

# Introduction to the Biblical Counseling Process

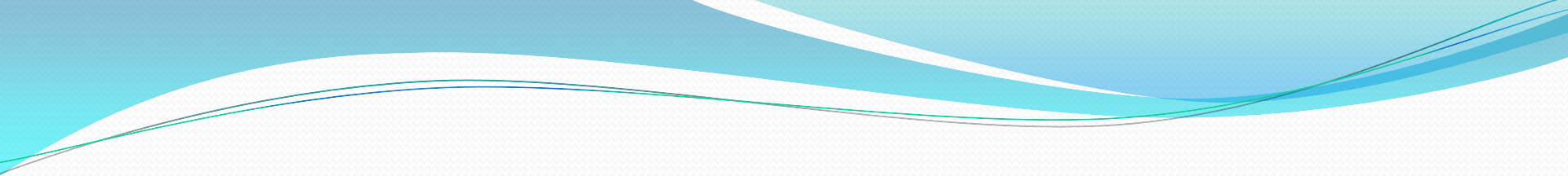
A Model Commonly Discernable in Biblical Counselors

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Use is granted for your personal counseling and teaching. If  
teaching is it expected that you will recommend the text,  
Curing the Heart publish by Christian Focus Publsihig

# History of Development of Model

- While teaching at CCEF in the early to mid-70's, I came to the conclusion that the work of Dr. Adams and my associates at CCEF needed to be packaged into a model that provided a logical process

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- During my second year of teaching at CCEF I first formulated this model.
  - It has been clarified and refined over the years
  - You will find it discussed at length in ***Curing the Heart*** by Howard Eyrich and William Hines.
  - I hope you will find it a helpful framework to process your counseling

# The Linear Process

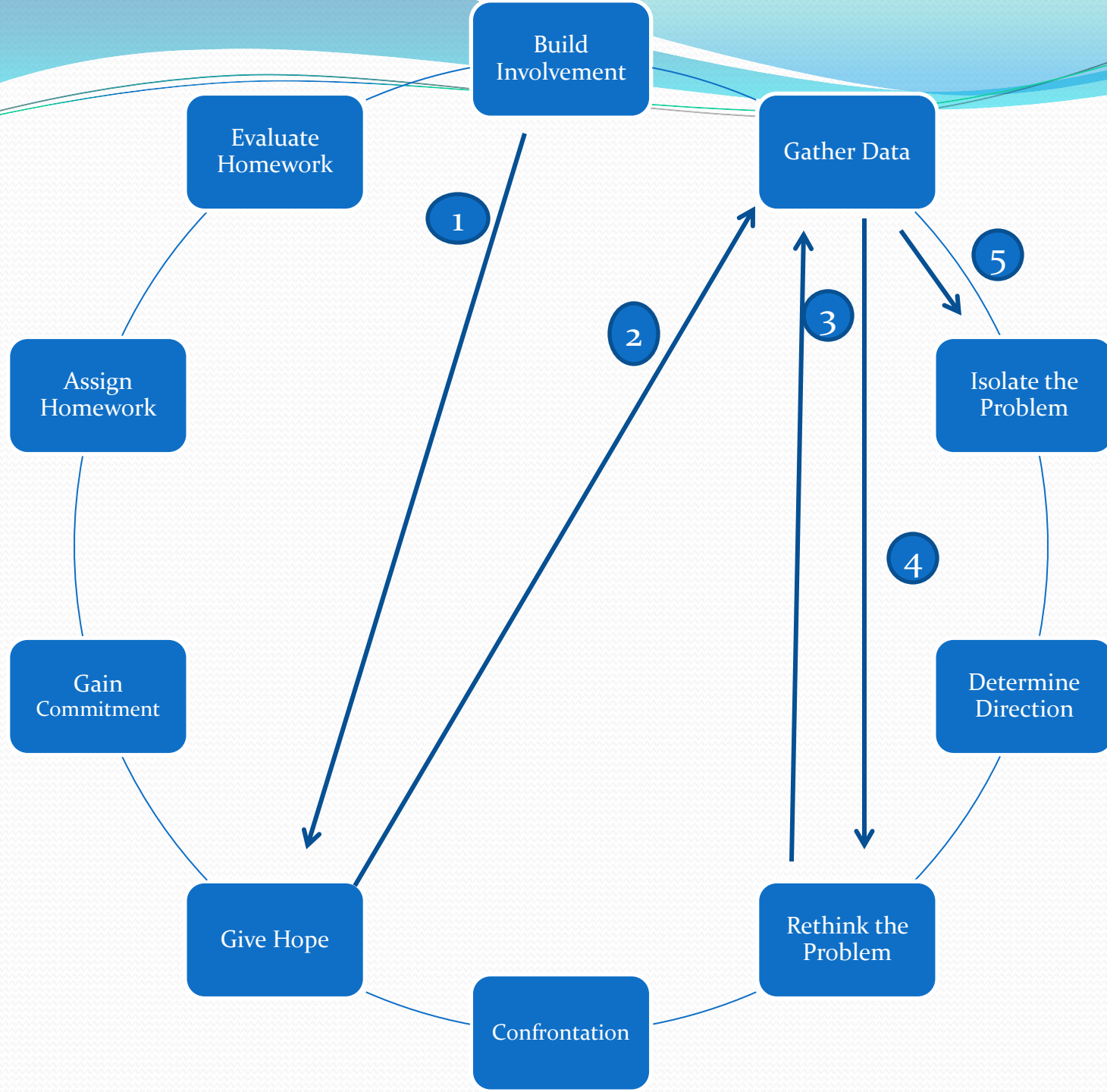
- You will note that on diagram 1 the arrows indicate a clockwise process. I refer to it as linear, but put it on a circle because it is a repeated process as well as cycle process.
- You may think of it also as a continuum:
- Building Involvement.....Evaluate Homework





