesus Christ and how He endured hostility by others against Himself, including in His death on the cross, we will be able to overcome frustration ("not grow weary") and temptations to become discouraged or depressed (not "lose heart").

Here a sequence that describes a common human response to hardship:

Disappointment→Discouragement→Disillusionment→Depression→Despair

Based on Hebrews 12.3, the following paradigm is possible for followers of Christ:

Sin Against You, Unmet Desires, or Death of Loved One + Following Jesus' Motive,
Endurance = Growing Faith (James 1.2-4) and Peace (John 16.33)

Questions for Discussion and Application

Jesus knew what pain and suffering awaited Him. He realized Psalm 22 was a prophecy about Him. He lived in a city where scourging and crucifixions could be viewed. What can we learn from His endurance?

Have you followed the Hebrews 12.3 pattern of dealing with hard times that is described above? What did you desire, think, and do? What were the results?

Open Questions and Answers

For Further Study

Read John 15.12-13. Think of eight words that describe Jesus' unique love. How can you love as He did?

Take time to read Psalm 22.14-19 again. If your sins were paid for by the suffering of Jesus Christ, give thanks to him for His faithfulness and love.

What hard times do you face today? Choose to endure, not grow weary, and not lose heart (remember Jesus Christ's victory, have the same motive as Him, endure).

The Gospel and Its Practical Implications

Study 3: Repentance and Faith

The Gospel

The accuracy of the Gospel message is of utmost importance. To be useful to the Master in the field of evangelism, we must communicate in a manner that results in salvation for those who respond to the Gospel we proclaim. The Bible teaches that a proper response to the Gospel includes Repentance and Faith.

Faith

Wayne Grudem, in his Systematic Theology, speaks of the essential components of the Gospel:

4. All people have sinned (Rom. 3:23)
5. The penalty for sin is death (Rom. 6:23)
6. Jesus Christ died to pay the penalty for our sins (Rom. 5:8)

The Bible teaches that we are saved through faith in these facts of the Gospel (Ephesians 2.8-9).

Repentance and Faith

Invitation to Respond to Christ Personally in Repentance and Faith

It is sufficient to note here that if we come to Christ and trust him to save us from our sin, we cannot any longer cling to sin but must willingly renounce it in genuine repentance. In some cases in Scripture both repentance and faith are mentioned together when referring to someone's initial conversion (Paul said that he spent his time "testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of *repentance* to God and of *faith* in our Lord Jesus Christ," Acts 20:21). But at other times only repentance of sins is named and saving faith is assumed as an accompanying factor ("that *repentance* and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all nations" [Luke 24:47; cf. Acts 2:37-38; 3:19; 5:31; 17:30; Rom. 2:4; 2 Cor. 7:10; et al.]) Therefore, any genuine gospel proclamation must include an invitation to make a conscious decision to forsake one's sins and come to Christ in faith, asking Christ for forgiveness of sins. If either the need to repent of sins or the need to trust in Christ for forgiveness is neglected, there is not a full and true proclamation of the gospel.

Repentance

The Example of Zaccheus: Luke 19.5-9

What is Repentance?

Repentance is, literally, ("metanoia") a change of thinking. Repentance of sin is, in essence, saying to God, "I regret that I have sinned against You and I intend to never sin in this way again."

Repentance connected to salvation is the one-time event of a person turning from a life direction of sin to a life direction of obeying God. Repentance is not a source of salvation apart from the Gospel but rather is part of the response of faith in one receiving the Gospel. No one is saved by works, including the work of repentance. Yet true saving faith is described as having died to sin and now being alive to God (Romans 6:4-14).

Questions for Discussion and Application

Have you ever heard a presentation of the Gospel that did not include both repentance and faith? What was said to be necessary to go to heaven?

Read 2 Corinthians 7.10. How would you define the sorrow of the world? What would you want and think if your decision about past sins was "repentance without regret"?

For Further Study

Read Romans 6.4-14. How does this passage give you great hope that you will be able to overcome current sins in your life?

Do you have the assurance of salvation spoken of in John 15.8-11?

The Gospel and Its Practical Implications Study 4: Regeneration

Regeneration

"Regeneration" is the theological term for being born again. It occurs at the moment of faith in the Gospel message and is completely the doing of God. It is, "the work of God that gives new life to the one who believes," (Ryrie, 630). The one who is born again begins a new life with God that will never end.

The term, "regeneration," indicates a new and different birth. The soul that is born again changes from being dead toward God because of sin (Ephesians 2.1-3) to being alive toward God because of its association with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Romans 6.3-11). The result is that the regenerated inner man will be united with an eternal body for heaven after the end of life on earth.

The theology of regeneration supports a dichotomous anthropology. The conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus (John 3.1-21) specifically addresses this point. Jesus proclaims that spiritual birth is mandatory to enter the kingdom of God (John 3.3). Ironically, in the first decade of the 21st century, many secular mental health professionals have endorsed Nicodemus' misconception that man is a solely physical being.

Ramifications of Regeneration

Being born again necessarily produces the abilities to overcome sin and to obey God. That is the teaching of 1 John 5.3. Since God exposes our remaining sins through the Word (Hebrews 4.12-13 and 2 Timothy 3.16-17), to obey His Word often includes the change of replacing sin with righteousness.

Is the regenerated man now made up of two conflicting natures, living together in one being? The Scriptures answer this important question. The old self was crucified with Christ (Galatians 2.20, Romans 6.6), so he no longer holds power over us. Yet we still live in bodies tainted by sin. Therefore we are tempted to sin. The temptation to sin and the propensity to disobey God, despite our redeemed inner man that longs to fully honor God, are attached to our mortal bodies (Romans 7.14-23).

But our "old man" is dead and therefore powerless. The new life enjoyed by the believer is due to regeneration, which includes our union with Christ and the indwelling Holy Spirit. We can overcome sin. We long for the day that we live in new bodies that are free from this attachment to sin (Romans 7.24 and 8.19-31). That day will come (Revelation 21.1-7).

Questions for Discussion and Application

Have you been regenerated? How and when did this occur?

What sins do you currently struggle with? Based on the doctrine of regeneration, what should you think about yourself, God, and the temptations you face?

What aspects of this truth from the Bible can be the source of giving thanks and worshipping God?

Open Questions and Answers

For Further Study

If you have been regenerated, praise and worship God for His kind act of causing you to be born again.

Choose to think about yourself, the temptations in your life, and your choices based on the truth of regeneration.

The Gospel and Its Practical Implications
Study 5: Justification

Justification

Justification is a legal term that is equivalent to declaring one “not guilty” in a courtroom. The Bible teaches that all who are forgiven for sin through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ are justified. The Greek word that is rendered “justified” 31 times in the New Testament (*dikaioo*) is also translated, “acquitted,” “freed” and “vindicated,” elsewhere. Justification occurs at the point in time when regeneration occurs. Salvation consists of justification (the imputation of the righteousness of Christ to those who come to saving faith), sanctification (the process of growing in righteousness during the remainder of life on earth) and glorification (the end point of time, when believers are given new bodies and arrive in heaven for eternal life without the possibility of sin). The doctrine of justification is a major theme in Romans.

Two landmark passages provide cornerstone truths about this doctrine:

Romans 3:23-26

Romans 5:1-2

The doctrine of justification is a bold truth about our salvation. God has graciously provided assurance of the finality of our destiny through use of this legal term in His inspired Word. Millard Erickson comments,

In the New Testament, justification is the declarative act of God by which, on the basis of the sufficiency of Christ’s atoning death, he pronounces believers to have fulfilled all of the requirements of the law which pertain to them. Justification is a forensic act imputing the righteousness of Christ to the believer; it is not an actual infusing of holiness into the individual. It is a matter of declaring the person righteous, as a judge does in acquitting the accused. (Erickson,)

This definition accurately reflects the relationships of atonement to the legal declaration of the believer as not guilty, and of Christ’s sinless life in regard to those who trust in Him for salvation.

Questions for Discussion and Application

How does the doctrine of justification alleviate guilt over sins committed prior to salvation?

How do psychologists and psychiatrists attempt to solve the problem of man's guilt?

If the doctrine of justification is true as it is explained in Romans 3.23-26 and 5.1-2, is it right for a Christian to have pride in himself or to boast about his worth?

Open Questions and Answers

For Further Study

No one is justified by the Law of God since that only reveals sin in each one (Romans 3.10-23). The declaration of righteousness is only possible through faith in the propitiatory sacrifice of Jesus Christ, whose payment of the full price for sins is effective for all who believe in Him (Romans 3.24-26, 5.1-2; 8.1-11, 8.28-30). What religions and churches teach a Gospel that involves being justified by works? Can their teachings be true? How should you view followers of such beliefs?

If you are not guilty in God's courtroom, give thanks to God for the truth of justification on the basis of Christ's atoning death.

Theology of Counseling
Week 11
Teaching in Class: Repentance

Repentance in the New Testament

"metanoia": to think differently

Repentance and Salvation

Acts 2.37-38: Components of the Gospel

Preaching that is centered on the Bible (.17-36)

Preaching that is centered on Jesus Christ (.17-36)

Fearless preaching (.36)

Faith in the facts of the Gospel (.37)

Repentance (.38)

The Christian and Repentance

Revelation 3.19

These are sinning Christians

Christ's response

He loves them

He reproves them

He disciplines them

What the sinning believer must do

Be zealous

Repent

Proverbs 28.13

Conceal transgression > will not prosper

Confess and forsake transgressions > will find compassion

This Scripture speaks of sin in relation to God

Hebrews 4.12

The role of the Word in repentance

Theology of Counseling
Week 11
Case Studies

Case 229

A counselee is referred by a friend of a former counselee. He is not a Christian. You have shared the Gospel. He is considering it. He believes everything the Bible says about Jesus and the Gospel. He believes he is a sinner. He is unwilling to yield his will to God's. He is holding onto control of his life. What are the next three things you will show him from the Word? What questions will you ask?

Case 44

A counselee is a thirty year old woman, married with two young children. As you have gathered data, you have come to realize she often makes excuses for her sins. She has seen that Scripture identifies as sin her selfishness, anger and harsh words to all in her home. But she rationalizes: "I was tired," "It was that time of the month," "My husband deserved it," and "I was just beyond being patient." What does she need to understand from the Word now? How would you communicate these things to her?

Theology of Change

Week 12

Theology of Counseling

WEEK 12:

THEOLOGY OF CHANGE

New Testament Teachings on the Theology of Change

The following study contains portions of a study titled "Change," by Wayne Erick Johnston, available in its entirety, at www.valleybible.net.

Introduction

In this study we will look at five different perspectives from Scripture. Each takes us to the same conclusion. The passages featured will show that truths about Jesus, the Word, difficult times, the legacy of an apostle and who we are as typical Christians all point to the same idea. Growth is our goal. Specifically, change is the mode of life God intends for believers.

Jesus' Death and Resurrection Show Us How to Think

Romans 6:10-14

For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

Applications

We are to consider ourselves dead to sin and alive to God

We are to transition from presenting ourselves to sin as instruments of unrighteousness

We now present ourselves to God for the purpose of doing righteousness

We can make the dramatic transformations from sin to righteousness

Sin is not to be our master

The Word Is God's Primary Tool To Cause Change In Our Lives

2 Timothy 3:16-17

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

The four things that the Word accomplishes (verse 16) all have to do with change

Teaching

Reproof

Correction

Training in righteousness

God Graciously Transforms The Storms of Life Into Great Opportunities To Grow and Change

James 1:2-4

Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have *its* perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

God uses hard times to accomplish His goal of spiritual growth (change) in the lives of believers

Our responsibility is to endure, to persevere

The tempest is when faith means most

This process of responding correctly to trials results in becoming mature and complete

God graciously turns the storms of life into tools to help us grow

The Legacy Left By The Apostle To His Successor Emphasizes Change As The Mode Of Life God Intends For Church Leaders

1 Timothy 4:7b,8,12,15

...On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and *also* for the *life* to come. Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but *rather* in speech, conduct, love, faith *and* purity, show yourself an example of those who believe. Take pains with these things; be *absorbed* in them, so that your progress will be evident to all.

Paul exhorted his young friend to diligent pursuit of this growth.

He set "progress" as the goal for Timothy.

Timothy is told to discipline himself for godliness

Pursuing godliness is described in each of these: speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity

"Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them."

I Am A Typical Christian Therefore Change In Me Glorifies God

1 Corinthians 1:26-31

For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, so that no man may boast before God. But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, so that, just as it is written, "Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord."

In general, God chooses people that are not considered substantial to shame people who are regarded as significant in this world

Are you a typical Christian?

When we typical Christians do well in marriage, in holiness, in being like Christ in any way, it is an honor to God

Relevance

After studying the truths of His Word in this study, will you begin to measure your life by the amount of Godward change which occurs?

Do you see your life on earth as a time of change? Will you now see yourself as dead to sin and alive to God? Will you ask God to teach you, reprove you, correct you, and train you in righteousness as you open His Word each day? Will you seek His work of change in your life through the Word?

Are you certain that change is the mode of life God intends for you, a believer? Have you been persuaded that growth is God's good intention for the outcome of the storms of your life? Do you realize that Paul's words to Timothy show that even for church leaders progress is to occur? Will you embrace the idea that God's plan is to use us typical Christians as illustrations of His work as the unsaved observe change in us?

Put Off Sin / Put On Righteousness: The Christian Process of Change

Ephesians 4:22-24

...that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in *the likeness of God* has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

We are to put off, or "lay aside" the old self. Verse 22 describes the old self as our "former manner of life", the "old self", as "corrupted", and as including the "lusts of deceit."

We are to put on a "new self." The things with which we are to replace the old self are related to the Lord.

Verse 23 describes the putting off / putting on process: "Be renewed in the spirit of your mind."

Put Off / Put On: A Transformation In The Mind

Romans 12:2

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

In this passage we are to put off being conformed to this world

We are to put on doing God's will

The concept of change is defined by the word 'transformed.' The Greek word is "metamorphoo."

The Christian Process Of Change: A Battle Strategy

Romans 13:12-14

The night is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to *its* lusts.

"Make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts." Provision, Greek "pronoia", means to consider in advance, give forethought, to plan. Lusts, Greek "epithumia", is literally, the center of heat, a word that expresses the longing for the forbidden, the attraction to something because it is wrong or daring.

Putting Off / Putting On: The Issue Of Anxiety

Philippians 4:6-8

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things.

God has provided the means for overcoming anxiety in our lives

"Be anxious for nothing"

What must be believed to pray with thanksgiving when making requests?

The result of facing anxiety His way is a powerful peace

We are to limit our minds to what is true, honorable, right, lovely, of good repute, excellent and worthy of praise

How will this practice keep anxiety from returning?

The War Within That Demands Change

Galatians 5:16-17

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. ¹⁷For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.

It's a war! The flesh and the Spirit are opposed to each other.

You may not do the things that you please

A Christian's Destiny Is Overcoming Sin

1 John 5:3-5

For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

Every Christian is capable of overcoming sin

Theology of Counseling

Week 12

Teaching in Class: Implications of the Theology of Change

Subtitle: The effective biblical counselor views each case based on the theology of change found in God's Word and counsels accordingly

The counselor has absolute certain hope that the problem can be overcome

We have (and communicate) definite secure hope to the counselee

We know how to define the problem (by evaluating data with God's Word)

We realize what is the solution or goal (becoming a doer of the Word)

We understand the tools to enable change

Scripture

The Holy Spirit

Jesus Christ

God's Grace

When should I clearly communicate the place of the theology of change in the counseling process?

First phone conversation

First counseling session

Periodically, explaining an overview of the process

Identify where is the counselee, in regard to the entire change process

Theology of Counseling
Week 12
Open Q & A

Practical Theology

Week 13

Theology of Counseling

Theology of Counseling
Week 13
Teaching in Class: Practical Theology

What is love? How can I live a life of love?

1 John 3.16 We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

- Jesus' love was motivated by His desire to obey the Father (John 6.38)
- Jesus loved people in spite of their sins (Romans 5.8)
- Jesus still loved when in pain and alone (Is. 53.5, John 16.32)

The mission of Christians is to love as He loved, laying down our lives for others

- We are commanded to love at this level (John 13.34-35)
- Love for the purpose of obeying God
- Love even when people sin against you
- Love despite pain and loneliness

1 John 4.19 We love, because He first loved us.

Where can I find courage?

At the cross of Jesus Christ

John 16.33 "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."

- We will have tribulation in this world
- How did Jesus overcome the world?
- How are His victories a source of courage for me? Because of my Union with Christ
- What must I do to take courage in Him?
 - Remember His victories
 - Remember Romans 6.10-14
 - Think accordingly

Why am I suffering and going through hard times?

John 12.27-28a "Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. ^{28a}"Father, glorify Your name."

- Jesus' soul was troubled
- He suffered greatly
- His purpose was to bring glory to the Father

Following Christ in my troubled hours

- I will not seek escape as my primary goal
- I will believe there is a reason for this hour
- Jesus Christ is my example and source of hope

I will do whatever necessary to bring glory to the Father

Notes

COUNSELING ISSUES (SEMESTER 1)

VALLEY BIBLE COUNSELING CENTER
SEMESTER 1

WAYNE ERICK JOHNSTON

SERIES B SYLLABUS

**COUNSELING ISSUES (SEMESTER ONE)
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**COUNSELING ISSUES (SEMESTER ONE)
COURSE INFORMATION**

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

A beginning course that takes a thorough look at the biblical teachings on counseling and related theological issues.

**This class meets Sundays from 6:30pm to 8:00pm
at 3347 West Avenue J,
Lancaster, California;
and on-line at www.valleybible.net.**

The course will meet for 13 weeks.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

To understand counseling from a theological and thus biblically accurate perspective and to be able to use these truths in personal spiritual growth and in ministry.

COURSE TEXTS:

- *COUNSELING*, John MacArthur, Nelson, 2005
- *A THEOLOGY OF CHRISTIAN COUNSELING*, Jay Adams, Zondervan, 1979
- *COMPETENT TO COUNSEL*, Jay Adams, Zondervan, 1970
- *SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY*, Wayne Grudem, Zondervan, 1994
- *LOVE TO EAT HATE TO EAT*, Elyse Fitzpatrick, Harvest House 1999
- *A CHRISTIAN GROWTH AND DISCIPLESHIP MANUAL*, Wayne Mack and Wayne Erick Johnston, Focus publishing, 2005
- *PSYCHOBABBLE*, Richard Ganz, Crossway, 1993
- *FROM PRIDE TO HUMILITY (BOOKLET)*, Stuart Scott, Focus Publishing, 2002

**"Scripture quotations taken from the New American Standard Bible[®],
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1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation
Used by permission." (www.Lockman.org)**

WHY GRADES?

Grades are for the purpose of measuring results. It is helpful for you to know at what level you are learning and working.

POINTS (Students taking class live):

700- Read the weeks syllabus before class (12)

500- In-class projects (Journals 2)

700- Reading assignments from texts

200- Writing assignment (1)

600- "Open Discussion" (3)*

300- Class participation

3000 TOTAL

POINTS (On-line students):

700- Read the weeks syllabus before class (12)

700- Reading assignments from texts

400- Writing assignment (1)

1200- "Open Discussion" (3)*

3000 TOTAL

*Open Discussion entries at livetheword.squarespace.com (3)

On-line students: not required to complete in-class projects: not graded on class participation

GRADES:

A 2700 (90%)

B 2400 (80%)

C 2100 (70%)

D 1800 (60%)

WHAT TO BRING: The Syllabus, your Bible, any assignments due.

PARTNERS:

You are responsible for providing all class information to each of your partners if they are absent. You are responsible for obtaining all class information from your partners if you are absent.

YOUR TEACHER:

Communicate with me.

If you know you will be absent, let me know so I can help you stay current with the class. If you have comments on the teaching or the content of the course, please come and talk with me. My purpose is to serve you and benefit you. If you are struggling with the course or are in need of assistance, I am available to provide help or encouragement.

