Session 10 - KEY ELEMENTS IN THE BIBLICAL COUNSELING RELATIONSHIP

*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.* 2 Cor. 1:3-7

*but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.* Ephesians 4:15-16

This presentation includes a general overview of the biblical counseling process from building involvement, gathering data, speaking the truth in love, identifying and discerning problems biblically, loving confrontation, biblical instruction through counseling, assigning homework, and reviewing homework.

The biblical counseling process/relationship center in Scripture, leading and guiding of the Holy Spirit, and unceasing prayer. The key elements include knowing the person(s) and their problems, loving them through it all, speaking the truth in love, and doing the work necessary for transformation. In this presentation each of the elements are described in the counseling process. The graphic below shows this process:

A diagram of a prayer

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

I. KEY ELEMENTS IN THE BIBLICAL COUNSELING RELATIONSHIP – KNOW

A. Gather Information (Prov. 18:13, 15, 17; 23:7)

Building Involvement/Personal Data Inventory (PDI).

Use a PDI for each counselee to know more about them and their problems before the first visit. A copy of the SMCC PDI is included with this presentation.

We must know about them to help and minister to them.

Be willing to dig deep to get to the heart.

This may be helpful even in informal settings.

B. Extensive/intensive probing (Proverbs 18:17).

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** are shallower but you ask a lot of them. They regard a broad spectrum of aspects of life, covering a wide range. Then when you discern an area that may need help, you ask good, intensive questions that probe deeply into that area.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ – many questions about one area to reveal heart motivation.

C. Verbal/non-verbal communication:

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ data = what is said (actual verbs, phrases).

2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ data = how it is said (body language, tone of voice, eyes).

Listening is a requirement for information gathering – listen well (Prov. 18:13)

Listen actively for these things:

Blame-shifting.

Words like can’t, unable, too much.

Sin being called disorder/disease.

Reliance on feelings over facts.

D. KNOW: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Proverbs 18:2)

**Physical** information

**Resources**: What resources are available to the person that can help the process of counseling?

**Emotions**: (Genesis 4:1-8).

**Actions**: (Ps. 1:1-3, Ps. 34:12-14, Lk. 6:46-49, Js. 1:22, 25). Are the actions of the person in line with God’s Word.

**Concepts** (Mark 7:18-23, Romans 12:1-2, Galatians 5:16-21, Ephesians 4:22-24).

**Historical** information (Proverbs 5:22-23, Colossians 3:21, 1 Peter 1:18).

E. KNOW: Levels of Information Gathering

Trials: Circumstances, situations, problems.

Fruit: You will be considering observable manifestations, evidences, emotional affect, responses, feelings (objective presentation and performance levels).

Root: Don’t ignore desires, motivations, beliefs, obsessions, values, inner man heart issues (subjective preconditioning level).

Cross: What does the person know about God, and where does He fit into the person’s fruit and root?

II. KEY ELEMENTS IN THE BIBLICAL COUNSELING RELATIONSHIP – LOVE

A. LOVE: Biblically Defining the Establishing of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

How does the Bible define \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ involvement?

JESUS—Mark 1:41, Mark 3:5, Mark 3:14, Mark 6:34

PAUL—Acts 20:31, 2 Cor. 11:29, Eph. 4:15, 29, 1 Thess. 2:7-9, Phil. 1:7

JOHN—3 John 4

B. LOVE: Involvement Includes Compassion, Respect, and Sincerity.

Practical ways to show compassion:

Tell the person that you care for him/her (Philippians 1:8).

Pray for and with him/her (Colossians 4:12-13)

Rejoice and grieve with him/her (Romans 12:15).

Deal with them gently and tenderly (Matt. 12:20).

Be tactful (Proverbs 15:23).

Speak graciously (Colossians 4:6).

Continue to love and accept them even after they have refused your counsel (Mark 10:21).

Defend the person against those who mistreat and accuse (Matt. 18:21-22).

Be willing to assist in meeting physical needs if necessary (1 John 3:17).

C. How to show respect to someone.

Proper verbal communication – 2 Timothy 2:24-25; Proverbs 16: 21, 24

Proper non -verbal communication (S-O-L-V-E-R):

S – Squared shoulders

O – Open stance

L – Lean forward slightly

V – Vocal quality (volume/intensity reflecting tenderness/compassion)

E – Eye contact (w/o staring to make them uncomfortable)

R – Relational posture (not stiff or robotic, but not so totally relaxed that you appear to be bored)

Taking the person’s problems \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ communicates respect. Never minimize problems presented by the person.