# The Multidimensional Process

- Note on this diagram that there are points not arrows.
- While the process is linear, it is also multidimensional.
- While building involvement I may see an opportunity to give Hope and then cycle up to Data Gathering.  
From Data Gathering I may slip down to Rethinking the Problem and then back to Data Gathering.
- Note the arrows on next slide represent this process.



# Building Involvement

- **Building Involvement** is essential because it establishes a trust relationship. Building involvement can be as simple as connecting with the person on a particular common interest. It can be as complex as patiently helping the person to process the consequences of their sin or genuinely empathizing with a tragic loss or the crippling illness of a child (Rom 13:15).



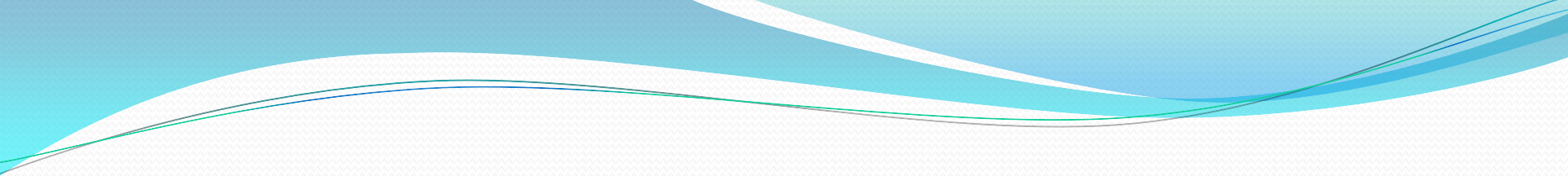
# Data Gathering

- **Data Gathering** is a multifaceted enterprise. Without data gathering the counselor may commit folly and shame (Proverbs 18:13). As important as it is, the counselor must avoid becoming an interrogator. The Personal Data Inventory can supply great assistance because it not only provides objective data but also subjective with opened ended questions.