HOMEWORK ITEMS:

Homework assignments marked with an asterisk (*), are to be turned in to the instructor during the class meeting of the week due. Other homework will also be greatly beneficial to getting the most from the class meetings and discussions.

NANC CREDIT:

Students who pass this course satisfy the education requirement toward counselor certification from the National Association of Nouthetic Counselors (NANC). After course completion, students who pass the NANC exams and complete mentored supervision will be certified as biblical counselors by NANC.

CLASS SUBJECT

Week	Theology of Counseling	Counseling Issues (Semester 1)
1	A New Testament Description of Biblical Counseling (part 1)	Forgiveness Issues in Counseling
2	A New Testament Description of Biblical Counseling (part 2)	Feelings / Emotions
3	Theology Proper	Depression
4	Anthropology	Trials and Suffering
5	Hamartiology	Sin, Disease, or Weakness?
6	Soteriology	Anger
7	Sanctification	Pride
8	Bibliology	Lust
9	Hope from God's Word	Death and Dying
10	Theology of Love	Marital Roles
11	Repentance	Marital Theology (Part 1)
12	Theology of Change	Marital Theology (Part 2)
13	Practical Theology	Marital Theology (Part 3)

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

Week	Counseling Issues (Semester 1)	Assignments
All		Read syllabus and be prepared to discuss all discussion questions.
1	Forgiveness Issues in Counseling	
2	Feelings / Emotions	Read Competent to Counsel, pp.93-100
3	Depression	Read Competent to Counsel, pp.116-127, 146 Obtain a login password for http://livetheword.squarespace.com/
4	Trials and Suffering	
5	Sin, Disease, or Weakness?	Read Competent to Counsel, pp.26-35
6	Anger	Read CGDM, pp7-10
7	Pride	Complete the "Humility" journal found in bibleresources>journalswithscripture>humility">livetheword.squarespace.com>bibleresources>journalswithscripture>humility pp 73-81for 7days Read the booklet,"From Pride to Humility" Read from "CGDM" pp 3-5,181,187-190
8	Lust	
9	Death and Dying	Read "CGDM", pp 97-102
10	Marital Roles	Complete the Husband or Wife study and journal from bibleresources>journalswithscripture>husband">livetheword.squarespace.com>bibleresources>journalswithscripture>husband pp 82-86 or wife pp 161-164 for 5 days
11	Marital Theology (Part 1)	*Write a 2 page paper: "The Most Pressing Need in Christian Marriages Today and the Bible's Solution To It" Read Christian Growth and Discipleship Manual, studies on pages 17 and 147
12	Marital Theology (Part 2)	Complete the study on page 162 of CGDM
13	Marital Theology (Part 3)	*Make a copy of this page. Put a circle around every assignment completed on time. Put a square around every assignment completed late. Leave every assignment not completed unmarked. Turn in the marked page to your instructor.

*Throughout the semester, contribute and further each "Open Discussion" topic at <http://livetheword.squarespace.com>

Class Notes

Class Notes

Counseling Issues (Semester One)

Valley Bible Biblical Counseling Center
Biblical Counselor Training Course

Series B

Forgiveness Issues in Counseling

Week 1

Counseling Issues
(Semester One)

WEEK 1: FORGIVENESS ISSUES IN COUNSELING

In-Class Teaching Outline

The Gospel: evangelism (pre-counseling)

The reason for problems related to forgiveness is that the counselee has never been forgiven through the blood of Christ

Results of counselees following "A Christian's Guide to Dealing with Sin"

Keys to forgiving others:

Ephesians 4.32: Forgive others as God in Christ has forgiven you

Matthew 18.21-35 Think about Jesus' death for your own often enough that the sins of others sins against you seem like three month's wages and the price for your sins seems like \$20,000,000.

Other biblical techniques to enable forgiving as God in Christ has forgiven us (choosing to remember sins no more)

1 Thessalonians 5.18

Titus 3.3-5

Romans 8.28-29

1 Peter 2.18-25

Common ways that families fail to deal with sin properly

Family members bring up past sins to win arguments or get their way

Family members view sins as personal rejection rather than sin against God

Anger

James 1.20

Husband or wife unwilling to forgive specific incident of sin

One child chooses and enforces the consequences for the sins of their siblings

Parents try to use guilt as a weapon

The fear of mom or dad saying, "I'm disappointed in you," should not be a child's primary reason to try to replace sin with righteousness.

The household standards of right and wrong change with the moods of dad and mom

Other common forgiveness issues that arise in counseling

A Christian imposes his own standard on himself rather than dealing with sin biblically:

"I know God forgave me, but I can't forgive myself."

A person sinned against is unwilling to forgive

An adult who was sinned against as a child holds unbiblical view of what happened and its effect

Christians hang on to guilt regarding sins for which they have repented and sins forgiven by God

Important Counseling Principles

Go back to the cross

Remember Jesus' sacrifice, the price paid for sin, the suffering of Jesus Christ;

the doctrines of redemption and justification, and the forgiveness of God

Use the Scripture as the basis of defining the problem and the solution

Carefully explain what is entailed in truly forgiving as God forgives

Extend gentleness and kindness as a normal manner of relating to the counselee

The answers to difficult questions about forgiveness are answered at the cross

The love of Christ

Obedience to the point of death

He overcame the world

The following studies are resources for your personal use in ministry. Each is a practical application of the teaching of the Word on repentance and forgiveness.

Forgiveness

A common question is discussed among Christians. “Am I required to forgive someone who has not repented and / or has not asked for forgiveness?”

We must forgive all sins against us.

Mark 11.25-26 is clear that unconditional forgiveness is right. Holding “anything against anyone” inhibits prayer.

Matthew 18.21-35 compares sin against us with the lifetime of sin we have each been forgiven of through the blood of Christ. Any sin against us is \$10,000, compared with the \$20,000,000 debt that we have been forgiven, according to Jesus.

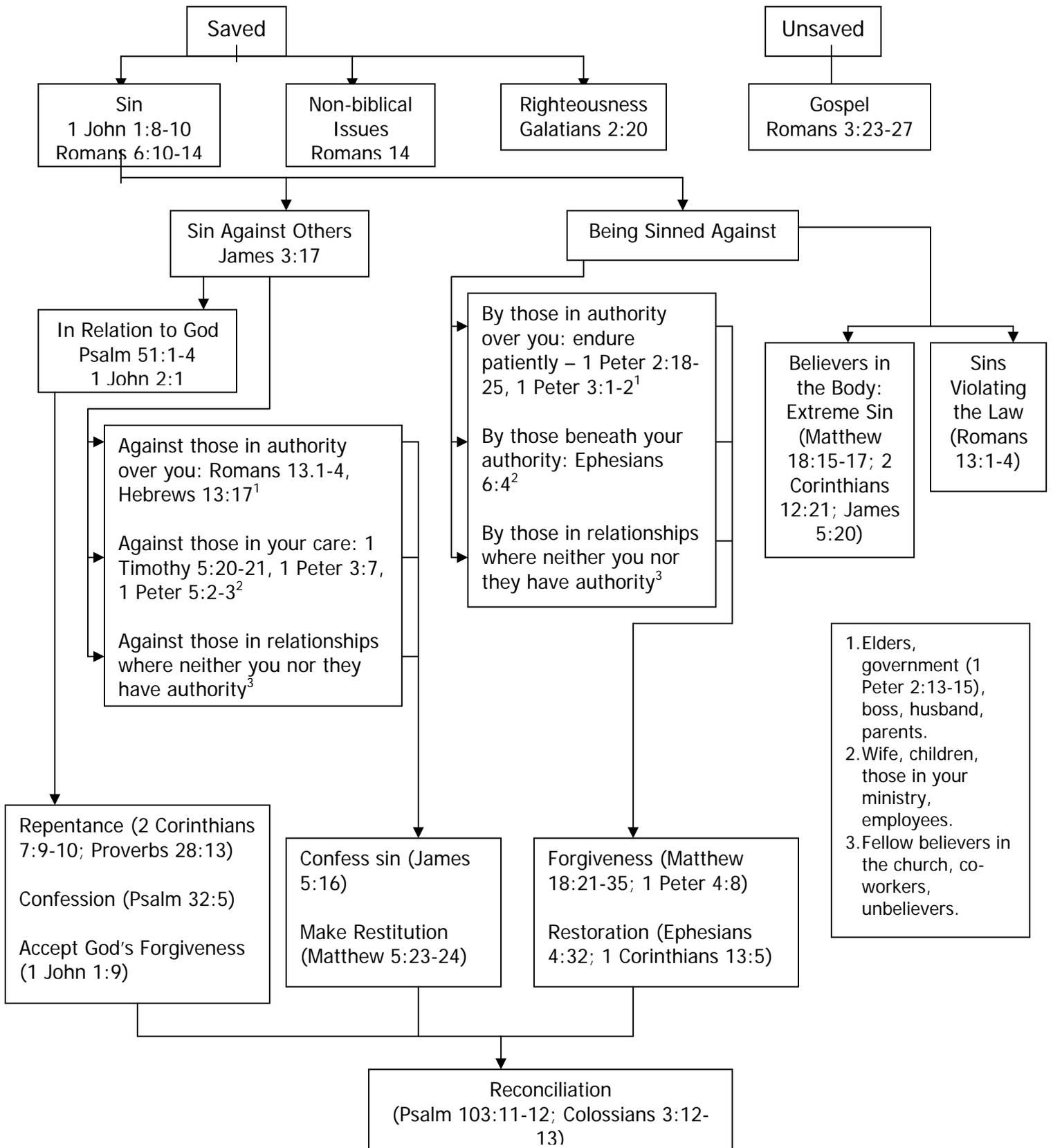
The conclusions are that we must forgive, that any sin against us is miniscule compared to how much we have been forgiven, and that those forgiven by God through Jesus’ death should be pleased to forgive others.

Further, love covers sins (1 Peter 4.8) and does not even take them into account (1 Corinthians 13.5).

Those holding the perspective that we only forgive those who have repented and asked for forgiveness would say that God forgives, in the judicial sense, sins not specifically repented of (all agree we cannot lose our salvation by sinning just before dying). Jesus intercedes even before we repent, so that we are not separated from the Father at any time (Hebrews 7.25). Yet, they argue, in the parental sense, God does not forgive the unrepentant Christian—such a one is in danger of the Father’s discipline. This group also contends that God’s dealings with the sinning child are in some way restricted by the forgiveness of men.

The conclusion is that since our unconditional forgiveness is commanded (Mark 11.25-26, Matthew 18.21-35, 1 Peter 4.8, 1 Corinthians 13.5), Ephesians 4.32 (“as God in Christ has also forgiven you’) must be referring to the judicial forgiveness of the Lord, granted to Christians at the point of regeneration. We can forgive and simultaneously proceed with biblically mandated consequences of sin, such as church discipline (Matthew 18.15-17) or reporting crimes to the government (Romans 13.1-4).

SIN AND FORGIVENESS FLOWCHART



FORGIVENESS ISSUES IN COUNSELING: STUDIES FROM SCRIPTURE

Scriptures Regarding Forgiveness

Jesus Christ and Forgiveness

Romans 6:3-6
Colossians 2:13-15
Jeremiah 31:34

“...for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”

Psalms 103:10-12
Ephesians 2:1-5
Hebrews 2:10,14
Hebrews 7:25

Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

1 Peter 1:3-5

Forgiving Others

1 Corinthians 13:5
Ephesians 4:32

Love ... does not take into account a wrong suffered
And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other,
just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

Matthew 18:21-35
Matthew 6:14-15

For if you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.

Colossians 3:12-14

And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.

And beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.

Confess Sin to God and Repent

Psalm 32:3-5
Psalm 51:1-12
Psalm 51:16-17
Revelation 3.19

How to replace remembering sins against me with thoughts that please God

Philippians 4:8

Think about Jesus paying the price for your sins

Isaiah 53:3-10
Psalm 22.11-18

A Christian's Guide to Dealing with Sin

When I have sinned

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

...confess my sin to God. Agree with Him: I hate it also.

Proverbs 28:13 He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper,
But he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion.

Revelation 3:19 Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous
And repent.

...I prayed until I repented of sin.

James 5:16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another.

Matthew 5:23 Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come to present your offering.

...I confessed my sin to the person I sinned against and asked for their forgiveness.

When I have been sinned against

1 Corinthians 13:5 Love does not take into account a wrong suffered.

Ephesians 4:32 Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just
As God in Christ also has forgiven you.

...I forgave as God, in Christ, forgives me. I chose to remember the sins no more, therefore; I no longer think about or speak about those sins.

Matthew 18.21-35

...I viewed my sins, forgiven by the blood of Jesus Christ, as an unpayable debt and the worst sin against me as only a month's wage

Forgiving Others: Scripture

1 Corinthians 13:5

Love... does not take into account a wrong suffered

Ephesians 4:32

Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

How God forgives:

Chooses to remember our sin no more, Jeremiah 31.34.

Removes it as far as the east is from the west, Psalm 103.12.

Forgives us for eternity through the blood of Christ, Hebrews 10.10-14.

Matthew 18:21-35

Then Peter came and said to Him, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" Jesus said* to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. "For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. "When he had begun to settle *them*, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. "But since he did not have *the means* to repay, his lord commanded him to be sold, along with his wife and children and all that he had, and repayment to be made. "So the slave fell *to the ground* and prostrated himself before him, saying, 'Have patience with me and I will repay you everything.' "And the lord of that slave felt compassion and released him and forgave him the debt. "But that slave went out and found one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and he seized him and *began* to choke *him*, saying, 'Pay back what you owe.' "So his fellow slave fell *to the ground* and *began* to plead with him, saying, 'Have patience with me and I will repay you.' "But he was unwilling and went and threw him in prison until he should pay back what was owed. "So when his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were deeply grieved and came and reported to their lord all that had happened. "Then summoning him, his lord said* to him, 'You wicked slave, I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. 'Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave, in the same way that I had mercy on you?' "And his lord, moved with anger, handed him over to the torturers until he should repay all that was owed him. "My heavenly Father will also do the same to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart."

Luke 23:33-34

When they came to the place called The Skull, there they crucified Him and the criminals, one on the right and the other on the left. But Jesus was saying, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing." And they cast lots, dividing up His garments among themselves.

Acts 7:58-60

When they had driven him out of the city, they *began* stoning *him*; and the witnesses laid aside their robes at the feet of a young man named Saul. They went on stoning Stephen as he called on *the Lord* and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" Then falling on his knees, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!" Having said this, he fell asleep."

Matthew 6:14

For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.

Colossians 3:12-14

So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. Beyond all these things *put on* love, which is the perfect bond of unity.

1 Peter 4:8

Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.

Forgiving Others Journal

Day:

Date:

Ephesians 4:32 Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

1 Corinthians 13:5 Love... does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered

Past sins or others that I was tempted to remember or hold against the one who sinned

How people sinned against me or others today

What I thought about these sins and those who committed them

What I felt

What I said or did

What Scripture tells me to think and do in response to those sins

Prayer

If I obeyed God and forgave as He forgives me: Thanks for His help to obey (John 15.9-11)

Or

If I did not forgive as God forgave me:

Remember Jesus Christ paying the price for my forgiveness (Hebrews 10.10-14, John 3.16, Romans 5.1-2);

Repent of not forgiving; choose to remember no more the sins against me (Matthew 18.21-35, Jeremiah 31.34); Trust in God's sufficient grace (2 Corinthians 12.9-10)

How To Ask Forgiveness:

- A. Acknowledge that you have sinned. "I was wrong." Or "God has convinced me that I was wrong..."
- B. Identify the specific sin by its biblical name. "What I did was selfish." Or "What I did was dishonest."
- C. Identify an alternative biblical behavior to demonstrate repentance. "I should have clarified what you meant before I jumped to that hasty conclusion."
- D. Ask for forgiveness. "Will you forgive me?"

Confessing Sin to God

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

The Greek word translated "confess" is "homologeō," literally, "to say the same thing" or to "agree." So confessing sin to God is more than describing our sinful action, attitude and desire, it is agreeing with God's view of them (He hates sin). If I hate my sin, then I am also going to take the next step: to repent. To repent means to turn and go the other direction. I will also tell the Lord of my decision and ask for His help to never sin in this manner again. In Revelation 3:19 Jesus directs believers to repent of sins. Proverbs 28:13 tells us that the one who confess and forsakes sin receives mercy. We are to similarly confess our sins to the one we sinned against (James 5:16).

When we confess our sin, God both forgives us and cleanses us from all unrighteousness. Psalm 103:12 describes His forgiveness as, "As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us." If God has so forgiven us, we are free from guilt. Rather than remembering our sin and being frustrated over it, we may rather remember God's grace in forgiving us and be thankful for it. In relation to past sins, pride desires to be perfect; honoring God is happy to be a forgiven sinner.

What Does it Mean to Forgive?*

You are commanded to forgive, "just as God in Christ also has forgiven you" (Eph 4:32). What does that mean? God says, "I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake; And I will not remember your sins" and "I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more" (Isa. 43:25, Jer 31:34).

So, does God have amnesia? Certainly not! God is omniscient (all knowing) and knew about your sins even before you committed them. When the Bible speaks of God forgetting our sins, it refers to the fact that when a person has truly been forgiven by God, He does not hold them against the forgiven sinner. He doesn't charge them to our account. Rather, God will charge them to the account of the Lord Jesus Christ, Who died on the cross to pay the price of the penalty of guilty sinners like you and me. Christ's death was a substitution. He died to take the punishment for our sin so that we as saved individuals might be credited with His righteousness. When we truly believe the Gospel, God promises to not hold our sins against us. Instead, He imputes the perfect righteousness of His Son to our account. What is the Gospel (or good news)? The Gospel is simply this, if we repent and place our faith in what Christ has done by substituting himself for us on the cross and rising from the dead, God promises to forgive all of our sins and to give us eternal life.

Forgiveness, therefore, is first and foremost a promise. As God promised not to hold the sins of repentant sinners against them, so we also must promise not to hold the sins of those we've forgiven against them. You may demonstrate this promise by not doing at least three things to the person you've forgiven. First, you may not bring up the forgiven offense to the forgiven person so as to use it against him. Second, you may not discuss the forgiven offense with others. Finally, you may not dwell on the forgiven offense yourself but rather remind yourself that you have forgiven Your offender, "just as God in Christ also has forgiven you."

*How To Help Angry Kids, Lou Priolo, P. 33-34

Counseling Issues (Semester One)
Week 1
Open Q & A

Emotions / Feelings

Week 2

Counseling Issues (Semester One)

WEEK 2:

FEELINGS / EMOTIONS

Emotions / Feelings: Teaching Session in Class

Common issues in counseling

Counselee governed by feelings

Idol: something placed above God, pursued even to
The point of sin

The idol of contentment

The idol of serenity

The idol of self-worth

The idol of being loved (male version)

The idol of being loved (female version)

Errant theology: "God wants me to be happy"

Fear / worry out of control

Belief in unbiblical teachings on feelings

Belief in unbiblical teachings on God's guidance

The goal is being at peace, no conflicts; not to glorify God

Thinking a lot about "how do I feel?"

Based on own theology

Based on previous counseling

Based on adoption of common societal beliefs

Thinking very little about "what does God's Word say?"

Infrequent or ineffective time in the Word

Watches movies for comfort or escape

Decision making practices

Small matters

Big choices

Scheduling

Parenting

“How do I feel?”

“How does my child feel?”

Love viewed as a feeling

Important counseling principles

What does the Bible say about feelings?

Connected to obedience

Not the goal, but a byproduct of the goal

Basic discipleship

Focus on what is true about God and circumstances

Express biblical love from God’s Word

Putting off sin

Leaving current beliefs, practices and goals

Putting on righteousness

Learning the truths of the Word

Putting hope in them

Defining life issues / goals biblically

Seeking God's love

Seeking peace from God

Perceiving circumstances as the Word defines them

Other important matters involving emotions / feelings

Counseling Issues (Semester One)
Week 2
Group Project

(Obeying God vs. Obeying Feelings study and journal are from livetheword.squarespace.com > resources > journals with Scripture [chronicles of transformation])

From your section of Scripture, write down applications for your own life today:
What must you think or do differently or better to live out these Bible verses in the matter of obeying God rather than obeying your feelings?

