

Road to Emmaus

Biblical Counseling Center

The Need for Biblical Counseling, Definition and Goal of Biblical Counseling

Sept. 2019, Pastor Kerry Francetich

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Part One: The Need for Biblical Counseling

Introduction:

I. The Need is Based in Biblical History

- A. God never intended for man to be autonomous. (Gen. 1)
- B. Man was created in the likeness of God. (Gen. 1:26)
- C. Adam & Eve had all that man today craves: health (Gen. 2:7, 17), perfect environment (Gen. 1:25), all material needs met (Gen. 1:29-30), meaningful purpose (Gen. 2:15, 19-20), and companionship (Gen. 2:18-25).
- D. God clearly communicated the limitations on man's behavior and the penalty for disobedience. (Gen. 2:16-17)
- E. Satan tried to topple God's counsel by:
 - 1. Creating doubt about God's Word (Gen. 3:1)
 - 2. Leading to Eve Distorting God's Word (3:2-3)
 - 3. Denying God's Word (3:4)
 - 4. Denouncing God's Character (3:5)
- F. Eve listened to ungodly counsel and was deceived, and fell into sin (3:6; 2 Cor. 11:3)
- G. She yielded to temptation per 1 John 2:16 "lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, pride of life".

H. Adam then ate knowingly of the forbidden fruit. (3:6, 1 Tim. 2:14)

I. Their sin was more than just eating forbidden fruit. It was:

1. Disobeying the revealed commands of God.
2. Believing the lie of Satan.
3. Putting their desires above God's commands.

J. The same actions today will also produce the need for God's counsel, reconciliation, and restoration.

K. Sin brings consequences:

1. Knowledge of good and evil. (Gen. 3:7a, 10-11, 22)
2. Guilt (3:7b, 8, 10)
3. Broken relationship with God (3:8-13a)
4. Pain in childbirth (3:16a)
5. Distorted marriage relationships (3:16b)
6. Tiring labor (3:17-19)
7. Physical death (3:19, 22-24)
8. Spiritual death, separation from God (Rom. 5:12, 6:23)

L. Summary: The need for biblical counseling springs forth from man choosing to think and act contrary to God's revealed will. Today man still tries to run, hide, cover, and blame. Biblical counseling is very much in need.

II. Other Biblical Texts to Explore

- A. Genesis 4 with Cain
- B. 1 Samuel 13-31 on the life of Saul
- C. Romans 1

III. The Results of Man's Sin

- A. Vile iniquity (2 Tim. 3:1-4)
- B. Gross hypocrisy (2 Tim. 3:5-7)
- C. Opposition to truth (2 Tim. 3:8-9)
- D. Persecution (2 Tim. 3:10-13)

IV. The Answer to Man's Sin

- A. God gave us His inspired Word (2 Tim. 3:14-16)
- B. His Word is profitable to answer four key questions:
 - 1. How should I think and act? (teaching, doctrine)
 - 2. How do I know when I am wrong? (reproof)
 - 3. How do I change? (correction)
 - 4. How do I keep from repeating my sin over and over? (training in righteousness)
- C. The process of change is God's and the church's business.
- D. Through Biblical Counseling, by ministering God's Word, the church is adequately equipped to help hurting people be restored. (2 Pet. 1:2-4)

Part Two: The Definition and Goal of Biblical Counseling

I. Definition of Biblical Counseling:

A. Dr. Steve Viars' Definition:

- 1.) Discerning **thinking** and **behavior** that God wants to change.
- 2.) Using God's Word to **change** that thinking and behavior.
- 3.) For the **benefit** of the counselee and the **glory** of God.

B. David Powlison's definition, a summary of it from *Counseling: How to Counsel Biblically*, pp. 27-29: Counseling that -

- 1.) Places **God** at the center of the counseling,
- 2.) Acknowledges the authority of **God's Word** above all other authorities,

- 3.) Acknowledges **sin** in all its dimensions,
- 4.) Trusts that the **gospel** of Christ is the answer,
- 5.) Aims at **progressive sanctification** as the change process involved,
- 6.) Believes the situational difficulties people face are not random but within the **sovereign** rule of God, and
- 7.) Is fundamentally a **pastoral** activity and must be **church**-based.

C. Counseling that is Biblical...

- 1.) Recognizes the Bible as **foundational**.
- 2.) Recognizes the Bible as **sufficient**,
- 3.) Can be derived and understood by any growing **believer**, and
- 4.) Is **“elastic”** enough to grow with the counselor’s understanding of Scripture.

(The above is from Faith Baptist “On the Road Training” notes, 2003)

D. ACBC’s short answer:

“Biblical Counseling is **discipleship**. It is the personal **ministry of the word** through conversation. **Every Christian** is called to **speak the truth in love** to his neighbor and help them grow in grace. Believers should desire to **apply** the Bible to **every area** of life. The **goal** of Biblical Counseling is to present everyone **mature** in Christ by teaching with all wisdom.”

E. Dr. Scott Mehl’s Definition

“Biblical Counseling and Discipleship is the God-exalting, grace-saturated act of loving another person, through patient knowledge, sacrificial service, true speech, and consistent application of the gospel in order to help them become more like Jesus.”

** Pastor Kerry's definition: Biblical Counseling is intensive discipleship that brings God's sufficient Word and an understanding of His curriculum of life together to speak into people's lives to produce change into greater Christ-likeness for the believer unto God's glory.

II. The Goal of Biblical Counseling

While "goal" in the heading above is singular, there are obviously many goals of Biblical Counseling, but they are all driving towards one main goal that is multi-faceted. So in the points below, please consider them as points all contributing toward the fundamental goal.

- A. The goal of helping the counselee **change** to become the kind of person God intends them to be. (Col. 1:28)
- B. The goal of seeing the situations and circumstances in a person's life being God's curriculum for teaching the counselee how he is to **please** God no matter what. (2 Cor. 5:9, Gal. 1:10)
- C. The goal of helping the counselee progress in the process of **putting off** wrong thinking and behavior and **replacing** them with God's way of thinking and behaving as the mind is renewed (Eph. 4, Col. 3)
- D. The goal of pleasing God being the **primary** focus and solving the problem that motivated the counselee to seek counseling becoming **secondary** (Rom. 8:28-29)
- E. The goal of the counseling being **God-oriented** in every facet. (Phil. 2:10-11, Prov. 1:7)
- F. To restore the counselee to a right **relationship** with God and to becoming a useful vessel in God's **service** again. (Gal. 6:1, Ps. 1, John 15)
- G. To **glorify** God. (1 Cor. 10:31, Rom. 11:36, 2 Cor. 4:5, 1 Pet. 4:11)

Some Resources:

Competent to Counsel by Jay Adams

The Christian Counselor's Manual by Jay Adams

Theology of Christian Counseling by Jay Adams

Counseling: How to Counsel Biblically by John MacArthur

Christ-centered Biblical Counseling by James MacDonald – esp. article by John Piper and Jack Delk

Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands by Paul Tripp