- The PDI supplies the counselor sufficient subjective data that becomes an invitation for the counselor to explore. Data gathering includes: the counselee's story, third party information and what Adams called halo data (body language, voice print).

# Isolating the Problem

- **Isolating the Problem** is the biblical counselor's equivalent of a diagnosis. In his seminal work Adams saw three levels to personal problems. He called them Presentation, Performance and Preconditioning. Early on when working with Adams and John Bettler I

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- suggested a fourth level, Perceptual, to account for the decisive nature of some problems and the conscious thinking cited in the biblical record (Eph 4:22-24; Rom 12:1-2). If you will note the page in your notes titled, Four Levels of Problems, we will look more fully at this matter.

# Isolating the Problem

- Perceptual
- Preconditioning
- Performance
- Presentation  
(Presence)

Starts

Observable



# Determine Direction

- **Determine Direction.** Once sufficient data is gathered and the problems at hand are evident (at least what the counselee has so far revealed), the counselor can begin to determine the direction of his counseling. For example, I recently had a case of with a broken engagement. Initially the break up was the Presence Problem (or in Adams' word, presentation problem).

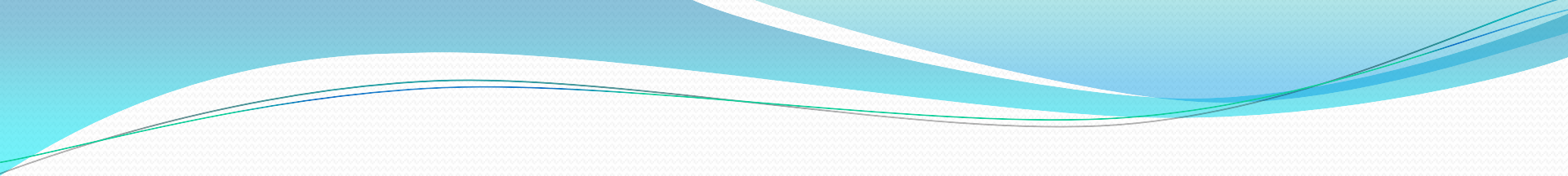
# Determine Direction Continued

- However, further data gathering unveiled a Performance Problem (cohabitation), a Preconditioning Problem (habituated anger) and a Perceptual Problem (counselee had chosen to think God was irrelevant). In this case, this fourth level of the problem was determined to be the point of entry. This meant doing evangelism....

# Rethink the Problem

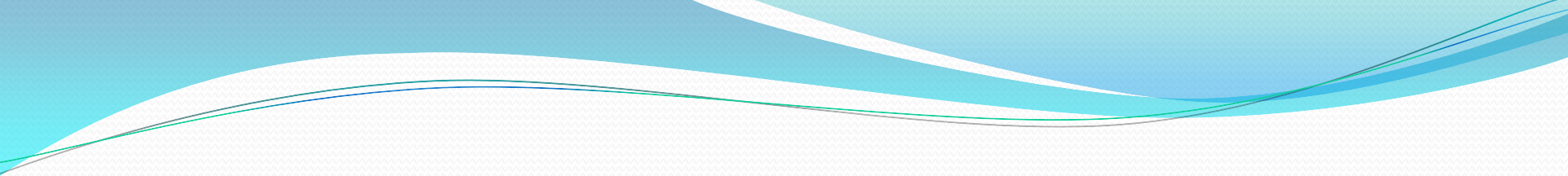
- **Rethink the Problem.** Rethinking the problem entails helping the counselee re-conceptualize the problem in biblical terms. Most counselees today are thinking in cultural terms. Adultery is called an affair. Homosexual relationships are called gay and normal.



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- It is not unusual for a counselee to explain that they are (or have) bipolar disorder. When asked how they were diagnosed they respond that they self-diagnosed through the internet or by a GP.