Discuss your applications with your group and listen to their applications of the same Scriptures.

Depression

Week 3

Counseling Issues (Semester One)

Real Life Stories

One man who had great success in the eyes of the world is in the hospital, diagnosed with depression. One morning he could not think of a reason to get out of bed. Two weeks later, his wife had him admitted to a mental health facility. He had a good paying job that he loved, a beautiful wife and an expensive home. Two years later, he was still in the private hospital. The Gospel held the keys to new life and a reason to live.

A 20 year old woman in the same institution described her life as a downward spiral of depression, with the low point of each cycle more severe than the last. She had no purpose for life. She had little hope that change was possible. Salvation by the forgiveness for sins through the blood of Christ could change her life, spiritually and in regard to depression. The care of God could infuse her life with a level of love and purpose she had not previously known.

A 22 year old woman cannot keep a job for more than a few weeks. That's the typical amount of time between episodes of depression. Her depression results in low energy and the feeling of worthlessness and lack of reason to fulfill her responsibilities. What does she wish would change? That her mother would love her. The Word has the answers for this woman.

A non-Christian man in his forties rarely leaves his couch. He was betrayed by his business partner (a long-time friend) and his wife had sexual relations with a man in their town. He is sad. He says he does not fear being hurt again, but he has no desire or energy to return to society. There are truths that are related to the Gospel that could save his soul, change his life and end his depression.

Keys in counseling the depressed

Build a relationship based on Christlike love, patience and kindness (often depressed people do not perceive that they are loved; true biblical love is often a prerequisite to having your counsel from God's Word heard)

From the beginning, communicate the great hope that God provides in his Word (by definition, the depressed person lacks hope...possible exceptions: the depression is a feeling caused by a physical factor such as medications, diet, illness or fatigue)

Gather thorough data

Use journals to get a detailed view of the exact thought pattern

Ask heart-level questions

What do you wish was different?

What would circumstances be if you were encouraged or at peace?

What is your biggest fear?

What events occurred around the time you begin to feel depressed?

What has changed in your life since?

Are you taking any prescription medications? What / what dose / how long?

Have there been other instances of depression in the past? What happened before/ during/ after?

What do you think about when you are down?

What do you think about when you are feeling better?

What do you hope happens in your life?

How do you think this depression will end?

How do you seek relief?

How do you think God views this situation?

What have others told you is the way out of depression?

If the Bible showed you how to deal with depression would you want to obey it?

Scripture

Hope from God's Word study

The answers to the data gathering questions reveal the nature of the counselee's depression and heart motives

Focus on the specific aspects of this person's thought pattern with pertinent Scripture

Through journals, cause the counselee to interact with the Scriptures (primarily hope) daily at the heart level

Monitor the responses to the Word: yielding the will / changing the thinking / trusting God / asking for His help / resistant / not hearing the truth / reluctant to let depression (and idols or unmet desires) go ?

Depression can result from dealing wrongly with:

Failure

Idols (desired love, respect, accomplishment more than pleasing God)

Rejection

Sins of others against you

A person's own sins

Grief

Laziness

How depression develops

May begin with grief or struggles with genuine difficulty

Turns to depression when the person begins to choose downcast, hurt feelings of introspection that result in not honoring God by carrying out their responsibilities (i.e., feeling sad, so they don't go to church, don't read the Word, don't take care of their home, late for work, miss work, eat out and don't cook healthy meals, stay away from friends)

Not dealing with sin biblically

Seeking idols of pleasure, being loved, success

Sins may include choosing to desire ease or success more than righteousness

Hope in God's love, purpose and help are forgotten

Focusing on failure, not getting what one wants or feelings (exalting self, not God) results in discouragement

Biblical truths about life are obscured by the obsession with problems

How depression can be alleviated.

Gather detailed heart level data on the desires, motives, thoughts and fears. Analyze the problem and realize the specific biblical course for change

The cure begins with repentance from sin and focus on the solution (God's help and His Word) rather than the problems

One by one, help the counselee choose to obey God in their responsibilities

Hope from the Word may be essential

See Jay Adams' "Competent to Counsel," pages 116-127

Depression can be caused by meds: check PDI, WEB MD; gather extensive and accurate data

Have your counselee get a check up with a physician (thyroid, mononucleosis, heavy caffeine intake)

Our culture's view of depression

It is a disease, not a choice

Often, medications are prescribed

Resources for counseling the depressed

A Christian Growth and Discipleship Manual, page 87: "Depression: Help for Overcoming Depression"

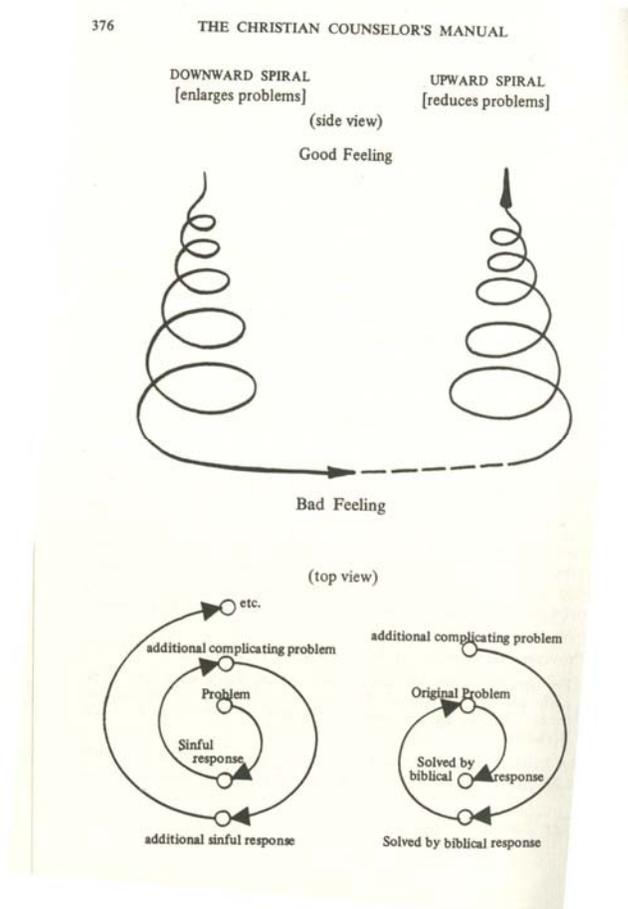
A Christian Growth and Discipleship Manual, pages 35-75: Studies that give hope

*Students: be aware of these studies; you are not required to read them as part of this course

Tom Aylward's Writing:

Dr. Dan Wickert, M.D.,¹ defined depression as: a debilitating mood, feeling, or attitude of hopelessness, which become a person's reason for not handling the most important issues of life. Depression is feeling oriented and those feelings often become the basis for actions.

However, the Scriptures clearly indicate that behavior determines feelings, and sinful responses to problems exacerbate the problems creating additional complicating problems. This if not responded to biblically spirals a person into guilt, shame, fear, anxiety and depression (see diagram² below).



The account of Cain (Gen. 4:3-7) and Elijah (1 Kings 19) illustrate this truth. People feel bad because of bad behavior (Ps. 34:12, 13). David's un-confessed sin affected both his body and soul and wore on him like "the fever heat of summer" (Ps. 32:3, 4). Adams notes "depressed persons whose symptoms fail to show any sign of biochemical root should be counseled on the assumption that they are depressed by guilt."³ That guilt is a direct result of sin.

There must be changed thinking and changed behavior to alleviate depression. God's Word provides hope for the depressed person (1 Cor. 10:13; Phil. 3:14; Rom. 8:28, 29). The downward cycle of sin and faulty responses must be replaced with an upward cycle of righteousness. The person must address each complicating problem biblically by confession of sin (1 Jn. 1:9) before God and man if necessary and begin to change their thinking about feelings, problems and depression (Jn. 13:17; Jas. 1:25; Rom. 6:11). Help the counselee find biblical solutions to their

¹ Wickert, *On-the-Road Training*, (Portland, 2006).

² Adams, *The Christian Counselors Manual*, p. 376.

³ Adams, *Competent to Counsel*, p. 126.

problems by giving them homework with realistic goals and plans as well as a regular schedule. Once they start doing the right things, they will begin to experience peace and joy again. Adams diagram clearly describes this cycle of spiraling downward into depression and the reverse upward spiral to “good feelings” by doing the right things. The goal is not to alleviate their depression, but to help them please God (2 Cor.5:9).

Common homework assignments for counselees

Memorize Philippians 4.4-9. Pray daily for God’s strength to only think thoughts that comply with these guidelines of Scripture. Make a list of things to no longer think about and instead, things that are honoring to God to think about based on verse 8.

Daily confess all known and previously un-confessed sin. Choose to no longer think about these sins in terms of guilt or shame but rather only in the context of God’s great grace and forgiveness, giving thanks for His love and this freedom.

Progressive work on the daily disciplines (time in the Word, prayer, go to church, serve others), and personal responsibilities (work, home management, finances, personal grooming, maintain friendships and family relationships)

Counseling Issues (Semester One)
Week 3
Class Teaching: Depression

*Philippians 4.8-9

What to Think

Whatever is true
John 17.17 ... "Your Word is truth."

Whatever is right
Psalm 19.8 "The precepts of the Lord are right,
Rejoicing the heart.
The commandment the Lord is pure,
Enlightening the eyes."

Whatever is pure
Psalm 119.140 "Your Word is very pure,
Therefore Your servant loves it."

Psalm 119.9 "How can a young man keep his way pure?
By keeping it according to Your Word.
Your Word I have treasured in my heart,
That I might not sin against You."

*Item	Thought of Depressed	Thought of Depressed	Philippians 4.8
General	I'm a failure.	Life is hopeless and sad.	I'm thankful for this day.
Lost job	I can't do anything well.	My boss hated me.	I trust You: God has a plan.
Need job	No one will hire me.	If I feel better I will look.	To honor God I'll try to find jobs.
Mom unkind	I never filled her expct.	She doesn't love me.	I will love her as God loves me.
I'm alone	I stink at friendships.	No one loves me.	You are my refuge and friend.
Self	I am inadequate.	I'm not valued by others.	Saved by grace, live to obey God.
My enemy	Me.	Everyone.	Sin, the world, the devil.
My hope	Me.	Someone else.	God, His promises, his grace.

What to do
Focus on the spiritual disciplines each day.

Do not measure the day by how I feel, but by what I did to serve God and grow in righteousness (1 Timothy 4.7b-16).

*John 12.27-28

Problem: My soul is troubled.

Temptation to seek escape: what shall I say, "Father, save Me from this hour"?

Key perspective: But for this purpose I came to this hour.

Life defining purpose: Father, glorify Your Name.

Counseling Issues (Semester One)
Week 3
Case Studies

Case 1

What was desired that was not received?

Were trials dealt with unbiblically?

What crucial heart level data was gathered?

How was the love and compassion of Christ in the counselor important in this case?

What truths of the Word were key to change in this case?

What are the three most important differences between this person's thinking during depression and now?

Case 2

What was desired that was not received?

Were trials dealt with unbiblical?

What crucial heart level data was gathered?

How was the love and compassion of Christ in the counselor important in this case?

What truths of the Word were key to change in this case?

What are the three most important differences between this person's thinking before depression began and now?

Trials and Suffering

Week 4

Counseling Issues
(Semester One)

Trials and Suffering

God's Purposes in Trials

James 1:2-4 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, ³knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. ⁴And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

James uses the same Greek word, *periasmos*, to describe trials here in verse 2, trials again in verse 12, and the temptation which cannot originate with God in verse 13 of this first chapter of his epistle. How does God view these trials? What is His purpose for us? James, in concert with the balance of Scripture, gives us a clear answer here. The road to maturity, to being complete in Christ during our alien pilgrimage here, is filled with the bumps of difficult circumstances. The life of ease is not the way God has typically chosen as the forum for growth. This perspective, also reflected in Acts 14:22, and 1 Peter 1:6-9, shows us a purpose in hard days. We have the great opportunity to both please and honor our God by our faith and to simultaneously grow in the likeness of Christ.

Philippians 1:12-14 and 21-24 "Now I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel, ¹³so that my imprisonment in the cause of Christ has become well known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else, ¹⁴and that most of the brethren, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment, have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear. ²¹For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. ²²But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. ²³But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better; ²⁴yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake."

The divine purpose in trials which is illustrated here involves the gospel. Note the results of Paul's imprisonment: the gospel has been spread to a group of guards that would be unlikely to hear it. Look at the results of Paul's response to the trials: the outworking of her verse 21 statement of faith, "to live is Christ and to die is gain," is that he is a man who can be confident that life on earth will result in fruitful labor. Is the fact that his life can result in fruitful labor the result of his attitude, or is it that all believers may have such lives? Many have an attitude of pride that is manifested in a selfish desire for ease, rather than such an attitude of faith.

Romans 8:28 "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."

This well known and landmark verse speaks of "all things." Certainly within "all things" are every circumstance that will ever come our way. MacArthur, when preaching on this verse, supplied a message with three points. Each point was a component of "all things." He stated that according to this verse, God would cause all good things, all difficult things which happened to us, and even our sin, to work together for our good as His children. These incredible truths illustrated in a powerful manner the greatness of God's love. Because of His love for His children, He is willing to transform every circumstance of our lives, including the sins of others (a la Genesis 50:20) and our own past sins, to work together for our good in Him. Our God is an awesome God!

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

This verse, often used in biblical counseling, has much to say on the issue of difficult circumstances. *No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man*: the Lord conveys to us that many common themes in victimhood are not accurate when we stand before Him, Each set of circumstances is not unique, but common. There is nothing new or special about the situation of any counselee. *God is faithful*: the next reality in this verse deals with the Almighty. One of His attributes is faithfulness. His faithfulness is conveyed in two ways. He *will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able*, and He *will provide the way of escape also*. The combination of all temptation being common and God being faithful gives us a working theology for viewing everything that happens to us. Conclusion? Choose not to focus on self, on what is around you, or on the problem. Choose to look to the solution, the Lord Himself. Then you will be able to endure it.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; ¹⁷so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."

One of the tremendous results of trials is that we have the opportunity to find out that this verse is true. Does the Word of God really equip you for every good work? The fires and earthquakes and broken legs and heartaches of life will allow you to find out... Yes, it does!

Hebrews 4:14-16 "Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

Once more a blessed result of trials is explained. This passage is speaking about finding help in time of need. What help might we need? In the difficult spots of life, there are two kinds. We need mercy when we have chosen to regard our setting in a selfish way, when we have complained against God and judged ourselves to be worthy of greater comfort. We need grace to help when we are in the battle, diligently laboring to honor our Lord with actions based on faith in the midst of difficulty, such as are recorded in Hebrews 11.

2 Corinthians 12:9-10 "And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. ¹⁰Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong."

The blessed result of trials is gain stated here. Paul, had learned this after years of trials (as explained in the previous chapter): "God's grace is sufficient for me." We can rejoice over this. Suffering is difficult by nature. But God's intended outcome is to transform hardship into something good, something that helps faith grow and the forum to realize His grace is sufficient. Choose to view your trials in light of these truths.

Counseling Those with Chronic Pain

Introduction:

What do most people suffering chronic pain have in common? They know that the pain is real and they desire to have it end. Often, they adopt pain as their identity or defining characteristic. This self-perception affects how they approach the problem of pain.

Pain is felt, interpreted, and acted upon based on an ongoing agenda: to remove it and feel better.

Gather data to find out what the person is thinking and wanting. The counselee often comes to you with wants, hopes, fears and expectations.

Pain Described: What is Pain?

Pain is a bodily, physical discomfort. Pain means something is wrong in, but not necessarily with the body. It may serve as a warning system when something is wrong with the body.

All illnesses and misery of this life, including pain, result from the curse of sin (Romans 5.12-21; 2 Cor. 4.16-18; Ezekiel 18.4,20).

Pain may result:

- From actual tissue damage-disease (Romans 5.12-21; 2 Cor 4.16-18).

- When there is no discoverable tissue pathology or abnormality found:

 - The human body is not flawless

 - There are more symptoms reported than causes discovered.

 - Because medical science and physicians are limited.

 - From the way a person uses his thinking and body in responding to life situations.

Pain is perceived in the body: it is evaluated and interpreted.

- A person knows he has pain because he hurts-he says so.

- Attitude affects how one feels, evaluates and interprets pain.

- The intensity of pain can be modified by how one views pain.

Culture's View of Pain

- The culture's assessment: pain is bad.

- Do your best to get rid of it; cope, accept, and live with it; and do not let it control you.

- There is help to get you what you want: pain relief.

- Medical science claims it can give or help you get what you want: pain relief.

- Medical science also focuses on and emphasizes a person's inner resources: you take control of your pain.

Results of the culture's solution to pain:

- A self focus (not a God focus) that leaves the God of the Bible out of the picture.

- At best there is a temporary relief of pain.

- Futility.

- Dissatisfaction.

- Bondage.

- A downward spiral of increasing hopelessness and helplessness.

What is the Bible's Far Superior Answer?

The Bible's view of pain:

It is a given, a universal and inescapable part of life in a fallen world (Gen 3.16-17; Rom 5.12-21; 2 Cor 4.16-18).

Therefore the issue is not whether a person will experience pain or no pain but how one will respond.

Is it wrong to seek pain relief? 2 Cor. 12.7-10; James 5.14-16.

No. But, the focus should be on stewardship of the body and the overall bodily problem rather than pain and pain relief.

The Bible's far superior answer to the problem of pain:

It is being satisfied when pain relief doesn't come.

This satisfaction comes from growing and changing to be like Christ using the lack of pain relief as God's instrument for that growth (John 4.31-34; 2 Cor 5.9).

Pain when handled using biblical principles produces something far superior than pain relief: Christlikeness (Rom 8.28-29; 2 Cor. 3.18).

The desire for pain relief apart from good stewardship of the body focuses on the inferior goal of what "I want" thus taking attention away from the superior goal of God's purpose of His original design (Eph. 1.4).

Christlikeness focuses on what God is doing and His result, which is best for the counselee.

Application of these principles by the counselor:

Help the counselee answer the question, "How can something bad, be good?" God's way.

Help the counselee change his goal and thinking about the inferior goal of pain relief to the far superior goal of becoming like Christ.

Show the futility of his present hope, expectation, goal, and agenda of pleasant circumstances.

Questions to help the counselee think this through:

What relief has your approach achieved?

Where does the pursuit of pain relief (as your life goal) take you?

What will you do next if you get no victory now?

When the counselee's emphasis is on becoming like Christ, the focus of life is God-pleasing which leads to satisfaction, progress, and a potential for reduction of pain.

Being more like Christ is far superior to pain relief and is satisfying even when pain relief does not come.

Contrast the difference in the counselee's approach to life especially regarding pain, pain relief, and body problems and the approaches found in John 4.31-34 and a 2 Cor. 5.9.

Question to help the counselee think this through:

Why would God say "no" to pain relief?

How have you responded to His "no"?

What is the Creator's design for you?

Where is your focus: the pain or the gain?

Help the counselee change his thinking when he is faced daily with pain, the desire for pain relief and a body he does not want:

Develop mind renewal daily (2 Cor. 5.14-15; 10.4-5)

God is in the problem (Heb 13.5-6)

God is up to something (Proverbs 21.1,31)

God is up to something good (Rom 8.28-29; Gen 50.19-21)

God provides both saving and enabling grace (Rom 5.5; 2 Cor 9.8)

Help the counselee get moving when he is faced daily with pain, the desire for pain relief, and a body he does not want:
Help the counselee establish personal responsibilities based on stewardship that correlates with his physical ability and capacity.
Help them to function and complete personal responsibilities no matter how the counselee feels.

Conclusion and Application

When there is a daily focus on God, the counselee is growing and changing.
As a result, the counselee will not be controlled by the desire for pain relief (2 Cor 5.9; 9.8).
Rather, he will be using what he doesn't like and what seems to be bad to grow and change (Rom 8.28-29)
This is in part the lesson of the cross, taking what is foolishness to the world and using it for something good (1 Cor 1.18).