Love \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ all things (1 Corinthians 13:7) - *Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*

It is never helpful to have a cynical attitude. If the person is insincere, you will use that as information to find out what he thinks it will accomplish.

Don’t be fooled or put off by the person’s manipulations (i.e. tears, changing the subject).

Express \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in the person. Paul rejoices in the work that God was doing in the Corinthians, although that church had more problems than any other church (2 Cor. 7:16; Phil. 2:13).

Welcome the person’s input. Ask for evaluation of sessions and suggestions regarding improvements.

Maintain \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Guard the person’s reputation as much as possible without disobeying God (Matthew 18:16-17).

Be honest about your goals and agendas.

Let the person know right from the start what you are trying to do and how you intend to do it.

It must be clear that God’s Word is the source of authority.

Be honest about your limitations as a counselor.

If you don’t know how to proceed, admit it and seek help (Galatians. 4:20; 2 Cor. 4:8).

Try to help the person not lose hope that God’s Word does not have the answers he needs.

Be honest about your weaknesses. Wise openness about your own struggles will demonstrate sincerity (1 Corinthians 2:1-3, 2 Corinthians 1:8, Romans 7:14-25).

Model, don’t ramble (Ephesians 4:29).

D. Give \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. God is the source of all hope and the Bible is a textbook on counseling (Romans 15:13, 1 Peter 1:3, Psalm 25:4-5, Psalm 42:5, 2 Corinthians 4:7, 1 Thessalonians 1:3, 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 1 Peter 1:21).

Christ is the Great Counselor (John 14:16), and the Holy Spirit is at work in the counseling room (Philippians 2:20-21).

Always give hope that problems can be overcome, even if the circumstances do not change.

Biblical counseling is not about the counselor or the counselee; it is about the Word and Spirit of God.

The person can, by the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit, become God’s kind of person for God’s glory.

Should nothing else change, the person still can gain a sense of hope as they embrace God’s sovereignty, grace, and glory.

III. KEY ELEMENTS IN THE BIBLICAL COUNSELING RELATIONSHIP – SPEAK (Proverbs 25:11-13).

Prior to speaking relevant truth into the situation, problems must be discerned thorough ongoing information gathering.

At the foundational level, problems must be defined biblically.

When a problem is defined differently than God’s Word defines it, it has been distorted. A wrong definition leads to destructiveness.

As you gather information, determine areas to cover and categories within that area. You must know your Bible. A biblical counselor must be constantly growing as a theologian.

People seek help because their life is hard (Proverbs 13:15).

Do a personal study so that you are familiar with all the NT lists of transgressions that make life hard (including Romans 1:29-31, Col. 3:5-9, Ephesians 4:25-32, 2 Timothy 3:2-5).

Speak – Give proper \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Instruction must be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Since the Bible is our Creator’s instruction manual for how to live life, it is foolishness to look elsewhere (2 Timothy 3:16-17, Psalm 19:7-11).

We must not confuse our people by combining the wisdom of God with man’s wisdom (Colossians 2:8, 1 Corinthians 12:20).

Instruction must be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Know the meaning of biblical words (hope, love, rejoice, joy, justification, sanctification, repentance, temptation, consider, confess, grace, forgiveness, sorrow, fornication, adultery, faith, idolatry, guilt, humility, pride, sin, wisdom, etc.) and use them.

Properly interpret passages in their context (use good hermeneutics).

Immediate context and larger context of the Bible.

Scripture interprets Scripture (i.e. Matt. 18:20 – church discipline)

Be specific —Know and apply your own life to the three-part biblical paradigm for change before teaching it - Put off, renew mind, put on (Rom. 12:1-2, Eph. 4:22-25, Col. 3:5-11).

Clearly differentiate between God’s directives and man’s suggestions.

Instruction must be appropriate. Don’t just use your favorite passages. Instruction must be individualized according to their problems.

Instruction must be appropriate to the person’s spiritual condition.

Saved or unsaved? Does he need to be introduced to the Gospel (John 20:31)?

A babe or mature in Christ (Hebrews 5:12-14)?

Rebellious, faint-hearted, or weak (1 Thessalonians 5:14)?

Instruction must be appropriate to the person’s learning style.

Visuals, pictures, simple charts, role-playing may be appropriate.

Jesus used stories to make a point.

