

# COUNSELING MINISTRY



## **Providing biblical counsel for all of life's situations**

First, our counseling ministry exists to provide a way to discern unbiblical thinking and behavior in individuals and lovingly and truthfully use God's word to demonstrate the need for growth and change for the benefit of the counselee and for God's glory. (Adapted, Faith Biblical Counseling Ministry).

Second, our counseling ministry exists to encourage individuals from the Word of God by ministering to the whole person. Our counseling ministry seeks to provide advice consistent with God's truth and in harmony with His nature and attributes, encouraging and calling people to respond to God by imitating Him.

## **Biblical Basis**

An important ministry of believers to other believers<sup>1</sup> is that of providing biblical counsel, encouragement, reproof and correction as needed. God has positioned believers to have the ability and access into one another's lives so that we may guide each other to Him and to the application of His Word. Believers find themselves in a variety of settings and situations in need of biblical correction, instruction and encouragement (1 Thess. 5:14). Believers have a responsibility to show love and care for one another by providing encouragement, advice, wisdom and support, which we often call counseling. Scripture outlines a variety of reasons why we should be involved in the individual ministry of the Word, biblical counseling.

- Believers are to admonish one another (Acts 20:31; Rom. 15:14; Col. 3:16).
- Believers are to comfort one another with the truth of God's Word (1 Thess. 4:18) and by pointing each other to the Lord, the God of all comfort (2 Cor. 1:3-7).
- Believers are to encourage one another and build each other up (1 Thess. 5:11; Heb. 3:13).
- Believers are to exhort each other (Acts 20:1-2).
- God's Word is sufficient to produce a mature man or women of God who is adequate and equipped for the good works the Lord intends for us. Scripture teaches, reproves, corrects and trains the submitted believer (Ps. 19:7; 2 Tim. 3:16-17).
- Believers are able to live godly and holy lives because God's power in us is sufficient for life and godliness (Rom. 8:1-14; 2 Pet. 1:3).
- Sin blinds, deceives and can carry a believer into lustful passions (Jer. 17:9; Heb. 3:13; 1 Thess. 4:3-5). When a believer is not walking in the Spirit, other believers can help them to see the objective truth of God's Word, and encourage and stimulate heart change (Lk. 17:3; Matt. 18:15).
- Believers have a responsibility to gently restore those who have been caught in sin (Gal. 6:1) by inviting them back to submission to God and obedience to His word (Eph. 5:18; Gal. 5:16; 2 Cor. 10:5).
- Believers are able to provide biblical wisdom and counsel (Prov. 11:14; 15:22).

- Believers are to call believers to live biblical and holy lives, helping them to overcome the snares and sin that entangles them (Tit. 2:11-15; Heb. 12:1-3).
- We want to bring the Word of God, which is living and true (Heb. 4:12) to bear in people's lives in practical and applicable ways.
- There is hope for life, regardless of how bleak our sin or circumstances may look. We are able to offer real hope in Christ and point people to Scripture in whatever situation they are in (Ps. 71:5; Heb. 6:19; Rom. 15:13).

## Theology and Counseling

The relationship and effect of theology on counseling

One's theology will affect how they understand and implement biblical counseling. It affects our approach, method, goals and purposes in counseling.

- Biblical counseling is the process of ministering the Word of God and applying theology to an individual in any given situation in life.
- Our view of sin and/or sinning can drastically affect our approach to counseling.<sup>2</sup>
- Our theology forms the theological and practical grid for our counseling. Scripture is a sufficient framework to help us understand God, the world, humanity and the problems encountered as these intersect.
- Scripture is not an alphabetized manual for life, nor does it attempt or claim to answer every question humans have. Neither is it a magic elixir to solve all the problems we have. To make it appear to do this, is at best naive, at worst arrogant and idolatrous.
- When rightly understood, Scripture will form a sufficient understanding to live biblically in all of life's uniqueness and complexness. We have sufficient truth to live life as God intends, both individually and with others.
- God is the one who changes, comforts, grows and strengthens people. A believer, therefore, has divine resources and ability in any situation that a non-believer does not. A counselor does not change anyone, but participates in the process.
  - Counsel for non-believers focuses on their need for salvation in Christ.
  - Counsel for believers focuses on their continued need to walk with God, for genuine repentance, and yieldedness to the Spirit.
  - We must not divorce God's Word from God Himself. It is God Himself who brings about change.
- We must have a healthy balance between theological breadth, spiritual depth and relational competency.

## Core Principles For Biblical Counseling

- Biblical counseling must be rooted in a developed and balanced theology (especially of God, man, sin, and salvation, to name a few important areas).
- The world is currently broken (not in harmony with God and His truth), and bears the effects of sin and death at the Fall. People are sinners, and act accordingly.

- Biblical counseling seeks to bring God's truth to bear in a person(s) life. The Bible is sufficient for all of life's problems.
- Listen well for in the listening you begin to hear their pain, felt reality, and how to best bring truth to bear in their lives.
- Biblical counseling focuses on the glory of God, by interacting with a person as an image bearer of God, not a problem to be solved.
- Biblical counseling recognizes the supernatural work of God to change people.
- Biblical counseling happens in a variety of contexts, ways, and places.
- Biblical counseling happens within the framework of the three theological pillars for growth: The Spirit of God, the Word of God, the People of God.
- Biblical counseling seeks to care for a whole person (spiritual, emotional, physical, relational) by seeking to identify causes and root issues, not just symptoms. Feelings are windows into the soul, which can offer a perspective, but they are not the issue, the solution or necessarily true.
- Biblical counseling's aim or goal is to see individuals continually conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. For the unsaved, they must first be saved.