"Counseling Those with Chronic Pain" by Dr. James Halla (excerpts from a complete study, used with permission)

"Why?"

We live in bodies that feel pain, can suffer, and will ultimately die. It has been this way since the sin of Adam (Romans 5). Original sin, directly or indirectly, is a cause of our pain.

Man's will and God's sovereignty both exist, yet where one ends and the other begins is not something God has clearly revealed in this era. A comparison of two accounts of the same event illustrate this point. In Acts 2.37-38, Peter is asked question, "What shall we do?" by the multitude after they have realized they are guilty of the blood of the Messiah. He answers, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins." Peter attributes the responsibility for the crucifixion of the Messiah to their sin. Yet in Acts 4.28, Peter and the other believers are praying, and they say, "whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur," regarding the same events. Here, God preordained the execution of Jesus Christ. So, men chose to kill Jesus and they were responsible for that sin yet simultaneously God predestined it to occur. Both are true. Further, God does not tempt anyone to sin, nor could He possibly cause sin (James 1.12-18). Yet, in His sovereignty, He allows it (Job 1). Also, every man is responsible for his own sin (Romans 8.6-13). God may choose to show us the relationship of the choices of man and His own preplanned schedule in heaven, but He may not. He has not chosen to reveal these things in this age. For now, we are left with the fact that both exist.

Similarly, there are two factors in the issues of pain, trials and suffering. God is sovereign; yet the acts of men cause results. To say we know where one ends and the other begins in cases of chronic pain, undiagnosed illness and other various types of suffering and hardship goes beyond what God has revealed.

It must be noted that, while the above is so, there are also some causes of difficulty listed in Scripture. God disciplines His children to bring them to restoration (Hebrews 12.5-11). Our problems may be the result of our sinful acts (Galatians 6.7-8). They can also be allowed to show us our need to depend on the Lord and not trust in ourselves (2 Corinthians 1.8-9). It can be as simple as the fact that one person is unfair to another (1 Peter 2.18-25); or that God is allowing an opportunity to follow in Jesus' steps (same passage). It could be for the purposes of bringing glory to God or in preparing a heart for saving faith (John 9.1-7). Except for the case of

significant unconfessed sin, it is hard to know for certain what is the specific cause of hardship in a specific case. Even then, sorting out the weight of God's discipline, reaping what has been sowed, the results of the sins of others and other factors is often beyond human discernment.

Many people dwell on the question, "Why am I suffering?" Some have been falsely taught that life on earth is supposed to be easy. Jesus said the opposite, "In the world you have tribulation." He is the answer for such times; He overcame the world (John 16.33). Others selfishly desire a life of ease above all else, so they ask, "Why is this happening to me?" Others just wonder as a point of curiosity. Still others wonder if it means God has abandoned them. Sometimes when a person evaluates their heart, choices and circumstances from the light of the Word the cause of suffering can be understood. More often, only God knows.

In the lives of believers, we do know what God thinks about suffering. He intends to cause it to work together for the good of His child (Romans 8.28). Whether in this life (stronger faith, James 1.2-4) or the life to come (to have endured with faith will bring glory at Jesus' revelation, 1 Peter 4.13) one day we will all see that God worked for our good in times of pain.

Whether we know exactly why we suffer or not, God has told us what to do while in pain: "Therefore, let those also who suffer according to the will of God entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right," 1 Peter 4.19. And Philippians 1.20-21: ". . .according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I shall not be put to shame in anything, but that with all boldness, Christ shall even now, as always, be exalted in my life, whether by life or by death. For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain." The result of such thinking is this, "I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am," Philippians 4.11.

The Better Question, "How Can I Glorify God?"

When we are doers of the Word regarding the passages in Philippians just cited, there is purpose amid pain and peace coexisting with hurting. The heart set on the glory of God is focused on a higher goal than ending pain. Such a soul is content, because he or she is fulfilling the things God ordained as the opportunities to bring glory to Him for that day (Ephesians 2.10). When the day comes when the suffering ends, there is joy. But there is greater joy because the season of hardship brought glory to the Lord. There is rejoicing because that person found out once again that God's love was real, His Word was enough and His grace sufficient.

Hope From God's Word

This resource from the first semester is extremely helpful for believers in the midst of trials and suffering. The Word is God's chosen tool to equip them for this time. Along with the use of this study as a resource of truth for you and the counselee, their written responses in each section provide you with an ongoing detailed record of their heart in response to the hope God is communicating to them from His Word.

Keys to Counseling the Suffering

Build a relationship of friendship and compassion. Hurt with them. Don't assume you know their fears or why this is most difficult for them. Find out. Listen well to the answers to your carefully prepared questions. Find ways to communicate your love in Christ outside the counseling session. When you speak the truths from the Word that are new to the counselee, do so without reservation or apology. Along with the sovereignty of God, also teach of His purposes for the outcome of these things and His certain grace. Know that your responsibility ends with love and accurate communication of the Word. Leave the issues of the response of the counselee to the Word and the next change in their circumstances between them and the Lord. Fill your mind with confidence in the hope God gives in His Word, for you and for your counselee.

Data Gathering Questions for Counselors

What do you hope happens? What are you doing to cause that result?

What is your purpose for today?

For you personally, what are the most difficult aspects of what is happening? Why is that so hard?

What have other people told you about your situation?

What is God's view of your difficulty?

What do you think about your present circumstances?

What help do you seek?

Resources

PRIORITIES AND TRIALS

Based on each passage, what should your goal/focus/priority be on days like today, when life includes difficult circumstances of some sort? Read each passage, then write your answer. If God gives you other insights as to how these verses apply to your life, write them down as well. Pray, committing yourself to this way of thinking amid your trials.

John 12:27-28a

Acts 16:22-25

Acts 20:24

Galatians 2:20

Philippians 1:21

Colossians 3:1-4

1 Thessalonians 2:1-4

1 Timothy 6:11-16

Hebrews 11:8-12

Hebrews 11:13-16

1 Peter 2:18-25

1 John 2:15-17

Revelation 21:1-7

TURNING THE NEGATIVES OF LIFE INTO POSITIVES

- A. When we encounter difficulties in life, we often want quick solutions; God wants to use problems to train us and equip us . . .
- B. When we encounter “a want to get out from under the pressure”; God wants to use the pressure to make us spiritually mature. Sometimes our problems are the result of past failures and disobedience. God wants to use these problems to apply pressure to change. If we don’t learn from these problems, God will have to raise up new problems.

BENEFITS FROM PROBLEMS

- 1. Benefit of getting more grace from God.
 - Hebrews 4:16 Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

 - James 4:6 But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, “GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.”

 - 2 Corinthians 12
- 2. Self-examination.
 - 1 Corinthians 11:31-32 But if we judged ourselves rightly, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord so that we will not be condemned along with the world.
- 3. New insight into Scripture.
 - Psalms 119:71 It is good for me that I was afflicted, That I may learn Your statutes.
- 4. Unifying the family.
 - 1 Peter 4.1-2, 12-19
- 5. Uniting you with other Christians.
 - 1 Thessalonians 2.13-16
- 6. Developing Christian character and qualities.
 - James 1:2-5 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

 - Romans 5:2-5 ...through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God. And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope;

and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

Matthew 5

Galatians 5:22, 23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

2 Peter 1:4-7 For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.
Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love.

7. New opportunities for service.

Philippians 1:12-19 Now I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel, so that my imprisonment in the cause of Christ has become well known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else, and that most of the brethren, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment, have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear.
Some, to be sure, are preaching Christ even from envy and strife, but some also from good will; the latter do it out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel; the former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition rather than from pure motives, thinking to cause me distress in my imprisonment. What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and in this I rejoice. Yes, and I will rejoice.
For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayers and the provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ...

8. New understanding and ability to help others who are having problems.

2 Corinthians 1:3-7 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.
For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ.
But if we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; or if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which is effective in the patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer; and our hope for you is firmly grounded, knowing that as you are sharers of our sufferings, so also you are sharers of our comfort.

Counseling Those with Chronic Pain, presentation at NANC Annual Conference, 2004; CD and complete notes available from: www.soundword.com
Christ and Your Problems, booklet by Jay Adams
Pain, the Plight of Fallen Man, James Halla, Timeless Texts, 2002
The Power of Suffering, John MacArthur, Jr, Victor Books, 1995
Homework Manual for Biblical Living, vol 1, *Suffering*, p.170-172; Wayne A. Mack, P & R, 1980

Counseling Issues (Semester One)
Week 4
Teaching in Class: Trials and Suffering

Trials and Suffering

What are the difficult circumstances?

Why is this difficult for you?

Demonstrate compassion and Christlike love.

What help do you seek?

Offer true help (physical, financial, practical) and encouragement from Scripture.

What is true about God in relation to your situation?

Are you willing to seek to honor and glorify God as your purpose in this matter?

Help your counselee to view this season of life according to the hope of God's Word and the truth of His love.

Customize journals, memory verses, and readings from good books to help your friend grow to maximum intimacy with God.

Counseling Issues (Semester One)
Week 4
Discussion Questions

How can you communicate the love and compassion of Christ to someone who is suffering?

How can you get a person who is focused on pain relief to the point where he or she is ready to hear that there is another option as the focal point of thinking and goal of the day?

Would you try to determine whether the hard times could be God's discipline or not? If so, how would you do it? Why might this be important? Could you ever know for certain? What would you do with data gathered on this topic?

Counseling Issues (Semester One)
Week 4
Case Studies

A woman has suffered for five years with pain due to an inoperable malfunction in her spine. Her husband, a pastor, spends weeks at a time away from her because time is limited and he must do the work of the Lord. She has become bitter at her mate and bitter at God based on her predicament. At the initial counseling session, after gathering the above data, expressing your love for each and showing a few Scriptures that deal with their situation, what would you give as the outline of the general plan for counseling in the weeks ahead?

A 15 year old girl who is a strong Christian has suffered from migraine headaches for eight months. Her youth pastor has prayed for her healing; her parents are compassionate but distant. No one has shown her anything from the Bible about this kind of circumstance. How important would it be to develop a relationship that includes the compassion of Christ with this young lady? If it is important, what are three things you could do or say to express such care? In order of priority, what three things does she need to learn from the Word and then live by?

An elderly gentleman is living in a declining body. As this life slips away, he fears he will suffer more and he fears the process of dying. He is a Christian and knows he will be with the Lord; he fears all that might occur between now and then. How would you counsel him? What should be your attitude and demeanor? Why?

Theology of Sin / Disease / Weakness

Week 5

Counseling Issues (Semester One)

Physical Illness and Biblical Counseling

Introduction

The determination of what constitutes physical illness is no small issue in our world today. We need to differentiate between symptoms caused by measurable physical causes and the results of factors not connected to known or measurable physical causes. Please consider the following reports.

Resources and Studies

SIN, WEAKNESS OR DISEASE: THE QUESTION OF PSYCHIATRIC MEDICATIONS

An Overview

Issue	Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Volume 4, Text Revision; American Psychiatric Association; 2000	Scripture
Sexual relations outside of marriage	Sexual Desire Disorder	1 Thessalonians 4.3 James 1.14-15 2 Corinthians 12.21
Homosexuality	Gender Identity Disorder	Romans 1.24-28
Drunkenness	Alcoholism Dependence	Proverbs 20.1 Ephesians 5.18 Titus 1.7
Children who often don't listen or obey: scoff at authority. Anger is out of control, have self focused thoughts and desires	Attention-Deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorder	Proverbs 10.17 Proverbs 13.1 Proverbs 14.29 Proverbs 16.18 Proverbs 29.15

The professional mental health community in our society often deals with the items listed in DSM IV-TR from a viewpoint that the person is suffering from a condition they can't control. Prescription medications are sometimes given. Counsel often includes the words "illness" or "victim."

People coming for help with such problems (unresolved by the world's methods) have spoken of their own lives or the lives of others with the above behaviors with these words: "He suffers from ADHD," "He was born that way," "He's taking medications to help," "Alcoholism is a disease," and "It's not his fault." The view of man as a helpless reactor is not shared by God. What truths from the passages above summarize God's perception of these issues?

- Calling Sin, "Sin": The Bad News And The Good News

Some people dislike calling sin, "sin," because that term implies guilt and personal responsibility. That is perceived as bad news.

The good news is that, although all men have sinned and fallen short of God's holiness, forgiveness and a new life with God are available through the work of Jesus Christ on the cross (Romans 3.23-26). This results in peace (Romans 8.1,6).

The further good news is that followers of Christ, enabled by God Himself, can have victory over sin and temptation in their lives (1 John 5.3-5). In the mental health community prescription medications are usually not portrayed as the cure for the "diseases" listed previously. For Christians, God claims to be the source of victory over sin. For believers this is great news!

- The Believer's Process Of Change

For each passage, highlight the words and phrases that describe the Christian process of change, enabled by God's grace.

1 John 5:3-5

For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

Titus 3:3-5

For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. But when the kindness of God our Savior and *His* love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,

2 Corinthians 7:9-10

I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to *the point of* repentance; for you were made sorrowful according to *the will of* God, so that you might

not suffer loss in anything through us. For the sorrow that is according to *the will of God* produces a repentance without regret, *leading* to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death.

- 2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.
- 1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.
- John 15:8-11 "My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. "Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. "These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and *that* your joy may be made full.
- 2 Corinthians 12:9-10 And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.
- Psalms 119:9-11 How can a young man keep his way pure?
By keeping *it* according to Your word.
With all my heart I have sought You;
Do not let me wander from Your commandments.
Your word I have treasured in my heart,
That I may not sin against You.
- 1 John 2:5-6 but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.
- Hebrews 4:15-16 For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as *we are, yet* without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Write a summary of how victory over sin can occur for the child of God.

If you are a Christian today, give thanks to God for His love and this life in Him. If you are not, please consider your need for God's eternal forgiveness and the possibility of committing your life to Him as your Lord, accepting the free gift of His mercy through the blood of Christ.

- Weaknesses

The DSMIV-TR also lists a number of difficulties that they say are directly related to "stressors," that is, difficult circumstances or events in one's life. "Panic attacks," "acute stress disorder", and some forms of "depression", "anxiety" and "disturbance of conduct" are listed this way.

God provides tremendous hope for people who have faced or do face the storms of life. Christians who, with God's help, have chosen to view the difficulties in light of these truths of the Bible, have come to enjoy peace in Him. To get started on such a course, see the "Hope From God's Word" study on page 88 of this book.

Note: Medications and our health care system are of great help in prolonging the lives of those posing a danger to themselves. The faithful service of professionals often allows their patients to be able to hear and consider the truths of God's Word at a later date.

Note: It has been a great honor to observe God changing lives through His Word. When a man or woman has victory over long-term sin through the work of God in their hearts, there is great joy.

ADD / ADHD and ODD

Many sources in our culture these days teach that ADD / ADHD and ODD are disorders caused by a chemical imbalance in the brain. The answer to the problem lies in psychotropic drugs. However, if you watch the advertisements for such prescription medications or read their websites, it is clearly stated that if chemical imbalances exist, what chemical is out of balance is not known. The prescribed drugs do not alleviate the supposed but unproven imbalance, but only change behavior. Further, the drugs often have side effects if taken for an extended period of time.

Proponents of this way of thinking in the church say that the Bible does not speak about ADHD or chemical imbalances. However, as you read the following criteria for diagnosis, compare them with the Scriptures listed previously in this chapter. How many of the symptoms of these disorders are *not* addressed in the verses from the sections “Obey Parents,” “Treat Others With Kindness and Respect,” “Do Work for God’s Glory,” “Do Not Be Arrogant” and “Replace Anger With Doing Right”? These things are covered in detail in the Word! God teaches that these problems can be overcome and that they should be overcome. He is not giving us, in His Word, impossible tasks. Further, He offers clear instruction on how a child can deal with sin biblically, beginning with the Gospel but also including steps to put off sin and put on righteousness. Parents are also given clear guidelines on how to train children to obey God and medications are not necessary. For the Christian child there is hope: God does offer certain help to those who seek it and the result is growth in holiness, sanctification, becoming more like Christ. Consider the symptoms of ADHD and ODD. Notice that diagnosis is not based on a measure of chemicals in the brain, nor on tests of physical balances in the body, but only on observed behavior.

The document that defines these terms is the DSM4 (latest edition), produced by the American Psychiatric Association. The following quotes are taken directly from said volume:

“Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, ADHD, is diagnosed based on the following criteria:

Either six or more of the following symptoms of inattention have persisted for at least six months to a degree that is maladaptive and inconsistent with developmental level:

1. Often fails to give close attention to details or makes careless mistakes in schoolwork, work or other activities
2. Often has difficulty sustaining attention in tasks or play activities
3. Often does not seem to listen when spoken to directly
4. Often does not follow through on instructions and fails to finish schoolwork, chores, or duties in the workplace (not due to oppositional behavior or failure to understand instructions)
5. Often has difficulty organizing tasks and activities
6. Often avoids, dislikes or is reluctant to engage in tasks that require sustained mental effort (such as schoolwork or homework)
7. Often loses things necessary for tasks or activities (e.g., toys, school assignments, pencils, books or tools)
8. Is often easily distracted by extraneous stimuli
9. Is often forgetful in daily activity

Or, six of the following symptoms of hyperactivity-impulsivity have persisted for at least 6 months to a degree that is maladaptive and inconsistent with developmental level:

1. Often fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in seat
2. Often leaves seat in classroom or in other situations in which remaining seated is expected
3. Often runs about or climbs excessively in situations in which it is inappropriate
4. Often has difficulty playing or engaging in leisure activities quietly
5. Is often "on the go" or often acts as if "driven by a motor"
6. Often talks excessively
7. Often blurts out answers before questions have been completed
8. Often has difficulty awaiting turn
9. Often interrupts or intrudes on others (e.g., butts into conversations or games)"

"Oppositional Defiant Disorder, ODD, is diagnosed based on the following criteria:

- A. A pattern of negative, hostile, and defiant behavior lasting at least 6 months, during which four or more of the following are present:
 1. often loses temper
 2. often argues with adults
 3. often actively defies or refuses to comply with adults' requests or rules
 4. often deliberately annoys people
 5. often blames others for his or her mistakes or misbehavior
 6. is often touchy or easily annoyed by others
 7. is often angry and resentful
 8. is often spiteful or vindictive
- B. The disturbance in behavior causes clinically significant impairment in social, academic or occupational functioning.
- C. The behaviors do not occur exclusively during the course of Psychotic or Mood Disorder.
- D. Criteria are not met for Conduct Disorder, and, if the individual is age 18 years or older, criteria are not met for Antisocial Personality Disorder."

As stated, the experts who write these definitions and prescribe drugs for their treatment believe that if there is such a thing as a chemical imbalance, the medications do not directly address it. Also, long term use of these medications is not endorsed, due to side effects.

If you are a Christian today, take hope. God addresses each of these issues in His Word. Certainly all of us have susceptibility to one temptation or another more than most people. But as in any other sins, they can be overcome.

I once counseled the parents of a boy diagnosed with these "disorders." As I got to know the boy and the parents, it was confirmed that he did most of the things listed in DSM4. The parents' form of discipline was to let him do what he wanted until they had had enough, then yell or say harsh words. The boy often hurt his siblings, cursed at his mother and disrupted his classroom.

After seeing all that the Word said about parenting and these so-called disorders, we developed a course of action. The father met with his son when the boy came home each afternoon. They read verses on the boy's temptations to sin and discussed the choices he would likely face in the next three hours. There would be consequences for his choices: to disobey God would result in the two meeting again and a spanking being administered; to obey God would result in the two meeting together and the father hugging his son, encouraging him and the two engaging in happy

conversation. In the afternoon meeting, they prayed for God's help for the boy to do right. They also discussed strategies for remembering what the Word said when temptation came. They talked about how to think differently than the habit pattern of acting selfishly. The father did his part consistently.