Reading can reinforce what has been taught, but not everyone reads with comprehension or can read at all.

In discussion, be alert to what the person actually hears.

III. KEY ELEMENTS IN THE BIBLICAL COUNSELING RELATIONSHIP – DO (Luke 6: 46-49; James 1:22-25).

DO: Assign \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. What Is Homework?

Definition of homework in biblical counseling: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ homework leads to working hard in the areas where change is needed, training in the direction that God’s Word gives, and practicing biblical thinking and behavior (2 Timothy 3:17, Philippians 3:13-14).

Biblical examples include:

Matthew 19:21-22 — Rich young ruler (Go – sell – give – follow Me)

2 Kings 5:10 — Naaman (Go – wash)

Luke 3:7-18 – John the Baptist (Repent – produce fruit)

Matthew 7: 17-20; 24-27 – Jesus - (Produce good fruit – Build on the Rock)

DO: Why Give Homework? Homework is vital to turn the talk of the session into \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Talk alone is only therapy.

When homework is given, counseling goes faster

Work is not stopped at the end of the session, but is continued through the week.

Counselees are not dependent on the counselor.

Our people learn to take personal responsibility.

People see the changing power of God’s Word.

People learn the value of prayer.

Our people can readily gauge their own progress.

Homework gives \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as it says you believe things can be different today.

Homework teaches them the knowledge necessary to rightly respond and how to biblically handle their challenges.

Homework trains them how to respond to their challenges, conflicts, and obstacles. Homework helps to learn Scripture imperatives – what, how, and why of putting off the old man, being renewed in the spirit of the mind, and putting on the new man (Eph. 4:22-24).

DO: What Does Homework Look Like? Learning Scriptural teaching formulates a pathway in the mind; then an applicable, hands-on methodology brings about a paradigm for change.

God says His Word must be hidden in hearts in order for sin not to take place (Psalm 119:11).

Speaking of and meditating on God’s Word is necessary for success (Joshua 1:8).

As God works in us, obedience to His Word is how we work out salvation (Philippians 2:12-13). Homework is theology in action.

C\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, not abstract. Concrete homework is vital to change. To be concrete, homework must be:

Specific

Practical: It must involve knowing and doing. Connect Bible study to daily life.

Robust with practice.

Personally tailored for each situation based on data gathered.

Written – both in instruction and implementation (records).

Give clear expectations of homework and the person – otherwise the results will be vague and subject to the whim of the person.

Homework is tailored to the ability of the person (be sure he understands it and is physically able to do it). Have homework repeated back to you to be sure it’s understood.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ homework does not help the person change. Abstract homework:

Is about lofty ideas.

Lacks relevance.

Lacks application.

People don’t sin in the abstract. Be sure homework is specific, not abstract.

DO: How Is Homework Used in a Biblical Counseling Session?

Review previous homework at the beginning of the session (gather further data).

Neglected homework can lead to an understanding of the cause of problems. Gain commitment prior to assigning homework.

Assign new homework at end of each counseling session, that applies to the person’s life and problems to the biblical principles that have been learned.

DO: Specifics Of Homework - Prepare tentative homework that includes:

Bible reading

Scripture memorization

Extra-biblical reading material

Doing – action steps

Preaching = sitting under biblical preaching reinforces biblical counsel.

Prayer

Homework may include radical amputation (Matthew 6:29-30). This requires the terminating of influences that feed the failure and replacing them with godly influences.

Conflict lists.

Thankful lists.

DO: Beware of the dangers of assigning behavioral change without scriptural conviction and convincing regarding what Scripture says.

Watch for lack of commitment when homework is not attempted or completed.

Not being convinced or convicted by the Holy Spirit – God’s Word is the power for change.

Behavioral change alone fosters dependence on counselor. If the person is not convinced regarding what God teaches, and you ask him to make a change, if he does it he is pleasing you over God.

The greater likelihood is that he won’t be persuaded to do it and may fall away from continuing in counseling.

Biblical Counseling Process. Below is the biblical counseling process in action incorporating the key element in the counseling process. Please review the entire additional presentation entitled “Introduction to the Biblical Counseling Process” by Dr. Howard Eyrich. It is included with this session.

Build

Involvement

Gather

Data

Isolate

the

Problem

Determine

Direction

Rethink the

Problem

Confrontation

Give Hope

Gain

Commitment

Assign

Homework

Evaluate

Homework

Class Summary: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_