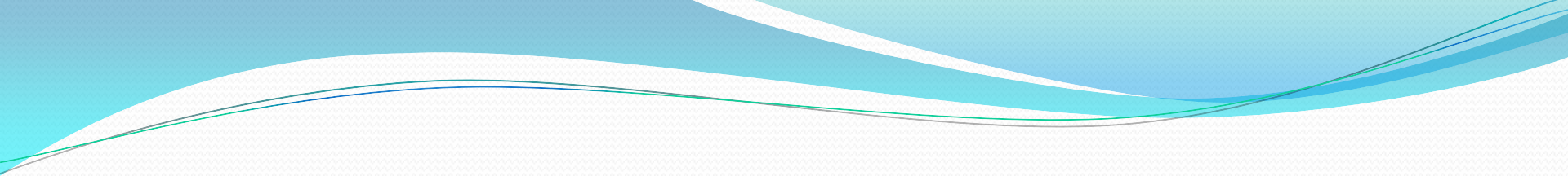
# Rethink Continued

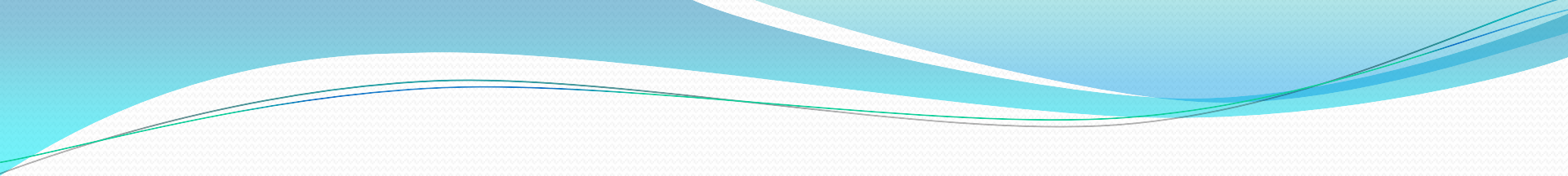
- Parent's first line of defense for an ADD child is drug therapy. The counselor will have to lead these counselees through Scripture to learn how to re-conceptualize their issues in biblical and theological terms and from there the implementation of thinking and behavioral changes.

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- A child is given a diagnosis of ODD (oppositional defiance disorder). This often leads to a spike in non-biblical parenting and training the child to solidify control.

# Confrontation

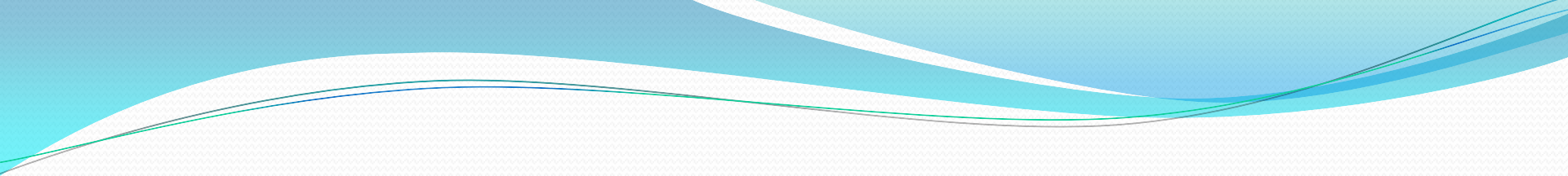
- **Confrontation.** Perhaps by this time you have noted that this is a very logical process and confrontation is very logically sequential. But what is confrontation and how is it best accomplished

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- I have found in most instances that walking through the Rethinking process actually allows the Scripture to do the confronting. A lot of my task as a counselor is answering questions and clarifying issues. In some cases it becomes necessary to be pointed.

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- However, the counselor should never be argumentative. Doing so puts the counselor in juxtaposition needing to defend the position. I have found it much better to simply lead and prod the counselee by questions. Confrontation is a prerequisite to repentance. Repentance is prerequisite to change.