By God's grace, the ten year old boy became a Christian a short time later. For the first time he understood he was a sinner, needing forgiveness through the blood of Christ, rather than a boy with a disease beyond his control. The son loved God and was grateful for forgiveness and redemption. He also appreciated the grace of God in the process of putting off sin and putting on righteousness. His sin decreased steadily. He learned self control, love and obeying God even when he didn't feel like it. The home changed dramatically. It became a place of love, pleasant conversation and joy, for the boy, the father, the mother and the other children. Five months after the change in parenting, a month into sixth grade, the parents got a note from the teacher. Their son had become a hard working student, helpful, obedient to the teacher and kind to other children.

God has answers to all problems. He was glorified in the family that obeyed His Word. Choose this day to pursue with full energy counseling parents to obey God's Word.

Counseling Issues (Semester One)
Week 5
Teaching in Class: Sin, Disease or Weakness

Introduction

The Problem of Guilt

 Guilt, the Conscience and Sin

 The Solution

 The Application of the Solution to the Christian's Sins

The Proud Man Does Not Seek God's Solution for Guilt

 The Mental Health Community Assists this Agenda

 Sin is Renamed

 Sin is Excused

 "It is not my fault."

Sin, Guilt and Biblical Counseling

 The Unsaved Hear the Gospel

 Sinning Christians are Confronted

 Victory Over Sin

What is True About You and I?

 Ephesians 2.1-7

 Sin Persists; Victories are Won

 We Serve Guilty Sinners and Sinning Christians to Overcome Sin and Guilt

A Huge Problem in the Church

 Sin is Ignored

Praise God for Faithful Preachers and Counselors Who Proclaim Truth About Sin and Its Solution

Counseling Issues (Semester One)
Week 5
Case Studies

A man's wife left him and he was accused falsely of embezzlement at work within a span of two months. He has been seeing a "Christian psychologist" for months, with no benefit. They spend the hour each week thinking of things about which the man can love himself more and feel good about himself. He asks what you would do in counseling if he met with you. What would you say?

A woman believes she has a physical problem. Her energy level suddenly and markedly declined. Her husband doesn't believe it. He tells her it is all in her head. What questions would you ask to begin to gather data?

Counseling Issues (Semester One)
Week 5
Video

Anger

Week 6

Counseling Issues
(Semester One)

Anger: A Common Problem

A fifteen year old boy seeks counseling help. He is angry much of the time. He knows this is wrong according to the Word, but he finds himself thinking angry thoughts most of the day. He is angry at his parents because they sin against him and each other. He does not like to be at home. He is also angry at others at school: some because of their arrogance, others because they do wrong or stupid things, and others because they are fake. He has few friends. He complains frequently.

A mother of three uses anger to control her children. According to her, they don't respect her or obey her unless she is yelling. She has not considered principles of parenting such as training your children biblically and focusing on the heart (motive) level. This mother evaluates the success or failure of the day by one criteria: "Did my children do what I told them to?"

Arthur and Suzanne have been married for 18 years. Both are Christians. Nearly all conflicts end in the same way. Arthur expresses his anger with loud, harsh words. Suzanne fears his anger. After the outbursts, a week of silence goes by. Then the two resume normal life.

What are some common factors are involved with sinful anger?

- >>Habit patterns learned during the first 15 years of life
- >>Pride
- >>Anger at the sins of others
- >>Anger at one's own sins
- >>Not getting what you want
- >>The idol of ease and peace with all
- >>Responding to the anger of others
- >>Belief that anger is not sin if it is directed toward a person who did wrong
- >>Hurt feelings
- >>Hiding fear
- >>Trying to control others
- >>Feeling constrained by time, traffic or people

The Anger (Wrath) of God

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primary word; anger (6), wrath (30)
anger

- Mark 3:5 After looking around at them with *anger*, grieved at their hardness of heart, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored.
- Luke 3:7 So he began saying to the crowds who were going out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the *wrath* to come?"
- John 3:36 "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the *wrath* of God abides on him."
- Romans 1:18 For the *wrath* of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

- Romans 2:5 But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up *wrath* for yourself in the day of *wrath* and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,
- Romans 5:9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the *wrath* of God through Him.
- Romans 12:19 Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the *wrath* of God, for it is written, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY," says the Lord.
- Ephesians 2:3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of *wrath*, even as the rest.
- 1 Thessalonians 1:10 and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the *wrath* to come.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:9 For God has not destined us for *wrath*, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,
- Revelation 6:16 and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the *wrath* of the Lamb;
- Revelation 14:10 he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His *anger*, and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.
- Revelation 19:15 From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce *wrath* of God, the Almighty.

To Consider:

How does the anger of God differ from human anger?

When would the preceding study of the wrath of God be appropriate to use in counseling?

The Anger of Man

Spend at least 15 minutes to learn as much as possible from the "Overcoming Sinful Anger" study, pages 7-10, *A Christian Growth and Discipleship Manual*.

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primary word; anger (6), wrath (30)

- Romans 12:19 Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the *wrath* of God, for it is written, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY," says the Lord.
- Ephesians 4:31 Let all bitterness and wrath and *anger* and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.
- Colossians 3:8 But now you also, put them all aside: *anger*, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth.
- 1 Timothy 2:8 Therefore I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands, without *wrath* and dissension.
- James 1:19 This you know, my beloved brethren. But let everyone be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to *anger*,
- James 1:20 for the *anger* of man does not achieve the righteousness of God.

Sermon Notes for October 13-14, 2001

Gerry Andersen, Valley Bible Church

"The Anger of God"

Ephesians 4:26-27

Definition of anger (Webster): An emotional agitation of no specified intensity aroused by great displeasure.

The large majority of references to anger in the Bible refer to the anger of God.

The vast majority of the references to God's anger in the Bible speak about His anger against His people.

God is described repeatedly as slow to anger (Exodus 34:6; Numbers 14:18; Nehemiah 9:17; Psalm 86:15; Psalm 103:8; 145:8; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2; Nahum 1:3).

The Anger of the Son of God

Jesus is only described as being angry once (Mark 3:5). Jesus also appears to express the anger of God in the cleansings of the temple (John 2:13-17; Matthew 21:12-13; Mark 11:15-18; Luke 19:45-48).

The anger of Jesus was selective.

The anger of Jesus served others.

The anger of Jesus expressed His authority.

The Anger of the People of God

Ephesians 4:26-27 is the only verse that allows that the people of God to be angry.

The New King James Version provides the most accurate translation of Ephesians 4:26: "Be angry, and do not sin."

"Be angry and do not sin" is a quote from Psalm 4:4, where it is in the context of God's rebuke of sin.

"Be angry" is in the imperative mood: God's people are commanded to be angry.

"Be angry" is in the present tense: God's people are to be continually angry.

"Be angry" is in the middle voice: God's people are to be angry with regard to themselves.

The context of Ephesians 4:26 is the sin of God's people.

"Do not let the sun go down on your anger" reinforces the present tense of "be angry." It commands us to be never stop being angry about our sin (cf. Micah 3:6).

We must not give the devil an opportunity by allowing our sin to continue (Ephesians 4:27).

Our emotional agitation aroused by great displeasure concerning our sin is an essential part of putting off sin and putting on righteousness.

(The point of Ephesians 4.26-27 is to be angry at our own sin. These two verses are in the context of Ephesians 4.22-32, a passage about putting off our own sin and replacing it with righteousness. Based on the context, it could not be referring to anger toward others.)

Sermon Notes for October 6-7, 2001

Gerry Andersen

"The Anger of Man"

James 1:20

Definition of anger (Webster): An emotional agitation of no specified intensity aroused by great displeasure.

The wrong responses to the anger of man

1. The anger of man must not be expressed in any way.
 - Expressed in deed
 - Expressed in word
 - Expressed in attitude
2. The anger of man must not be expressed to anybody.
 - Expressed to others
 - Expressed to God
3. The anger of man must not be justified.
 - Justified by cause
 - Justified by comparison
 - Justified by character
 - Justified by conviction
4. The anger of man must not be denied.
 - Denied by ignoring
 - Denied by renaming
5. The anger of man must not be simply managed.
 - Managed by time
 - Managed by withdrawal
 - Managed by substances

The right response to anger of man

The anger of man requires repentance.

Repentance involves the heart: It is not simply our actions that demonstrate repentance, but it is our attitude as well. With regard to our heart, our anger must be replaced by forgiveness (Ephesians 4:31-32; Matthew 18:35).

Repentance involves the mind: It is not simply an event that triggers anger within us; it is our perception of the event that triggers anger within us. With regard to our mind, our anger must be replaced by faith (Hebrews 11:23-26).

Repentance involves the will: It is not simply our hope for change but it is our determination. With regard to our will, our anger must be replaced by peace (Matthew 5:21-26; James 3:18).

It is not enough to simply cease from sin. We must strive for righteousness. This is only possible if we first have peace with God (Romans 5:1)

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Read through the Anger Study and Journal in livetheword.squarespace.com >bible resources >journals with scriptures >anger pp 4-8.

Counseling Issues (Semester One)
Week 6
Class Teaching: Anger and Counseling

Important Principles for Biblical Counseling Cases Involving Anger

Anger may be expressed with words or actions or with silence and hurt feelings
Both are sinful

What about anger at others because of their sins?

Many scholars take Ephesians 4.26 out of context (a review of syllabus pages 227-229)
James 1.20 and Ephesians 4.31-32 make it clear that the anger of man is sin
Wrath and vengeance belong to God: Romans 12.19
How are Christians to respond when sinned against? Romans 12.18, 21; Ephesians 4.32

Why do people get angry?

They don't have / get what they want: James 4.1-2, Genesis 4.6-7
Habit patterns and pre-conditioning
Pride

Angry parents

Yelling and punishing in anger shift the focus of the child from their sin against God to the emotions and actions of the parent
Angry parents stir up the anger of their children (Proverbs 15.1)
The parents of a sinning child teach most effectively when instruction and training focus on the heart level choices of the child in regard to the counsel of God's Word

Essentials for counseling the angry person

Gather data
The desires behind the anger
The thoughts behind the anger
The actions of anger (verify the degree of physical expression of anger)
The motives for expressing anger

Use Scripture to define anger, the sinful desires, the expressing of anger, and the alternatives
Show biblical alternatives for desires, thoughts, and how to deal with the sins of others
Counsel the recipients of anger accurately from the Word of God
Repentance is vital
Journals reveal the most precise data and strengthen the counselee's conscience
Counseling does not end until a habit pattern of righteousness is evident
The counselor must never get angry (It may be difficult: Proverbs 15.1)
The counselor should fear God, not man: Galatians 1.10

Are contentment and peace possible in this life? Yes, but they are not accomplished by controlling other people with your anger

Philippians 1.20-21<----->Philippians 4.10-11

Choose homework that fits your counselee

Counseling Issues (Semester One)
Week 6
Questions to Discuss or Consider:

How and when do you sin in anger?

What were the reasons for the anger of others you have interacted with?

What are three steps to Godward change? (include Scripture)

What important truths did you learn in this study? (maximum ½ page)

Why is it difficult to counsel angry people? What Scriptures explain the answers to those difficulties?

Further Resources

The Heart Of Anger, Lou Priolo
The Peacemaker, Ken Sande
War Of Words, Paul Tripp

Pride

Week 7

Counseling Issues
(Semester One)

Common Pride Issues in Counseling

- ❑ Compares self favorably with others
 - Cutting humor at the expense of others
 - Talking about neighbors, relatives and co-workers as inferior
 - Focusing on the failure of others in areas of personal strength or ability
 - Downgrading one's spouse
 - Speaking to one's children as inferior, ("When I was your age...")

- ❑ Does not compare self with God

- ❑ Inconsistency in studying and applying the Word

- ❑ Sees the sins of others as large

- ❑ High self esteem and belief that pride is good
 - "I had to stand up for myself"
 - "There was no way I was going to take that from him"
 - "How dare she talk to *me* that way"
 - "Looking out for number one"
 - "I believe in myself"
 - "You can do anything if you put your mind to it"
 - "You really do create your own destiny"

- ❑ Lives by own priorities, standards, truths-not God's

- ❑ Children who are arrogant
 - Manipulate parents (by anger, guilt, acting sad, comparing to what friends get to do) to get what they want.
 - Measure the day by "Did I get what I wanted?" not "Did I obey God and my parents?"
 - Mock and demean parents
 - Cry, yell, curse and threaten parents and other children if not obeyed
 - View self as smarter, prettier, funnier and more athletic than classmates

- ❑ Spouses who blame shift
 - "I only got angry because you got angry first"
 - "That was nothing compared to what she did"
 - "There is no hope. His mental cruelty to me is cause for divorce."
 - "You have no idea how difficult it is to live with her. I think this is a test from God to see how much one person can take."
 - "Even if I did do that, it's nothing compared to what he did."

- ❑ Angry parents
 - “When I yell like that it’s good for them”
 - “I try to stay angry when I give them a spanking”
 - “I never said anything like that to my parents. I never did what my kids do.”
 - “You would be angry too if your kids...”
 - Angry looks
 - Silence...for days
 - Rarely speaking kindly or expressing love
 - “My anger is so much less than my father’s”

- ❑ Those who think everyone is against them

- ❑ Those who don’t resolve conflicts
 - “I *can’t* forgive”
 - “She has to come and apologize to me first”
 - “He started it”
 - “What she did was worse”
 - “I forgave her, but I will never forget”
 - “After a few days we both just forget we had the big argument”
 - “I wouldn’t know what to say or do”

- ❑ Those who don’t forgive

Important Counseling Principles

- ❑ Utilize passages and studies from the Word to convince the counselee that they sin
- ❑ Verify what the counselee believes about self and about the Gospel
- ❑ Gather data thoroughly
- ❑ Confirm data by other sources, other people
- ❑ Utilize journals to learn the counselee’s thoughts process
- ❑ Help the counselee to accurately view who they are and who God is
- ❑ Use studies on the attributes of God

- ❑ Describe the thoughts, words and actions of the person who is humble before God in a practical way

- ❑ Do not minimize the sin of pride

- ❑ Do not settle for partial change

Pride

(Pride: exalting myself above God and others)

Proverbs 8:13

The fear of the Lord is to hate evil,
Pride and arrogance and the evil way.
And the perverted mouth, I hate.

Proverbs 11:2

When pride comes, then comes dishonor,
But with the humble is wisdom.

Proverbs 16:5

Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord;
Assuredly, he will not be unpunished.

Proverbs 16:8

Better is a little with righteousness
Than great income with injustice.

Proverbs 21:24

“Proud,” “Haughty,” “Scoffer,” are his names,
Who acts with insolent pride.

Proverbs 29:23

An angry man stirs up strife,
And a hot-tempered man abounds in transgression.

1 John 2:16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

Pride vs. Humility
(Humility: knowing who God is and who I am)

James 4:13-17 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow, we shall go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." ¹⁴Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. ¹⁵Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and also do this or that." ¹⁶But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil. ¹⁷Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do, and does not do it, to him it is sin.

2 Corinthians 4:5 For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bondservants for Jesus' sake.

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.

Luke 17:5-10 And the apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" ⁶And the Lord said, "If you had faith like a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and be planted in the sea'; and it would obey you. ⁷But which of you, having a slave plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the fields, 'Come immediately and sit down to eat?' ⁸But will he not say to him, 'Prepare something for me to eat, and properly clothe yourself and serve me until I have eaten and drunk; and afterward you will eat and drink?' ⁹He does not thank the slave because he did the things which were commanded, does he? ¹⁰"So you too, when you do all the things which are commanded you, say, 'We are unworthy slaves; we have done only that which we ought to have done.' "

John 1:1-4 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. ⁴In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

Revelation 21:1-7 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. ²And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. ³And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them, ⁴and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death; there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away." ⁵And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true." ⁶And He said to me, "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. ⁷"He who overcomes shall inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son.

Read the booklet, "From Pride to Humility"

Read through the following resources in *A Christian Growth and Discipleship Manual*

Page 3 Getting to Know Yourself Inventory

Page 181 Relating to Other People Biblically ("One Another" Passages)

Page 187 Self-Image and Self-Love

Counseling Issues (Semester One)

Week 7

Teaching in Class: Pride

What was the Original Sin?

Pride is the Reason Temptation is Tempting

James 4.1-2

Philippians 3.19

How does Satan Tempt?

Genesis 3.6-8

Matthew 4.1-10

1 John 2.15-17

Satan tempts us through the promise of immediate pleasure, and thus pride

Pride: the Essence of Sin

James 4.6

Humility: the Solution to Sin

James 4.7

2 Corinthians 7.9-10

Pride: Part of Every Counseling Case

Defeating Pride

Luke 17.5-10

Philippians 1.1, James 1.1

Slavery: The Ultimate Humility

Counseling Issues (Semester One) Week 7 Group Project

For Groups of Male Counselors

Counselee writing about the problem:

I am a man. I work as a law Enforcement officer. My job is to uphold the law and keep our society safer. I see sin all the time in my line of work. Sure, some of my colleagues go over the line in how they treat prisoners, but if you saw the way these people treat us, you might do the same.

My problems are at home. My wife is threatening to go visit her mother and my kids are struggling to pass at school. My wife is always complaining about the kids. They're lazy and disrespectful, she says. I don't know. I think they just haven't matured yet. I know I'm supposed to do more as their father. It is true that I'm not home that much. When you are under as much stress as I am, you need to find time to relax and get the tensions out. So I go to the gym a lot, or I go watch the basketball games at Tony and Brain's house. But about the kids—I put food on the table. They have a good home. We have them in all kinds of sports to learn to work hard. I was kind of rough around the edges when I was young. I always tell myself they'll turn out okay, too.

My real problem is that I don't get enough respect. At work some guy who just graduated from college is always giving me a hard time about how I do my job. What does he know? And I hope you're going to tell my wife that she needs to appreciate all I give her, more than she does. She's got the kids thinking that way, too.

If it wasn't for the Lord, I don't know how I'd make it. I do spend time in the Word almost every day. I ask Him for strength to do my work well. He is the reason I can hang in there on the difficult days. I am different than most of the guys—I do my job to honor God. That's how I can be the calm one when there's lots of stress. He is my Lord and I am so thankful for His grace and His Word.

For Groups of Female Counselors

Counselee writing about the problem:

I am a woman. I have been married for 14 years. My mom told me that Jeff would never make it in the business world. I didn't believe her. So here I am, working overtime every week as a nurse, while he tries to get another degree for a new career. How do I deal with all this?

I do try to control him, but it is for his own good. What will our daughter think if he's still going from one career to another when she's a teenager? I think that if I didn't push him, he wouldn't accomplish anything. Some people say that the work he does on the side is so artistic, and he does make some money. But why isn't our kitchen as nice as the ones he's remodeled for other women? That one cabinet drawer still doesn't work right.

I know there is sin in my life. By God's grace I am working on treating my mom and my kids with less anger and kinder words. He's helping me make some real progress. But my sins are nothing compared to those of my husband. I think God is pleased at how patient I am with him. Just this week he came home two hours later than he said he would. And on Thursday he was gone all afternoon...he said he just went to play pool. He is so lazy. Then he yelled at me for no reason this morning. If he changed I know I could do a lot better at being a good wife. What am I doing wrong? Life is a mess.

Each group:

There are multiple problems with your counselee, but tonight please consider the issue of pride.

Discuss your case and the matter of pride versus humility. Then, as a group, answers the 3 questions.

1. What motives, thoughts, actions and words of pride have you noticed?
2. What two passages that address pride and humility would be most helpful for this counselee in the next two sessions? Why? What heart level questions would you ask in relation to each of the passages?

What three homework assignments would be the most effective in helping your counselee put off the sins of pride and replace them with biblical humility? How would these tools work toward that goal?

