

Counsel the Word: Pursuing Joy and Skill in Personal Ministry

SGCL Biblical Counselors Training Phase 1

Week 1: Brian Chesemore

I. INTRODUCTION

A. The Goal of counseling: Personal and Corporate Transformation

1. Promise of Change

And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ...and it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more..." (Phil. 1.6, 9)

2. Pictures of Change

And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. (2 Cor. 3.18)

3. Pathway of Change

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. (Eph. 4:11-16)

- Christians are equipped for ministry by the Word through pastors and teachers (11-12)
- Equipped Christians give themselves to ministry that builds up a local church into maturity, unity, and stability (12-14)

- Our Christ-exalting speech (counsel) is a major catalyst for Christ-centered growth (15-16)
- The whole process of transformation is Christ-centered (11-16)
- Personal and Corporate Transformation

B. The Hope that pervades Christ-Centered Counseling

*His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become **partakers of the divine nature**, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Pet. 1:3-8)*

1. Power to Change: By the Spirit, we experience divine power to pursue and experience godliness
2. Partakers of Change: His Word is the means by which we partake of the divine nature
3. Process of Change: This hope empowers our pursuit of transformation and growth into a greater knowledge of Christ, experience of his character, and fruitfulness in his service.

II. WHAT IS BIBLICAL COUNSELING?

I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to instruct one another. (Rom. 15.14)

Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm. (Prov. 13.20)

Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ (Eph. 4.15)

Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me. (Col.1:28-29)

A. Broad Definition:

Biblical counseling involves God's people, ministering God's Word, to specific troubles for the goal of sanctification.

Biblical counseling is personal ministry through intentional conversations in everyday life.

B. The Basic Components

"[Having] a keen sense of God's calling to minister to each other and then [having] the skills to do it." Ed Welch

1. A Keen sense of God's Calling to Minister to Others

"God has moved towards us, so we move towards one another." Ed Welch

2. The Requisite Skills to Ably Minister to Others

"God calls all of us to be biblical counselors. He calls every believer to know how to relate His Word to one another's lives so that every believer in every congregation grows more like Christ."¹

¹ Kellemen and Carson, *Biblical Counseling and the Church*. (Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI) 2015. pg 18.

C. Narrow Definition

Biblical counseling, narrowly defined, delivers the *concentrated discipleship* that all Christians need at various times.²

“A problem may have brought the counselee in, but the scope of counseling is bigger than just fixing a problem. We want to see the counselee become more like Christ—thinking more like Christ, following harder after Christ, and making choices that please Christ.”³

Summary: Biblical counseling involves God’s people, ministering God’s Word, to specific troubles for the goal of Christ-like transformation. Empowered by His Spirit, applying God’s Word, we show others Christ and how he saves, sustains, and sanctifies by his grace and for His glory.

III. A Paradigm of Change: THREE TREES MODEL

A. A Paradigm

1. Based on Jeremiah 17:5-8; Lk. 6:43-45
2. Gives us a picture of the Christian before God

B. A view of life, the heart and our responses

1. Circumstances
 - a. Represented by Heat

² This terminology is taken from the article The Discipleship River by Steve Viars, CCEF.

³ Kellemen and Carson, *Biblical Counseling and the Church*. (Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI) 2015. pg 27.

- b. Adversity and Prosperity
- 2. Thornbush or fruit tree?
 - a. Represents the responses in our lives (Galatians 5)
 - b. The roots represent our motivations: What is the heart desiring?

C. A way to process change biblically

- 1. The gospel imparts hope for change because God alone transforms the heart
- 2. The Cross: The event which secured our salvation
- 3. With the Spirit's help, we can discern rightly and walk in repentance and faith and increasing Christlikeness.