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## SESSION 4 | The Sufficiency of Scripture: All We Need to Counsel and Care

“His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence.” (2 Peter 1:3)

### I. NEED FOR COUNSEL

- The 3-fold Ministry of the Word
  - “If people will sit under the faithful preaching of the Word of God and have a regular devotional life, then they simply won’t need counseling.”
    - **Public Proclamation**
    - **Private Devotion**
    - **Interpersonal Counseling**
  - Both of these contexts are actually catalysts and training contexts for the acquisition of particular convictions and skills we need for a third context of ministry that is interpersonal.

### II. THE REASON WE NEED COUNSELING

- **We have Problems:** Something has me stuck, and God wants to use another believer to show me how Christ, and his gospel, speak to/inform me in my

trouble; and how my Heavenly Father wants to make me more like his Son through my trouble; and how God is enough for me.

- **God Gives the gift of Sanctification**

- “And we all with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory of another.” (2 Cor. 3.18; see also 1 Thess. 4.1-8, 2 Cor. 4.16, Titus 2.11-14, Phil. 2.12-12, Romans 8.28-29)
- God is at work in all our troubles, using the counsel of his word, to sanctify us.

- **God gives the ultimate gift: Himself**

- “Come unto me, all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28)

### **III. CALLED TO COUNSEL**

- *“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.”* **Romans 15.14**
- Galatians 6.1: “**Brothers**, if anyone is caught in any transgression, **you who are spiritual** should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, let you too be tempted.”
  - What is my responsibility when a brother or sister in the church is stuck in sin?
- 2 Corinthians 1.3-4: “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** may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.”

- What do we learn from this passage about the interplay between God's ministry to us and our ministry to others?

#### **IV. EQUIPPED TO COUNSEL**

- **Content: The Scriptures are sufficient to care for and counsel others.**
  - If Romans 15.14 convinces us and arms us with the conviction that **we are called** to counsel,
  - Then 2 Peter 1.3 convinces us and arms us with the conviction that **we have the content** we need to counsel.
  - “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.” (2 Peter 1:3)
    - **We have the gospel.**
    - **We have God's Roadmap: The Themes of Scripture Make Sense of Life**
    - **We have particular truths for Particular Change**
  - How would you care for a friend who is struggling with an anxious heart?
  - David said, “When the cares of my heart are many, your consolations cheer my soul.” (Ps. 94:19)
    - Ask questions. Listen to what the individual is going through.

- Listen to their answers, not so you can pounce on them with the truth, but so that you can graciously come alongside them.
  - Where is God in their story?
  - What troubles are mounting?
  - What do you think God's agenda is?
  - Are they trusting God?
  - I Peter 5.7 tells us: "Cast all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you."
  - Phil. 4.6: "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."
  - Maybe their cares come from suffering. Severe loss. Prolonged pain. Do you go to Romans 8.28? Do you go to 2 Cor. 1?
  - Psalm 46.1-2a "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear..."
- **Character:** The best counselors are not those who bring us into their clinics, who stand aloof from us. The best counselors walk alongside us, teach us what they've learned, they ask questions, they weep, they laugh, they love. As sinners saved by grace, as saints, they're growing too. They point us to the flawless counselor and Savior: Jesus.
- **Galatians 6.1: Gentleness and Concern**
  - **2 Corinthians 1: Sympathy and Comfort**

- **Context:** The Local Church:
  - Notice how interpersonal the New Testament is:
    - Stir one another up to love and good works Heb. 10.24
    - Admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all. I Thess. 5.14
    - Give a reason for the hope we profess 1 Pet. 3:15
    - Speak the truth in love Eph. 4.15
    - Take care and exhort others where needed Heb. 3.12-13
    - Rescue others from wandering from the truth James 5.19-20
  - Informal Counseling: Most counseling occurs in the day-to-day of Christ-centered ministry of the Word of God within my various relationships. The mechanism for that ministry is largely personal conversations. (Ephesians 4.29.) where we:
    - Listen
    - Ask helpful questions
    - Point your friend towards Christ
    - Take time to pray
- Formal Counseling: The nature of some counseling requires a more formal and structured context. This can be due to the severity of the issues and the benefits

of structure and consistent meetings. All Christians need concentrated discipleship in certain seasons.

- **God's Word provides us all that we need for personal ministry.**