Lust

Week 8

Counseling Issues
(Semester One)

WEEK 8:

LUST

Common Counseling Issues Involving Lust

- Men viewing pornography
- Teens viewing pornography
- Viewing pornography and fantasizing about sexual relations
- Viewing pornography and pursuing unbiblical sex
- Marriage unfaithfulness by women
- Marriage unfaithfulness by men
- Single people sinning sexually
- Homosexual relationships
- Teen girls confusing love and lust

Important Counseling Factors

Gather extensive data:

- The progression of sin
- The level of desires
- The thought process when tempted
- Why is lust being pursued?
- Sexual history
- Perceptions of right / wrong
- What is the goal?
- What events occurred when the door to sin was opened?

Repentance must occur

- All opportunities for temptation, friendships / practices / places associated with temptation that can be eliminated must be eliminated

Focus on truths of the Word dealing with overcoming sin

Putting off this sin includes visual images

Putting off sin includes changing the thought life

The counselee must be determined to flee sin

The counselee must be determined to make no provision for lusts (Romans 13.14)

Putting on righteousness involves a biblical view of sexual relations in marriage

Putting on righteousness involves a disciplined thought life (Philippians 4.8)

Putting on righteousness involves a restructuring of friends, time, thoughts, priorities

Resources For Counseling Those Losing the War With Lust

Read and study these two items:

>>>*Marriage: Sexual Inventory and Questions for Discussion Between Husband and Wife*, page 20: *A Christian Growth and Discipleship Manual*

>>>*Lust and Sinful Desires*, page 134: *A Christian Growth and Discipleship Manual* (as you read through this study, also read the corresponding paragraphs below)

For further help (*not assigned for this course):

>>>“*Often Overlooked Biblical Principles Of Marriage*,” week 3: Intimacy; valleybible.net, Biblical counseling studies, Sunday School 2003, Wayne Johnston: view audio / video + print notes

To consider side by side with the Scriptures in “Lust and Sinful Desires,” page 134, *A Christian Growth and Discipleship Manual*:

Facts About Temptation and Lust

Many Christians who engage in sinful acts of sexual lust do not regard this as a significant sin. Some men excuse looking at women with lust or imagining engaging in sexual intercourse with those other than his spouse as healthy, part of being a man, how God made him or showing love to his wife by being able to have relations more frequently with her. Many single believers participate in sexual acts other than intercourse and do not view this as sin. The Scriptures in this section make it clear that these actions of lusts are sin in the eyes of God.

It is a choice for a Christian to give in to these temptations or not. We do not have to let sin reign in our bodies. God’s will for us is purity in this part of life. All believers have the capability of changing from being conformed to these former lusts to glorifying God by keeping this temple of the Holy Spirit pure in regard to sex and lust.

We live in an age of great temptation and access to images that entice the lusts. God is still God. With help to know and live according to the Word, every believer can have victory over these temptations.

View This Battle as War

Every person battling against fleshly lusts is engaged in a war against his or her soul. It is that important. But the mind can be transformed. We can prove what God's will is for our lives. Christians can walk by the Spirit and not carry out the desires of the flesh. We can develop habit patterns of not doing what we please. Our lives can be an example of God to the unbelievers around us. We can have victory over these lusts of the world.

We must take this matter as seriously as if war was occurring on the streets of our town. There is a war raging, a war against your soul, if you are engaged in gratifying fleshly lusts. To this anything else is naive and opposed to the wisdom of God.

Strategies to Win the War

Choose your associations wisely. Relationships with other people can either strengthen you to win the war or corrupt you and lead to defeat. Is any person more important to you than God? No friendship is of higher value than winning this battle.

Stay away from evil and its sources. The counsel of God, who made each person, is to hide from evil, flee from it when you do see it and to make no provision for it. This is key in winning the war. Radical changes are called for. For many counselees having cable television, keeping certain friendships and going to some places are tantamount to making provision for the flesh (providing easy opportunities to be tempted to give in to sinful lusts). Whatever can be done to eliminate contact with evil must be done.

Working diligently to put off sinful patterns of thinking and replacing them with biblical thoughts and images is an essential strategy for winning the war. The counselor needs detailed logs of what the counselee thinks and visualizes to understand the depth of the problem. The solution comes in helping counselees to create habit patterns of thinking things that are the truth of God's Word and that fit the categories of Philippians 4.8 whenever he or she has lustful ideas or images come back to their minds. This could come in the form of memorizing Scripture or immediately thinking of something that is true, right or honorable when past wrong thoughts and images return to the mind.

There is Great Hope for Real Change

The true believer is dead to sin and alive to God and should choose to believe this truth at all times. Sin shall not be master over a child of God. The Word contains all that is needed to grow in respect to salvation. This new way of thinking is a crucial part of change. Many counselees who have made a pattern of lustful sin come to counseling with a long term belief that they cannot change or that there is no hope. They must hear from you from the first phone call that you are confident that if they are in Christ they can certainly put off this sin and replace it with righteousness. We must always be confident in the promises of God and in the power of the Word and His Spirit.

The Purpose for Change: Love for God

The question is not can change occur, but will the counselee choose to love God. As counselors we will pray, encourage, exhort, confront, help, come alongside, love, admonish, teach and counsel. The final decision is between the counselee and God.

Theology of Lust

1937. epithumeo

1909 + 2372; desire, lust after

covet (3), crave (1), desire (4), long to (5), lust (2), sets its desire (1)

sets its desire

- Galatians 5:17 For the flesh *sets its desire* against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.
- James 4:2 You *lust* and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask.

1939. epithumia

desire (lust), longing for what is forbidden, passionate longing, literally, heat beneath

lusts

- Romans 1:24 Therefore God gave them over in the *lusts* of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them.
- Romans 6:12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its *lusts*,
- Romans 13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its *lusts*.
- Ephesians 2:3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the *lusts* of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.
- Ephesians 4:22 that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the *lusts* of deceit,
- 2 Timothy 2:22 Now flee from youthful *lusts*, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.
- Titus 3:3 For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various *lusts* and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another.
- James 1:14 But each one is tempted when he is carried away by his own *lust*.
- James 1:15 Then, when *lust* has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.
- James 4:2 You *lust* and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask.
- 1 Peter 1:14 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former *lusts* which were yours in your ignorance,
- 1 Peter 2:11 Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly *lusts*, which wage war against the soul.
- 1 Peter 4:3 For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, *lusts*, drunkenness, carousing, drinking parties and abominable idolatries.

- 2 Peter 3:3 Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own *lusts*,
- 1 John 2:16 For all that is in the world, the *lust* of the flesh and the *lust* of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.
- 1 John 2:17 The world is passing away, and also its *lusts*, but the one who does the will of God lives forever.
- Jude 1:18 that they were saying to you, "In the last time there will be mockers, following after their own ungodly *lusts*."

Passages regarding sexual purity (Lou Priolo tape)

1 Thessalonians 4:1-9
 1 Corinthians 3:11-20
 1 Corinthians 6:9-20
 2 Corinthians 10:3-5
 1 Corinthians 10:12-15
 James 1:1-8
 Romans 6-8
 Galatians 5:16-25
 Colossians 3:1-10
 Hebrews 12:1-17
 Mark 7:18-23
 Psalms 1:2-3
 Psalms 119:9-11
 Proverbs 5,6,7

*Further resources for counseling:
 Essay, Scriptures and Journal for Overcoming Lust*

Overcoming Lust

I have met many Christians who were losing their battle to overcome sins of lust. These men and women describe their lives with words like these:

How do I stop?
I hate what I do.
I hate myself.

I thought I was strong. I think I'm a Christian, but this thing controls my life.

What do I do?

I've tried to stop.
I'm losing hope.
I would have never imagined my life could be like it is today.

I've repented.
I told a friend about this.
I asked for help.

But here I am again, watching what I shouldn't watch, thinking wrong, sinning again.
I believe in the Gospel.

I want to obey God.
I am so confused.
Can I be a Christian if I keep sinning like this?

The Word of God describes the sins of lust this way:
Proverbs 7:7-10, 15-16, 18, 21-25, 27

And I saw among the naive,
And discerned among the youths
A young man lacking sense,
Passing through the street near her corner;
And he takes the way to her house,
In the twilight, in the evening,
In the middle of the night and *in* the darkness.
And behold, a woman *comes* to meet him,
Dressed as a harlot and cunning of heart.

Therefore I have come out to meet you,
To seek your presence earnestly, and I have found you.
I have spread my couch with coverings,
With colored linens of Egypt.

Come, let us drink our fill of love until morning;
Let us delight ourselves with caresses.

With her many persuasions she entices him;
With her flattering lips she seduces him.
Suddenly he follows her
As an ox goes to the slaughter,
Or as *one in* fetters to the discipline of a fool,
Until an arrow pierces through his liver;

As a bird hastens to the snare,
So he does not know that it *will cost him* his life.
Now therefore, *my sons*, listen to me,
And pay attention to the words of my mouth.
Do not let your heart turn aside to her ways,
Do not stray into her paths.

Her house is the way to Sheol,
Descending to the chambers of death

Is there any hope?
How can I change?

By the Word of God:

“How can a young man keep his way pure?
By keeping it according to Your Word”

“Whatever is born of God overcomes the world.”

“Do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey its lusts”

“Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against you.”

“If by the spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.”

You can have victory over lust.

What To Do

- 1) Repent of sin.
Stay in prayer until you can honestly say to God, “I turn away; I intend to never sin sexually again.” Eliminate all sources of temptation (websites, magazines, cable channels, friendships, and music connected with your lust must go).
- 2) Talk to your pastor, an elder or strong Christian man who will keep you accountable and pray for you. Tell them, in detail, every sinful action and thought. Set up ways they can check your internet activity, purchases, TV access and relationships.
- 3) Review the Scriptures on the next four pages every day, memorize one of them every week.
- 4) Complete the “Overcoming Lust” journal every day. Every week show all seven journals to the man you are responsible to. Fill your mind with the Word of God, prayer, music that focuses on the worship of God and conversations with people who obey the Lord.

Scriptures for Overcoming Lust

Closing the Door and Keeping it Closed

- 1 Thessalonians 4:3, 7-8 For this is the will of God, your sanctification; *that is*, that you abstain from sexual immorality.
- Proverbs 28:13 He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, But he who confesses and forsakes *them* will find compassion.
- 1 Peter 1:14-18 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts *which were yours* in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all *your* behavior; because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY." And if you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay on earth; knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers.
- Luke 6:46 Why do you call Me, "Lord, Lord," and do not do what I say?

Is it Possible to Change? Yes, and You Must

- Psalms 119:9-11 How can a young man keep his way pure?
By keeping *it* according to Your word.
With all my heart I have sought You;
Do not let me wander from Your commandments.
Your word I have treasured in my heart,
That I may not sin against You.
- Romans 6:11-14 Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.
- 1 John 5:3-5 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

Proverbs 6:32 The one who commits adultery with a woman is lacking sense
He who would destroy himself does it.

Relationships Can Help You or Hurt You

Galatians 6:1-2 Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are
spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; *each one*
looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. Bear one
another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.

Proverbs 9:8-10 Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you,
Reprove a wise man and he will love you.
Give *instruction* to a wise man and he will be still wiser,
Teach a righteous man and he will increase *his* learning.
The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom,
And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

Proverbs 7:21,27 With her many persuasions she entices him;
With her flattering lips she seduces him.
Her house is the way to Sheol,
Descending to the chambers of death.

1 Corinthians 15:33 Do not be deceived: Bad company corrupts good morals.

Proverbs 13:20 He who walks with wise men will be wise,
But the companion of fools will suffer harm.

Why Strive Against Lust? Because You Love God

John 14:21 He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who
loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I
will love him and will disclose Myself to him.

I Peter 1:6-9 In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if
necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that
the proof of your faith, *being* more precious than gold which is
perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in
praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; and
though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do
not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy
inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining as the outcome of your
faith the salvation of your souls.

John 15:8-10 My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so
prove to be My disciples. Just as the Father has loved Me, I have
also loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My
commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My
Father's commandments and abide in His love.

I Corinthians 7:3-5	The husband must fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband <i>does</i> ; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.
Romans 12:1-2	Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, <i>which is</i> your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.
For Married Men: The Goal is to Give Love to your Wife, Not to Get Pleasure	
I Peter 1:22	Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart.
I Corinthians 7:3-5	The husband must fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband <i>does</i> ; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.
Ephesians 5:25	Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her.
I John 3:16	We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.
I Peter 3:7-8	You husbands in the same way, live with <i>your wives</i> in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered. To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit.
Philippians 2:3-4	Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not <i>merely</i> look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

Journal for Overcoming Lust

Day:

Date:

I Peter 2:11-12 Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul. Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe *them*, glorify God in the day of visitation.

Genesis 4:7 If you do well, will not *your countenance* be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.

I John 5:3-5 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

Temptations to pursue sin in the form of lust today

What I did in response to each temptation

Why I did that (my motive to either pursue sin or to obey God)

How I drew closer or distanced myself from people who influence me to sin

How I drew closer or distanced myself from people who desire that I obey God

What I did to keep the door closed to all sources of sexual temptation and lust

What God observed in my thoughts and desires today

Prayer

Confess every sin (Revelation 3:19)

If you obeyed God, give thanks for His help (Romans 8:13)

Request help to obey God tomorrow (Hebrews 4:15-16)

Counseling Issues (Semester One)

Week 8:

Class Teaching: Lust

Keys to effective counseling in cases involving lust

- Gather heart level data
- Repentance is vital
- Deal with lust and other intertwined motives/sins/habits by specific teaching of the Scriptures
- Give clear detailed homework
- Carefully monitor motives, thoughts, and actions after repentance
- The goal is complete victory (Galatians 5.16-17, 1 Thessalonians 4.1-8, 1 John 5.3-5)

Case #29

Problems:

Counseling:

What to learn:

- There is value in giving practical guidelines
- Teach counselees how to change motives, thought life, and actions
- Test your counselees over a period of time
- Keep track of their progress in obedience on each level

Case #142

Problems:

Counseling:

What to learn:

- Call for repentance
- By God's Word and His grace even long term sin can be overcome
- Work through specific plans for dehabitation and rehabilitation

Case #174

Problems:

Counseling:

What to learn:

- Knowing God's grace and His Word overshadows even the most difficult trials
- Determine the priority of problems to address in counseling
- Work with the counselee who wants to change
- Hope is essential for one who is sinned against

Counseling Issues (semester One)

Week 8: Lust

Case Study

How to Counsel a Couple where Adultery has Occurred

- Verify facts
- Gather heart level data:
Why did this person choose to sin in this way?
- Repentance and forgiveness
Define each from God's Word
Both must occur
Each must be complete
Equip through Scripture
- Discover and deal with smaller sins
- Build a biblical marriage relationship
- Answer practical questions biblically
- The counselor must be strong in faith, love, and endurance

Case Study

The Sin

Why did this person sin in this way?

The Smaller Sins

Focuses on outward appearance and money

Lies

Separate lives

Much time with other friends, little time with each other

Repentance

The decision

The audible prayer

Ending all ties with the third person

Asking forgiveness from the spouse

Dealing biblically with public matters

Forgiveness

Matthew 18.21-35

"Hope from God's Word"

Building a Biblical Marriage

Marital roles

Learning to love

Communication

A new identity: mutual goal of growing in Christ

Helping, not judging

Practical Questions

Did they have to sell the house?

When should intimacy resume?

What guarantees can be given for the future?

How do you help him change motives, thoughts, and actions relating to lust?

Key Scriptures

John 13.3-17 Servanthood

James 1.22-25 Be a doer of the Word, not just a hearer

"Hope from God's Word"...for both

Matthew 6.25-34 Anxiety vs. Seeking God's kingdom

What to learn:

The counselor must be strong in faith, love, and endurance

Q & A

Death and Dying

Week 9

Counseling Issues (Semester One)

WEEK 9: DEATH and DYING

Death and Dying

Read Christian Growth and Discipleship Manual, pages 97-102

Counseling Issues (Semester One)

Week 9

Teaching in Class: Death and Dying

How to Counsel the Dying Christian

Develop a Helping Relationship

- Disclose motive: to love, serve and give
- Listen well
- Weep with those who weep, rejoice with those who rejoice
- Be willing to talk about difficult issues (and communicate this)
- When appropriate, just sit together quietly
- Give flowers, cards, gifts, and favorite foods

Instilling Hope

- At a proper pace, communicate the Scriptures from sections 1 and 2, pages 97-102, Christian Growth and Discipleship Manual
- Put pertinent scriptures on cards
- Provide audio of you reading the Scriptures of hope

Gathering Data

- What does God see in your heart?
- What goes through your mind?
- What is your biggest fear/?
- How can I help you?
- What concerns do you have?
- What questions would you like to ask me?

Interpreting Data

- Evaluate data by the Word of God

Providing Instruction

- Only say what is true from the Bible

Implementing Instruction

- Pray for your dear friend
- Check on progress or lack thereof

Counseling the Spouse and Family of the Dying Christian

Encourage each to repent of all sins against the dying person and ask for forgiveness from him/her

Help them to understand how to love, serve and give (keep the mindset that this time is focused on the one who is dying, not on self; meet physical needs, organize visitors, help with financial matters, accompany to doctor and hospital visits, and all the items from the "Developing a Helping Relationship" section, above)

Teach the biblical truth about grief

If necessary, kindly refute the "Cycle of Grief" developed by Elisabeth Kubler-Ross:

Shock – Denial – Anger – Bargaining – Depression – Testing – Acceptance

Kubler-Ross was not a professing believer. She was not attempting to describe the biblical theology of grief, nor of any of the seven components of her cycle.

Teach what is true from the Word of God about grief and about each of the 7 actions listed above.

Emphasize the truths of "Hope from God's Word" for the dying person and the spouse and family

Love and serve these souls as well

Counseling Issues (Semester One)
Week 9
Class Discussion and Q & A:

What is the most difficult aspect of counseling a Christian who is terminally ill?

In two sentences, write guidelines you should follow to keep the balance of 1) answering difficult questions honestly, plus speaking what is true; and 2) communicating Christlike love and compassion to the dying counselee or friend:

Marital Roles

Week 10

Counseling Issues
(Semester One)

Please read through the Husband Study and Journal and the Wife Study and Journal from "Chronicles of Transformation," livetheword.squarespace.net > resources.

Complete the journal that applies to you on three different days.

Marital Roles

- * HUSBAND: LOVE YOUR WIFE AND GIVE YOURSELF UP FOR HER; NOURISH AND CHERISH HER (EPHESIANS 5.25, 28)

As the leader of your home, you are to love your wife in a manner that entails all the aspects of love recorded in the Bible. In living out these truths, many types of words will be needed. Commit your way to speaking such communication.

Tell her you love her in many ways. Choose to protect her at all cost; let her know of your determination to do so. If anyone ever threatens her, let them know of your mission to defend your beloved. When you give gifts, take her on vacations and spend other money on her, interpret these tokens with words of your happiness for the honor of serving her and giving. Value her work, her worship, what she learns in the Word, her love, her parenting and her faith by asking about them, listening, encouraging and telling others of these things. Help her succeed. Know her heart. Know what she thinks, what she feels. Become intimately acquainted with all her ways. Strengthen her in faith. Help her overcome sin. Know what she likes and when possible, provide it. In words and actions, accomplish the purpose of pleasing her in intimate times. Ask and listen before you talk. Be more focused on giving than getting love, attention and happiness. The wife who is loved consistently in her husband's words and deeds is greatly impacted in a positive way. She rejoices in this love. It is a life-changing blessing. A man who obeys God in this manner brings glory to Him.

- * HUSBAND: SANCTIFY HER THROUGH THE WORD (EPHESIANS 5.26)

Sanctification is the process of becoming more like Christ (Romans 6.4-14). This form of change, putting off sin and putting on righteousness, is the occupation of every believer. The Word is the means to make progress in holiness for the glory of God (John 17.17).

Christian man, it is your duty to assist your mate in her quest for sanctification.

