

Counseling with the Gospel

Ephesians 4:11-15

¹¹ And he himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, ¹² to equip the saints for the work of ministry, to **build up the body of Christ**, ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of God's Son, **growing into maturity** with a stature measured by Christ's fullness. ¹⁴ Then we will no longer be little children, tossed by the waves and blown around by every wind of teaching, by human cunning with cleverness in the techniques of deceit. ¹⁵ But **speaking the truth in love**, let us grow in every way into him who is the head—Christ.

A Framework for understanding and counseling believers:

I. Identity through the lens of the Gospel: Saints, Sufferers and Sinners

Saints

Matthew 3:17; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Ephesians 1:3-14

Sufferers

Luke 9:22; Genesis 3:16-19; Romans 8:22-23

Sinners

2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 7:18-20; Matthew 15:17-19

II. Counsel through the lens of the Gospel: A B C

Assess the *situation*

1 Samuel 23:16 – a suffering saint

Bring God in

Psalms 34:18 – a God who is present

Communicate hope

1 Peter 5:10 – a Savior who saves

III. Prayer through the lens of the Gospel: A B C

Assess the *situation*

Bring God in

Communicate hope

I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who **remains in me** and I in him produces **much fruit**, because you can do nothing without me. John 15:5

A Saint, Sufferer and Sinner

A group member comes to you frustrated by their rebellious child. They've tried everything and nothing seems to work; everything is a battle, school work, chores at home, respect for parents and siblings. They're at their wits end and their marriage is starting to suffer for it. They're fighting more and more and ready to just call it quits, if they're honest. They feel like their spouse keeps blaming them, "if only you'd do more, take care of things like you're supposed to, get the kids to behave" on and on. They're just so tired of dealing with it and exhausted by their hectic lives. There's always some after school activity, homework or sports practice; weekends are spent with travel ball or birthday parties or house projects. They know they're supposed to be at church and CG but honestly it feels like one more thing to do and God seems uninvolved or uninterested in their situation anyway. They're trying to get there each week but it's hard. They admit this is a sinful attitude but at this point, they're just resigned to it and each day ends with hours of online scrolling just to escape it all. "What are you doing to keep it together in your family?" they want to know.