# Give Hope

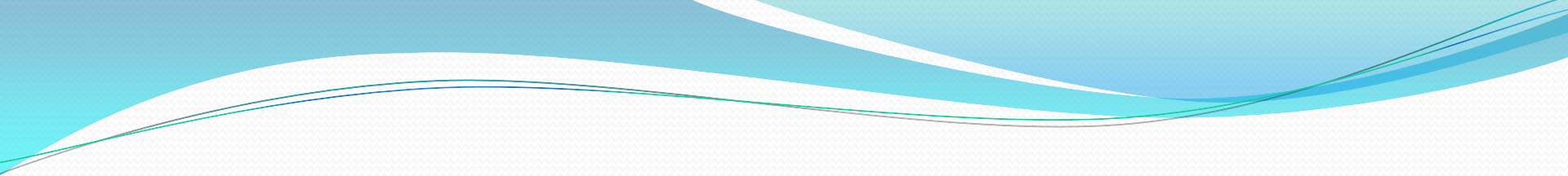
- **Give Hope.** I am certain some of you are thinking that hope giving should precede confrontation. However, logically, hope grows out of confrontation, at least biblically speaking it does. As I give the gospel, the good news not only of God's forgiveness.

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- but of the Holy Spirit's indwelling to enable the counselee to change, to correct course and to find peace and satisfaction, I give hope. Hope can be as simple as teaching the counselee I Corinthians 10:13 or Ephesians 5:22ff as the means of reversing the curse of the fall and the impact on marriage



# Gaining A Commitment

- **Gaining a commitment** has much precedence in Scripture. The Philippian jailer asked, “What must I do to be saved?” Paul’s response was to ask him for a commitment, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.” The Rich Young Ruler asked, “What good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?”

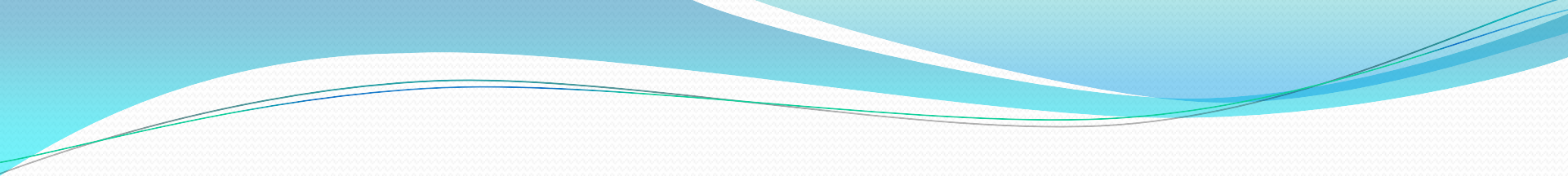
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- Jesus answered “Go sell your possessions and give to the poor...come follow me” (Matthew 19:16-26). Frequently when I reach the end of a session it is evident that the counselee is ready to take up the work of change. I will explain my approach to counseling in which I am the coach and they are the players on the field.

# Gaining Commitment Continued

- It will be their role to practice during the week the playbook that I give to them. I then outline for them the homework of the week and ask, “Does this sound doable?” Most of the time, they agree and carry out the practice. At times the counselee may balk or may be doubtful. When this occurs you will need to negotiate a specific commitment.

# Assign Homework

- **Assign Homework.** I have largely covered this in connection with gaining a commitment.
- So here are some further dimensions

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- It is important to:
  - Not give too much homework
  - Give targeted homework consistent with the direction you previously determined
  - Include some specific use of the Bible
  - Include some church experience

- Homework can be of many varieties.
- 1) Bible study
- 2) Bible memory/meditation
- 3) Guided interaction between feuding mates
- 4) Reading a book with some response
- 5) Watching a movie with specific assignments of what to be looking for
- 6) Data gathering

# Evaluation of Homework

- **Evaluation of homework** is very important. If you neglect to review the homework you have said it is not important. If you do not review the homework you will not be able to assess progress. Reviewing homework also helps the counselor to adjust his understanding of the problem.