To succeed, your communication should include many different things. Create an atmosphere in which she is comfortable telling you about her struggles with sin. Express your love and your purpose of helping her. Ask her about her thoughts, her desires and her actions (good and bad). Know the Word so that you can apply it both to your own battles with sin as well as hers. Let her know about your inner man and what God sees when He examines your heart. Seek her help in growing in Christ (her responsibility is to help you; make it easier for her to do well). Come alongside as a friend. Encourage, reprove and exhort. Set aside time regularly for conversation. Keep her accountable. Work together to develop effective ways to study the Word and to live by it. Pray for her often. Find out why temptations are difficult (what is it that she wants). Pray together. Be serious about this journey toward greater righteousness. Lead her. Help her eliminate provisions for sin. Walk with her on this road. Express your love and companionship. Be the example of a believer who is confident in the hope God gives in His Word. View her battles with sin based on that hope. Help her to do the same. Give thanks for God's certain help to replace sin with obedience to His Word. Rejoice together in Him with each victory.

* HUSBAND: KNOW YOUR WOMAN (1 PETER 3.7)

The Greek word translated "Understanding way" in 1 Peter 3.7 can mean nothing other than that a man must know his wife well. This effort is a worthy pursuit in itself and will also benefit the husband who obeys God in the topics just covered. Communication is vital in knowing your wife well.

What is she learning in her daily time in the Word? How do these truths apply to her heart? What is she learning about her roles as Christian, wife, mother, neighbor and friend? How could you help her in her walk with Christ? What are her dreams, desires and will in regard to you, family, career, finances, home, ministry, extended family, children and hobbies? What are her biggest fears? What are her strengths? In what circumstances is her faith strong? What areas of her walk with God are weak? How could you help? How does she like to spend recreational time? What would she like to do? What would she like to talk about? What would she like to buy? What would she like to study? What does she think are important spiritual pursuits today in your life, her life, and the kids' lives? What are her thoughts about school, sports and outside interests for the children? You are responsible for these things. You must be the leader but also are to work together as one with your wife. What needs do her friends fulfill? Her mother? What temptations to sin exist in those relationships? Why was that movie entertaining to her? What things about her does she think you don't understand? How can you change that?

* WIFE: RESPECT AND BE SUBJECT TO YOUR HUSBAND (EPHESIANS 5.22, 33)

The Bible teaches that marriage is a relationship in which there is one person in authority and another who is subject to that authority. Wives are to respect their husbands and to subject themselves to the leadership of their husbands. For a woman of God to accomplish this effectively, corresponding words are essential.

Commit yourself to follow his leadership and tell him about your decision. When your husband glorifies God by leading you according to the Word, thank him and thank God for his faithful work. In times when you believe he is acting / speaking / choosing in opposition to the Word, respectfully bring up the issue (we are to do the same with others in authority over us). Make your objective clear: that he would honor God by leading the family according to the Scriptures. Your purpose is to help by initiating discussion. You will follow his final decision as to his judgment on how to best obey the Word in this situation. Have the Word of God as the basis of whatever you say. Honor him with your words in public and in front of your children and parents. Ask for opportunities to help him in his responsibilities. Offer your help in discussing the Word and decisions. Cause him to prosper as a man of God, a husband, a father, in ministry, in business and in relationships with others.

* WIFE: LOVE YOUR MAN (1 PETER 1.22)

To love with the love of God is to be an identifying mark of true Christians (John 13.34-35, 1 Peter 1.22). This is to be so in all relationships. Marriage is the one relationship among people that is for life. It is the only bond described in God's Word as "two become one." Marriage should be the place where love should be best demonstrated and most clearly lived. To do so in your marriage requires communication.

Convince your husband that you love him. Communicate this in different ways. Share his burdens. Walk through life together, caring for him and allowing him into your soul to love you. Appreciate your man. Speak to him with words and action. Forgive him. Know him. Encourage him. Strengthen him through studying the Word together. Keep him accountable in his service and commitments to God. Offer help. Let him know your thought processes regarding your service to him. Ask for his guidance. When you give gifts or go out of your way to ease his burden on hard days, explain the heart of love behind those deeds. The man who is loved in such ways by his wife rejoices greatly, is benefited immensely and regards the worth of his excellent wife as far above jewels. Such a woman brings glory to God.

* WIFE: BE A SUITABLE HELPER FOR YOUR MATE (GENESIS 2.18-25)

God thought it was not good for man to be alone. He created woman to be a suitable helper for man. In what areas of life does a Christian man need help? In his pursuit of holiness, sanctification and in honoring God by becoming more like Christ. In becoming a better doer of the Word. In areas of love, communication, wisdom, relating to others and decision making. In areas in which his wife excels but he does not. Christian wife, commit yourself to serve your husband by being his suitable helper. Make it your personal ministry to be a tool in God's hand to benefit him in all these areas. Communication will be a key to this process.

Encourage your husband. Notice what he does. Ask him what he thinks, what pressures he faces, what temptations he battles (not to judge but to pray and provide truth from the Word), what choices he makes and what his method of choosing has been. Know about his job, his co-workers, and his acquaintances. Find these things out so that you can share his life and be the closest of friends. A suitable helper also assists their mate in functioning in their number one ministry, to you. Tell him about you: your studies in the Word, your prayers, your heart before God, your struggles, your fears, your faith. Make his life easier. Supervise the home and children in his absence. Work to have everything in order so that his time with you and the family can include more conversation about life and God, more personal time and less time on things that could have been completed earlier. In word and deed, regard him more highly than your children. Know his heart, his desires, his strengths and weaknesses. Express love in a variety of ways.

Counseling Issues (Semester One)
Week 10
Class Teaching: Marital Roles

The Husband's Role in Marriage

The husband is to love his wife.

Ephesians 5.25 Husbands, love your wives.

1 Corinthians 7.3-5 The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

1 Peter 3.7 Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.

Proverbs 31.28-29 Her children rise up and call her blessed;
her husband also, and he praises her:
"Many women have done excellently,
but you surpass them all."

The mission of the biblical servant leader is to lay down his life for his wife.

Ephesians 5.25... as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her.

Mark 10.43-45 But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Philippians 2.5-8 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

1 Timothy 5.8 But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

The husband is to be involved in his wife's sanctification through the Scriptures.

Ephesians 5.26 ...that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word.

Sanctification is change toward holiness, becoming more like Christ, or replacing sin with righteousness.

Implications of the Husband's Role

*The thoughts and actions of a husband striving to fulfill his biblical role:

I work diligently to honor God as a servant-leader for my bride.

My wife's sanctification is her becoming more like Christ, not more like me.

I may plant and water, but only God can cause growth to occur.

The main ministry in my life is my wife's sanctification.

I am working to help her be more consistent in the Word (God's tool to sanctify her).

I am working hard to know and obey God's Word so I can honor God and so I can be of benefit to my wife.

I am involved in her life in areas where she is attempting to put off sin and on righteousness.

I pray for my wife.

I initiate time of talking openly so I can know her heart, her struggles, her victories and so I can encourage and strengthen her.

I know her and am working with her to become more like Christ.

I do lead her. I am not afraid to speak the truth even when she opposes it.

My motive is to obey and honor God as a husband.

In physical intimacy, my purpose will be to please my bride and express love.

She is more important than me. That's what I will think as I pray on the way home every night.

I seek to love her sacrificially, the way Christ loves me.

I do my work heartily for the Lord, not for men.

More than my glory or honor, my purpose in work is to provide for my wife.

I am thankful for my job because it is God's chosen tool for me to provide her.

Since Jesus is my example and He was perfect, I know I will not follow His example exactly. Nevertheless, because it is God's will for me, I will labor diligently to follow Christ's example of love and service.

When I do sin, I will openly confess my sin and ask forgiveness first from God, then my wife.

I think about how I can humble myself, empty myself and be obedient to God to the ultimate degree because that was Christ's attitude.

When there are conflicts in my marriage, winning the fight or hurting her back or making her pay for sin by being angry or cold will be replaced by resolving conflicts biblically.

When my wife sins against me I will not take into account her sins against me, but will point her to God's way of resolving conflicts.

By God's grace I will expend great effort to lay aside sin and run this race with endurance.

I will spend daily time in the Word so that I can fix my eyes on Jesus.

I will leave my mom and dad, emotionally and as an influence over me, and, along with my bride, develop an independent family that honors God.

I will be an example of a man who obeys God.

Some days will be hard. I purpose to view them in relation to the day I see God face to face so I will not grow weary and lose heart, but rather endure like Jesus did.

I will not compromise my commitment to Christ when my wife opposes it.

I thank God that because of His love I do not fear the Day of Judgment.

Because God loves me, I seek to love my wife in the same way.

I will find ways to express love and care.

I will spend time and energy to be a blessing to my bride.

There will be great times alone together, when she is loved and cared for.

There will be the example of a strong man of faith when circumstances are harsh.

There will be frequent times of talking and listening at the heart level.

There will be hugs and back massages and gentle kisses.

There will be words of love and appreciation.

There will be words of strong faith and Hope From God's Word.

The Wife's Role in Marriage

The wife is to be subject to her husband's leadership at the level she is subject to God.

Ephesians 5.22-24 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

Proverbs 31.11-12 The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain. She does him good, and not harm, all the days of her life.

The wife is to be a suitable helper for her husband.

Genesis 2.18 Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."

Proverbs 14.1 The wisest of women builds her house, but folly with her own hands tears it down.

Proverbs 19.14 House and wealth are inherited from fathers, but a prudent wife is from the LORD.

1 Peter 3.1-2, 5-6 Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives— when they see your respectful and pure conduct. For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are her children, if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening.

Proverbs 31.25 Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come.

Proverbs 31.30 Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.

A wife is to love her husband.

John 15.12-13 This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lays down his life for his friends.

Proverbs 21.9 It is better to live in a corner of the housetop than in a house shared with a quarrelsome wife.

Implications of the Wife's Role

*The thoughts and actions of a wife who strives to fulfill her biblical role:

I fear and honor the Lord in all parts of my life; this is helpful to my husband.

Because Jesus Christ loved me enough to die for my sins, I will love my husband with that kind of love.

As a wise woman, I will build up my house.

I respect and obey my husband, unless he tells me to sin against God.

My ministry to my husband will include encouraging him and helping him excel in his walk with God.

I will do right and not be frightened by any fear.

I will think of ways to support and help my husband to excel.

I am secure in God's promise to keep me safe for salvation on the final day.

My commitment to Christ will not change even if my husband demands that I sin.

I will serve and care for my husband in intimacy.

If we have the opportunity and ability, and under the leadership and direction of my husband, I will seek to develop businesses and investments to benefit our family.

I am a trustworthy wife, who resists every temptation to hurt or try to control my husband.

When we disagree on an important decision, I will trust God enough to be subject to my husband.

I will show our children and other people that I respect my husband.

When my husband seeks to help me grow in sanctification, I will appreciate it and make it easier for him to help me by openly disclosing my thoughts, sins, and struggles.

I will be a blessing to my husband by managing the household.

I will leave my mom and dad, emotionally and as authorities over me, and with my husband make an independent family that honors God.

I will do good to my husband in great times and difficult ones.

I will not be contentious by always trying to get my way, prove I'm right, win conflicts with coldness, or control conversation.

I work diligently first for God, then for my husband.

My home is a venue where I can serve and be a blessing to him.

I will work intently on being a suitable helper for my husband in his pursuits of obedience to God, success in his job, and effective ministry to our children.

I will not compromise my commitment to Christ when life is hard.

I thank God regularly for every kind blessing He has given me.

Because God loves me, I seek to love my man in the same way.

Love and care will be the theme of my life as a wife.

I will expend time and energy to be a blessing to my husband.

There will be great times alone together, when he is loved and cared for.

I will be a strong woman of faith when trials fill my life.

By God's grace I will grow in righteousness to please God and be a blessing to my husband.

When I sin I will repent and confess my sins in prayer to God, then confess my sins to my husband and ask him to forgive me.

I am glad to support my husband and be a blessing to him.

My role of being a blessing to my husband will include wisdom and prudence.

On lonely, sad days I will believe God's promises of sufficient grace and working all for good. This will enable me to still honor Him by loving, serving and giving.

There will be frequent times of talking and listening at the heart level.

There will be close times when I initiate physical love.

There will be many words of love and appreciation.

There will be words of strong faith and hope in God's Word.

Conclusion: Change

We all sin in some way, even though we are new creatures in Christ (1 John 1.8).

The Scriptures reveal areas where you can better obey God within your marriage.

As Christians, our occupation between salvation and heaven is to overcome sin, replacing it with righteousness (1 John 5.3-5, Ephesians 4.22-24). The Christian life is denying self and obeying God (Galatians 5.16-17).

I will make it a lifetime pattern to work to put to death my sins in this marriage relationship. Change in the direction of holiness will be the theme of my life and of our marriage.

Conclusion: Hope

There is great hope for growth in becoming a better husband or wife.

2 Timothy 3.16-17 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

1 Corinthians 10.13 No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

2 Corinthians 12.9-10 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

1 Peter 5.6-7 Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.

Hebrews 4.15-16 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

*Use as a starting point, or the beginning of thought about how to live out the Scriptures in your marriage. Add to the list with many applications of God's Word that are specific to your ministry to your spouse.

Counseling Issues (Semester One)
Week 10
Class Project

Marriage Theology and Counseling Issues (Part 1)

Week 11

Counseling Issues
(Semester One)

Submission

We are to be subject to God's authority above all else because He is the Lord. He has also created other authorities to be responsible for us and to rule over us. Each one presents us with an opportunity to honor our Lord by our submission. How are you doing in these aspects of your life?

In each printed passage from Scripture, underline or highlight the words / phrases that describe God's will for you in submitting to authority or in exercising it in a godly manner.

God / Christians

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

Galatians 5:16-17

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things you please.

2 Peter 3:10-12

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!

Jesus / Christians

John 3:36

He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.

Galatians 2:19-20

For through the Law I died to the Law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Church Elders / Church Attenders or Members

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13

But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction and that you esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Live in peace with one another.

1 Timothy 5:17-20

The elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE THE OX WHILE HE IS THRESHING, and the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses. Those who continue in sin, rebuke in the presence of all, so that the rest also will be fearful of *sinning*.

Hebrews 13:17

Obey your leaders and submit to *them*, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, this would be unprofitable for you.

The Government / Citizens

Acts 5:27-29

When they had brought them, they stood them before the Council. The high priest questioned them, saying, We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and yet, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching intend to bring this man's blood upon us. But Peter and the apostles answered, We must obey God rather than men.

Romans 13:1-7

Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same; for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil. Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake. For because of this you also pay taxes, for *rulers* are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing. Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.

Parents / Children Living At Home

Ephesians 4:29-32

Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a *word* as is good for edification according to the need of *the moment*, so that it will give grace to those who hear. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

Ephesians 6:1-4

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER (which is the first commandment with a promise), SO THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU, AND THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH. Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Philippians 2:3-4

Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

Husbands / Wives

1 Corinthians 7:3-5

The husband must fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband *does*; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife *does*. Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

1 Corinthians 11:3

But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ.

Ephesians 5:22-33

Wives, *be subject* to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself *being* the Savior of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives *ought to be* to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also *does* the church, because we are members of His body. FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must *see to it* that she respects her husband.

Colossians 3:18-19

Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be embittered against them.

1 Peter 3:1-7

In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any *of them* are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior. Your adornment must not be *merely* external, braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but *let it be* the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious sight of God. For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands; just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear. You husbands in the same way, live with *your wives* in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.

Principles of Submission

What a husband's authority is not

What a husband's authority is

What a wife's submission looks like

Our society's view of the idea of submissive wives

God's view of a wife who does not submit

God's view of a wife who does

Counseling Issues (Semester One)
Week 11
Teaching in Class: Marriage Counseling

Practical Truths for Marriage Counseling
Colossians 1.28-29

Proclaim Him

The focal point is Christ

In Him, husband and wife learn to love

In Him, husband and wife learn endurance

In Him, husband and wife learn to obey the Father even when wronged

Admonishing ("noutheteo")

Encouraging

Exhorting

Teaching the Word with wisdom

Psalm 119. 2, 4

Psalm 119. 89

Psalm 119. 92

Psalm 119. 93

Our purpose: That they become complete in Christ

The counselor labors for this, striving according to God's power

Counseling Issues (Semester One)
Week 11
Class Video

How the counselor balanced love and being the leader of the session:

How the counselor used the Scriptures as the basis of his counsel:

What I learned from this counselor:

Marriage Theology and Counseling Issues (Part 2)

Week 12

Counseling Issues
(Semester One)

Biblical Sexuality in Marriage

The sexual relationship between a husband and wife is addressed extensively in Scripture. Therefore it is a topic open for discussion, and necessary to discuss, in biblical counseling. The relationship during and in relation to intimate sexual encounters is often a clear indicator of the health of the rest of the marriage. Because of the emotions and passions tied to this segment of the marriage, often ideas and feelings are intense regarding this subject.

In this study we will examine principles of Scripture that address intimacy within marriage, provide some data gathering questions for counselors working with couples regarding this topic, supply questions for discussion, connect you with sound resources for counseling and further study, and finally, present case studies to work through.

The Word of God and Physical Relations in Marriage

1 Corinthians 7:3-5 "The husband must fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband. ⁴The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. ⁵Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control."

This passage illustrates the principle of selflessness found in Jesus' words in Mark 10:43-45. The life of a believer is serving others. Both husband and wife are committed to loving, serving and giving physically in intimacy whenever the other desires. The idea of the term "duty" is more than obligation, it is to do good to the other person. Serving with a motive of love and pleasing the mate is the idea.

To obey these truths requires faith, love and a commitment to submit your will to God. The result of years of following the teachings of this passage is generally a great blessing for each person. It has a positive impact on the marriage. This yielding of the will and serving of the other person is a picture of true biblical love. It should be the normal occurrence not only in bed but in all aspects of a marriage of two Christians.

The authority in this matter is equal. Each participant has the same authority over the other's body. This place of power is not to be abused but rather to be respected. When either party expresses desire for intimacy, the other will make all efforts to please them. The purpose of sensual contact is not for one's own pleasure, but for the pleasure of the spouse. Often, the manner in which one is pleased varies from person to person, from one day to the next. The question is not, "What do I think would please you?" or "What would I desire?" but "What do you wish?" The Scriptures are clear on this matter.

The only time a married person says "no" is for a previously agreed upon time of devotion to prayer. Even then, there is sexual activity again afterward. Intercourse is never denied because of anger, unresolved conflict, personal preference or exerting control over the other person.

Sexual relations between a man and a woman present a vulnerable and sensitive situation. For the couple who obeys the Word, it is a time of humility before God and yielding to their spouse. It is a cherished act of oneness and love. The bed is held in high regard; it is not lowered to becoming a tool to win an argument or a privilege withheld to gain control. The result of obeying God in these things is normally a sexual life that is joyful, fulfilling and a physical expression of oneness only possible in Christ.

Philippians 2:3 "Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; ⁴do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others."

Sexual activity in marriage is for the purpose of giving, not getting. The Christian who honors God lives as a servant. Applying this theme of the Bible to intimacy results in a clear mandate to measure your sexual relationship by the level of your mate's pleasure. Your priority is the pleasure of your spouse. If you are not known to your mate as one who is happy to serve and give, what type of control do you hold over them? In such a case, what is their perception of lovemaking?

To do well in this requires the gathering of information. What words, what touching, what caring acts would make the time together more complete for your spouse? Would a type of kiss, back massage, love note or something else during the day be a blessing to your friend? What specific position or touch would be most beneficial? What would your love enjoy most at this time? Often these talks take place at times other than before or during intercourse, but the knowledge gained enables you to accomplish your goal of love.

In many couples, one partner desires to engage in intercourse more often than the other. The principle of Philippians 2.3-4 and the directive of 1 Corinthians 7.3-5 make it clear that when physically possible and however feasible, a married Christian is to not deny, but rather please their mate. Each person serves and satisfies the other.

Our culture is filled with distortions of this beautiful gift from God. They take what God has created, a good thing to be enjoyed by married people (James 1.17), and twist it into a form that is evil and self-centered. Most presentations of sex in this era reduce it to lust and self-fulfillment. This is quite far from the picture of two people committed for life enjoying giving their mate intimate pleasure that is shared only in their own privacy.

The culture's view of sex is the opposite of how God defines love. It is for pleasure. It is getting and not giving. It is not connected to the bond of two souls laying down their lives in love for each other and helping, giving, serving one another as their way of life in Christ.

As in all arenas of life, the believer finds true satisfaction in serving and obeying the Lord. In a marriage where both partners follow this direction in every part of their marriage, each selflessly serves God, energetically benefits their mate and fully enjoys a sexual life that is a reflection of their oneness of love in Christ.

Some Practical Issues

1 Corinthians 7.3-5 gives freedom as to what type of sexual activity is proper. Each is free to please their spouse, causing them to enjoy fully the options for physical interaction within marriage.

Freedom is limited when the issues are thoughts and lusts.

In Matthew 5.28-29 Jesus makes it clear that fantasizing about someone else or about someone else's body at any time, including during intercourse with one's spouse is wrong. Many in our culture think that becoming aroused sexually by viewing attractive bodies on television or witnessing film of acts of pornography is actually helpful in keeping their sexual life active. This is an idea that opposes God's view. The Bible teaches clearly with the Greek word, "porneia," translated "immorality," in 1 Corinthians 6.13+18, Galatians 5.19 and 1 Thessalonians 4.3, that thoughts of lust or pleasure outside of one's mate are sin.

The motive of lust is getting, not giving. Pornography, perversion, pleasure and self-fulfillment are lust and not love. There is physical pleasure but not shared oneness. The body is there but

the mind is far away, lost in sinful lust. If you sin in this way, today is the day to repent. Turn and go the other direction. With the help of God's Spirit and His Word, you can have victory over this sin that wages war against your soul (1 Peter 2.11-12; 1 John 5.3-5).

Physical pain or difficulties must be considered within the framework of loving by serving one's companion. If your spouse is suffering, pleasing them will likely take on a different form.

Women may not desire to climax every time intercourse occurs. What she desires is her decision. The husband who is a doer of the Word is measuring the entire event by one thing: did he please her in the manner she wished? Sometimes what women would most enjoy is being held, kissed and cuddled as they fall asleep. If so, he is to satisfy her accordingly.

Bitterness can drain the passion from intimacy. Proverbs 21.9 says, "It is better to live in a corner of a roof than in a house shared with a contentious woman." The husband of such a woman knows this. The effects impact the bedroom. If you are characterized by bitterness in words, actions and attitude, replace this sin with a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience (Colossians 3.12-13). The person who lives these traits as a general way of life will be much more desired and much more effective in pleasing their mate in intimate times.

Data Gathering Questions For Counselors to Ask Counselees

Note: In the interest of discretion, it may be best to gather this information through written assignments. If possible, counseling of this nature should be done by a married couple of counselors, both present at each meeting. The counselor should always explain as an introduction to this topic that the Word speaks of these things, therefore they are worthy of discussion and that the comments made will not leave the room unless they include matters that could require elders or law to be informed (extramarital affairs or homosexuality not repented of, sex with minors and so on). The counselors must be professional and careful in these conversations. The end should be that counselors have gathered data and that counselees have spoken honestly about this part of their relationship. They have understood the truths of God's Word relating to sex in their marriage.

On what basis do you evaluate the status of your sexual relationship?

How do you regard your mate as more important than yourself in your intimate moments?

What are your thoughts and desires in regard to sex?

Do other conflicts in your marriage impact your lovemaking? How so?

How frequently do you have intercourse?

What do each of you desire in terms of how often you are intimate?

Outside of sex, how do each of you physically express love to the other? What would please your spouse in this?

How do the two of you differ in your thoughts and opinions about sexual matters?

What do you enjoy most about your physical relationship?

What are the most significant conflicts you have regarding sex?

Questions for Consideration or Discussion

How would the effectiveness of biblically counseling diminish if this area of the relationship were not explored?

What steps can biblical counselors take to not cross the lines of respect for God and counselee when dialoging about a couple's sexual life?

How can the counselor be sure to counsel from the Word and not personal experience or practices in his or her own marriage?

Resources

Intended For Pleasure, Ed and Gaye Wheat, Revell Books

A Christian Growth and Discipleship Manual, Wayne Mack and Wayne Johnston, Focus, 2005: pages 20-21: Marriage: Sexual Inventory and Questions for Discussion Between Husband and Wife

A Christian Growth and Discipleship Manual, Wayne Mack and Wayne Johnston, Focus, 2005 page 198: Overcoming Sexual Temptation

Biblical Principles of Sex, Dr. Robert Smith

"Often Overlooked Biblical Principles of Marriage," 6-week study on video, along with syllabus; Wayne Johnston; valleybible.net/biblicalcounseling

Case Studies

A wife withholds sexual relations to get her husband to give in to their unresolved arguments. What Scriptures address the sexual problem? From the Word, what else do they need to put into practice?

A man who has watched pornography intermittently for three years struggles to be interested in relations with his wife unless he views something obscene or thinks about having relations with someone else in his mind. What should he do now? (Make a complete list). Based on the Word, what course of change will you outline for him?

A wife who had an active sexual past (before coming to the Gospel and becoming married) has made a long-term pattern of comparing her husband to others sexually. What needs to change? Where would you start?

Counseling Issues (Semester One)

Week 12

Teaching in Class: Principles of Biblical Counseling in Marriage

For counselors it is a privilege to walk alongside brothers and sisters during marital adversity, serving them no matter how long or difficult the road becomes.

Comparing oneself with God instead of one's spouse may lead to replacing animosity with the camaraderie of pursuing sanctification.

Work with each counselee at the present level of spiritual maturity

More mature: strongly challenge to obey Scripture and grow

Unruly: admonish, be patient

Weak: help, be patient

Unbeliever: do not counsel as if overcoming sin is possible

Unbeliever: this is precounseling (communicating the Gospel)

Unbeliever: in case of serious or potential lawbreaking sins, give practical direction

If both equal spiritually: expect most change and work from the husband

Most participants in troubled marriages do not know how to selflessly serve, nor do they seek God's glory above all else.

Preconditioning can be a big factor.

God's grace will be sufficient for the counselor.

A sinning spouse who has neither broken the law, committed adultery, nor is under church discipline cannot tempt a Christian beyond what they are able (1 Corinthians 10.13).

Assemble a variety of teaching tools.

Use teaching methods and homework types best geared to each counselee.

The joy of a vibrant growing bond with God through the Scriptures is a greater force than the most difficult hardships in marriage.

Gather data on words, tone, and motives.

For the Christian married to the unbeliever, the goal of the relationship is evangelism, not seeking an easy life.

Leaving father and mother is sometimes the root issue.

It is vital for Christian husbands and wives to hear the truth of the Scriptures, to repent of sin and strive to obey the Word, and to communicate with each other the content of these interactions with the Almighty.

God's grace will be sufficient for a believer married to a spouse with long term or serious habits of sin, or with declining health.

The biblical counselor is responsible for speaking the Scriptures accurately, not for the counselee's response.

The biblical counselor measures each week and each case by how well God was honored in his or her motives, words, and teaching.

Counseling Issues (Semester One)
Week 12
Group Project

Marriage Theology and
Counseling Issues
(Part 3)

Week 13

Counseling Issues
(Semester One)

WEEK 13: MARRIAGE THEOLOGY AND COUNSELING ISSUES (PART 1)

Finances

A Review of Biblical Financial Principles Taught at Valley Bible Church

Philippians 4.10-19 (Dale Whitehead, March 2003)

- The heart desire of knowing Christ better (3.7-11) resulted in being content in every financial circumstance for Paul.
- The Philippians exemplified managing money as righteous people. By giving sacrificially they were storing up treasure in heaven, not on earth.
- The Philippians experienced the joy of knowing Christ better because it truly was better to give.

5 Options for use of short-term finances (Dale Whitehead, Jan. 6-7/Feb. 10-11, 2001)

- Taxes — paying taxes honors God (Mt. 22.15-22)
- Debt — debt can lead to enslavement (Prov. 22.7)
- Savings — moderate priority with God: encouraged but not commanded (Prov. 6.6-8)
- Support Lifestyle Choices — supporting basic needs of family is a high priority with God (1 Thes. 4.11-12) - supplying wants is a low priority with God (1 Tim. 6.7-8)
- Giving — generously, sacrificially, cheerfully (2 Cor. 9.11) — to earthly and spiritual family members in need (1 Tim. 5.8) — to the church, those who minister to our spiritual needs (1 Cor. 9.14)

Finances and Marriage: Advantages of Living Out A Plan and a Budget Together (Wayne Johnston, 2003)

Share the joy of working together for God's glory

Both: in conversation, encourage each other by being content with food and covering and not complaining or valuing wants highly

Both: choose to subject your will to God

Husband: effectively provide for your family and their future by choosing a biblical plan

Wife: faithfully support your husband's leadership by implementing and overseeing the plan

Husband: better facilitate your wife enjoying the good things God provides by making the best use of money

Husband: work heartily for the Lord and for the provisions of your family

Wife: be a suitable helper by effectively managing household supplies

Husband of a working wife: share in the burden of household duties, and thus care for your wife

Working wife: be thankful for the opportunity to help your husband by working

Both: go through the storms of difficulty together and undistracted from the goals of serving / trusting God

Husband: cheerfully work at the job God has provided

Wife: cheerfully do the work at home/job God has planned for you

Both: work together to give to those in need and to church

Husband: appreciate and be thankful for your wife's work to be a doer of the Word

Wife: appreciate and be thankful for your husband's work to be a doer of the Word

Husband: encourage your wife by showing her truth from the Word regarding the family finances

Husband: help your wife make progress in putting off sin and putting on righteousness in related areas

Husband: strengthen your wife with the Hope from God's Word

Wife: encourage you husband by showing him truth from the Word regarding family finances, leaving the conclusion of how to apply it to him

Wife: find ways to support, pray for, and respectfully encourage your husband to make progress in being a doer of the Word

Wife: strengthen your husband with the Hope From God's Word

Husband: rejoice in the blessing of being able to trust a faithful wife

Wife: may enjoy the responsibility of overseeing budget, cash flow and investments

Wife: rejoice in the blessing of being provided for by a faithful husband

Both: enjoy the blessing of sharing a life of God's type of love

Both: enjoy the long term benefits of savings

Both: enjoy the bond of oneness that comes from consistent labor to honor God

Both: enjoy the contentment of fulfilling the important duties God has given you

What must you do differently to enjoy such a life of blessing?

See valleybible.net for texts + audio + video of cited sermons

Resolution of Conflict Process

1. Confess your sin to God. (1 John 1.9)

Repent. (Proverbs 28.13)

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Proverbs 28:13 He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, But he who confesses and forsakes *them* will find compassion.

Confess (homologeō) means to agree with God, to say the same thing as He does. He hates sin. It is against who He is. To agree with Him is to say I hate it to. To repent is to say, "I'm turning and going the other direction." To repent is to remain in prayer until it can honestly be said, "Lord, I intend not sin against You in this way again."

To confess sin and repent does not include justifying sin or excusing it. These practices are the opposite of accepting responsibility, regarding sin as sin against God, and turning away from it. People wrongly think that circumstances were too hard, that many people sin in the same way, that it didn't really hurt anything or that the one sinned against deserved it. These ideas ignore God. Sin pertains to Him, not comparisons with other people. Such ideas oppose the honor of the Holy God.

2. Pray, giving thanks for your spouse and for these circumstances (1 Thes. 5.18)

Pray for strength to love fervently (1 Peter 1.22)

1 Thessalonians 5:18 in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for in Christ Jesus.

1 Peter 1:22 Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart.

List many things about your spouse for which you are thankful

Make a request for God's strength to love fervently

3. Confess your sin to your spouse; ask them to forgive you. (Matthew 5.23-24, James 5.16)

Matthew 5:23-24 Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering.

James 5:16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.

Even if your view of what happened is that your sin was 10% of the problem and your spouse's sin was 90% of the problem, resolving conflicts God's way is to take responsibility for your own sin and deal with it biblically. If we see our own sin as God does, obeying Him by doing our part (confessing it and asking forgiveness) is more important than the pride of waiting for the other person to ask you for forgiveness.

The topic of this conversation is your own sin, not your spouse's. Keep the focus on your sin. Explain what you did or said and why it was wrong according to the Word. Include saying what you should have done. Let your mate know you have confessed your sin to God and repented of it. If the same thing happens tomorrow you will not sin in the same way against them.

Finally, ask for their forgiveness. This puts the ball in their court. Wait for a response. Either way, you have done your part to honor God. Humbling yourself for God's glory pleases Him and resolves conflicts.

4. Stand ready to forgive any sin by them against you (if they asked: Ephesians 4.32/if not: 1 Cor. 13.5)

Ephesians 4:32 Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

1 Corinthians 13:5 love does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong *suffered*.

Forgiving as God in Christ has forgiven you means:

I will not hold this sin against my spouse
I will not bring it up against them in the future
I will not speak about it to others
I will not think about my pain or their sin again

Strategies to avoid the temptation to replay the sins and harsh conversations against you in your mind:

Remember God's gracious forgiveness of your own sin

Know that Christ's blood paid for their sin against you (if they are a believer; if not, know that such times are great opportunities to be an example of God's kind of love and forgiveness)

Think of all the things you are thankful for in your partner

Think of ways you can show love the rest of this day, to show you have forgiven as God does.

5. Love, care, give (Phil. 2:3, Ro. 14:19, 1 Peter 4:8).

Philippians 2:3 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves.

Romans 14:19 So then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.

1 Peter 4:8 Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.

Work diligently to show your appreciation for your spouse's forgiveness and / or the sincerity of truly choosing to forgive them as God does (thinking about our sin no more), by showing kindness, love and care throughout the day and night.

Balancing Physical and Spiritual Service

Husband

Physical / Spiritual

1 Timothy 5:8 But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

1 Peter 3:7 You husbands in the same way, live with *your wives* in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.

1 Thessalonians 4:11-12 make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you, so that you will behave properly toward outsiders and not be in any need.

Ephesians 5:26-27 so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.

Proverbs 17:17 A friend loves at all times,
And a brother is born for adversity.

Wife

Physical

1 Timothy 2:9-10 Likewise, *I want* women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments, but rather by means of good works, as is proper for women making a claim to godliness.

Titus 2:3-5 Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, *to be* sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored.

Proverbs 14:1 The wise woman builds her house,
But the foolish tears it down with her own hands.

Proverbs 19:14 House and wealth are an inheritance from fathers,
But a prudent wife is from the LORD.

Proverbs 31:15 She rises also while it is still night
And gives food to her household
And portions to her maidens.

Proverbs 31:17 She girds herself with strength
And makes her arms strong.

Spiritual

1 Timothy 3:11 Women *must likewise be* dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things.

1 Peter 3:2-6 as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior. Your adornment must not be *merely external*, braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but *let it be* the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God. For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands; just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.

Ephesians 5:22 Wives, *be subject* to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

Proverbs 21:9 It is better to live in a corner of a roof
Than in a house shared with a contentious woman.

Proverbs 31:11-12 The heart of her husband trusts in her,
And he will have no lack of gain.
She does him good and not evil
All the days of her life.

Proverbs 31:18 She senses that her gain is good;
Her lamp does not go out at night.

Proverbs 31:25 Strength and dignity are her clothing,
And she smiles at the future.

Proverbs 31:28-29 Her children rise up and bless her;
Her husband *also*, and he praises her, *saying*:
Many daughters have done nobly, But you excel them all.

Proverbs 31:30 Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain,
But a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.

Laying Down One's Life: The Biblical Servant Leader

Jesus, the ultimate example

Mark 10:43-45 But it is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant; and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.

John 6:38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

Hebrews 5:8-9 Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation.

1 John 3:16 We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

The mission of a man: to follow Jesus' example by being a servant-leader in His marriage

Ephesians 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself *being* the Savior of the body.

Ephesians 5:25-31 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also *does* the church, because we are members of His body. FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH.

Philippians 2:5-8 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Hebrews 12:1-3 Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

1 John 4:16-19 We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and one who fears is not perfected in love. We love, because He first loved us.

The thoughts and actions of a servant-leader husband

- My wife's sanctification is her becoming more like Christ, not more like me.
- I may plant and water, but only God can cause growth to occur.
- The main ministry in my life is my wife's sanctification.
- I am working to help her be more consistent in the Word (God's tool to sanctify her).
- I am working hard to know and obey God's Word so I can honor God and so I can be of benefit to my wife.
- I am involved in her life in areas where she is attempting to put off sin and on righteousness.
- I pray for her.
- I initiate time of talking openly so I can know her heart, her struggles, her victories and so I can encourage and strengthen her.
- I know her and am working with her to become more like Christ.
- I do lead her. I am not afraid to speak the truth even when she opposes it.
- My motive is to obey and honor God as a husband.
- I seek to love her sacrificially, the way Christ loves me.
- I do my work heartily for the Lord, not for men.
- More than my glory or honor, my purpose in work is to provide for my wife.
- I am thankful for my job because it is God's chosen tool for me to provide her.
- Since Jesus is my example and He was perfect, I know I will not follow His example exactly. Nevertheless, because it is God's will for me, I will labor diligently to follow Christ's example of love and service.
- When I do sin, I will openly confess my sin and ask forgiveness first from God, then my wife.
- I think about how I can humble myself, empty myself and be obedient to God to the ultimate degree because that was Christ's attitude.
- When there are conflicts in my marriage, winning the fight or hurting her back or making her pay for sin by being angry or cold will be replaced by resolving conflicts biblically.
- When my wife sins against me I will not take sin into account against me, but will point her to God's way of resolving conflicts.
- By God's grace I will expend great effort to lay aside sin and run this race with endurance.

- I will spend daily time in the Word so that I can fix my eyes on Jesus.
- I will be an example of a man who obeys God.
- Some days will be hard. I purpose to view them in relation to the day I see God face to face so I will not grow weary and lose heart, but rather endure like Jesus did.
- I will not compromise my commitment to Christ when my wife opposes it.
- I thank God that because of His love I do not fear the Day of Judgment.
- Because God loves me, I seek to love my wife in the same way.
- I will find ways to express love and care.
- I will spend time and energy to be a blessing to my bride.
- There will be great times alone together, when she is loved and cared for.
- There will be the example of a strong man of faith when circumstances are harsh.
- There will be frequent times of talking and listening at the heart level.
- There will be hugs and back massages and gentle kisses.
- There will be words of love and appreciation.
- There will be words of strong faith and Hope From God's Word.

Counseling Issues (Semester One)

Week 13

Teaching in Class: Marriage Counseling and Finances

1. Gather complete data
 - Income
 - Expenses
 - Debts
 - Thinking and motives related to money and spending money
 - Spending habits
2. Teach the truths of Scriptures
 - Motives
 - Thoughts
 - Actions
3. Call for repentance
4. Work with your counselees to construct the budget that best honors God
 - It must be followed
 - Envelopes with cash replace credit cards (if necessary)
 - Keep daily record of every purchase
 - Review all documents at weekly counseling sessions
5. Help them learn to believe the hope of God's promises
6. Help them learn to love, encourage and appreciate each other when progress is made

Resolution of conflict process

1. Sometimes the primary issue in a marriage counseling case
2. Do you practice dealing with sin biblically

Balancing physical and spiritual service

1. Both are taught in Scripture
2. The husband who serves physically but not spiritually
3. The husband who serves spiritually but not physically
4. The wife who serves physically but not spiritually
5. The wife who serves spiritually but not physically

Counseling Issues (Semester One)
Week 13
Open Q & A

footnotes from week 3...

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- ⁹ CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY, Millard Erickson, Baker, Grand Rapids, 1984
¹ SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, Wayne Grudem, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1994
⁶ CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY, Millard Erickson, Baker, Grand Rapids, 1984
⁵ CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY, Millard Erickson, Baker, Grand Rapids, 1984
⁷ CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY, Millard Erickson, Baker, Grand Rapids, 1984
⁴ SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, Wayne Grudem, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1994
¹¹ SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, Wayne Grudem, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1994
³ SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, Wayne Grudem, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1994