



The Basics of Biblical Counseling

Course Syllabus

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Table of Contents

Part I: Foundations of Biblical Counseling

Psychology and Christian Counseling	1
General Principles of Biblical Counseling	5
The Doctrine of Sanctification and Biblical Counseling (Romans 6)	13
How Do People Change?	15
Theology and Biblical Counseling	19
The Medicine-Only Approach to Counseling	21
Psychotropic Drugs and Biblical Counseling	23
Cognitive Perceptual Disorders and Biblical Counseling	27

Part II: Common Counseling Issues

Peacemaking:

Peacemaking (Romans 12:18)	31
Forgiving Others (Genesis 45)	33
Church Discipline (I Corinthians 5:1-13, Matthew 18:15-20)	35
Confess Your Sins (I John 1:8-10)	41

Anger/Abuse:

Anger	43
Who is a Murderer? (Matthew 5:21-26)	45
Counseling in Cases of Abuse	49

Depression:

Depression	55
Rejoice in God's Forgiveness (Psalm 32)	57
Why Do the Wicked Prosper? (Psalm 73)	59

Worry/Anxiety/Fear:

Worry/Anxiety	61
How to Have Joy and Peace (Philippians 4:4-7)	63
Don't Worry, Be Holy! (Matthew 6:25-34)	65
Fear	67
In Whom Do You Trust? (Jeremiah 17:5-10)	69

Temptation:

Temptation	71
Learning from King David's Mid-Life Failure	73
David's Catastrophic Sin (II Samuel 11:1-5)	81
The LORD Confronts David's Sin (II Samuel 12:1-12)	83
Learning from Joseph's Temptation (Genesis 39)	85
Life Dominating Problems: Drugs, Alcohol, Etc.	87
Wisdom from Proverbs about Substance Abuse	89
The Pain of Porn	93
Gluttony, Diet, Fitness and Body Idolatry	95

Marriage:

Biblical Foundations: Marriage is Made in Heaven (Genesis 2:18-23)	99
Biblical Foundations: God’s Directive for Marriage (Genesis 2:24)	101
Are You an Adulterer? Part 2: Divorce (Matthew 5:31-32)	103
How to Change Your Husband (Ephesians 5:22-24, I Peter 3:1-6)	107
How to Change Your Wife (Ephesians 5:25-30, I Peter 3:7)	109
Solving Marriage Problems: Conflict Resolution and Communication	111
Solving Marriage Problems: When Husbands Won’t Lead	113
Solving Marriage Problems: Using Financial Wisdom from Proverbs	115
Solving Marriage Problems: Sex	119

Parenting:

Parenting is More Than a Formula: Part 1	121
Parenting is More Than a Formula: Part 2	123
You Never Stop Being a Parent: Parenting Your Adult Children	125
Dealing With Rebellious Teens: When “Good Kids” Make Bad Choices	131
But My Child Is Different!	135

Knowing God’s Will:

Knowing God’s Will: Part 1 (Deuteronomy 29:29)	137
Knowing God’s Will: Part 2 (Proverbs 3:5-6)	141

Part III: Counseling Helps for the Biblical Counselor

Some of My Favorite Counseling Resources	143
(Approximately) 100 “Go to” Texts for Biblical Counseling	147
Homework Assignments	151
The Use of Audio Resources in Counseling	153
Confidentiality Policy for IBCD	155
Consent to Counseling	157
Personal Data Inventory	159
IBCD Counseling Observation Information	163
Observer’s Organizer	167
IBCD Counseling Role Play Class	169
Counselor’s Notes	171
Becoming a NANC Certified Counselor	173
The Three Phases of NANC Certification	177
NANC Observation Log	181
NANC Pastor/Elder Evaluation	183
NANC Application for Membership	185
NANC Theology Exam	189
NANC Counselor’s Exam	191
NANC Case Report Form	193

Part I: Foundations of Biblical Counseling

Psychology and Christian Counseling

I. Introduction and review.

- A. A breakdown in society - the religion of secular humanism.

- B. The failure of the Church.

- C. The emergence of the Biblical Counseling Movement.
 - 1. Jay Adams: 1970s Competent to Counsel.

II. Harmful errors of modern psychology.

- A. Is psychology a science in the same way that medicine is?
 - 1. Should the pastor deal with the spiritual problems while the “mental health professional” deals with the emotional and mental problems?

 - 2. Psychology and theology both deal with the same fundamental issues of meaning and value from widely differing perspectives.

- B. Unscriptural presuppositions and practices of certain schools of psychology.
 - 1. A faulty view of man.
 - a. Man is only an advanced animal: naturalism/materialism. Gen. 1:26-27

 - b. Man is basically good, or at worst a blank slate. Rom. 3:10-18, 23 Ps. 51:5

 - c. Man is autonomous: able to solve his own problems without God’s help. John 15:5 II Tim. 3:2

 - 2. Excuses sin and denies personal responsibility.
 - a. Blame shifting: parents, teachers, society, etc. I John 1:8-10 Js. 1:13-15 Ps. 32.3f

 - b. The medical model: calling sin sickness (“mental illness”).

 - c. Is there such a thing as “mental illness”?

3. **No fixed moral values: relativism. II Tim. 3:16-17**
 - a. **Non-directive counseling (Rogers). Pr. 14:12 Col. 1:28 Js. 5:19-20**

- b. **Sinful behaviors and desires legitimized.**

- c. **Promotion of “socially acceptable” gratification of carnal appetites (ventilation).**

- d. **Often attempts to relieve God-given guilt by destroying conscience.**

4. **No place for God.**

C. Secular psychology is powerless to bring about meaningful change. Jer. 17:9 Rom. 8:5-8

D. What about those cases in which people seem to get better?

1. **Often symptoms (i.e. bizarre behavior) go away with or without treatment.**

2. **The most serious (spiritual) problems remain. Luke 11:24-26**

III. Christian approaches to counseling.

A. Radical separation: the pastor and psychologist are professionals working in different realms.

1. **Pastors refer cases dealing with emotional problems to qualified counselors.**

2. **Psychology and biblical Christianity address the same human problems from very different viewpoints.**

3. **Who is qualified to counsel? Gal. 6:1 Rom. 15:14**

- B. Integration: psychologists who happen to be Christians are best suited to helping people with their problems.**
1. These people tend to use their psychological training as a starting place, with Scripture being applied to support the psychological ideas. Mk. 12:31 II Tim. 3:2
 2. They tend to accept psychological findings uncritically while neglecting sound, in-depth Bible teaching.
 3. The danger of integration. II Cor. 6:14-18
- C. Synergism/spoiling the Egyptians: since “all truth is God’s truth”, Christians should add the best of psychology to what the Bible teaches.**
1. They claim to use Scripture to critically examine the findings of psychology.
 2. They have the same problems as the integrationists.
 3. Their system is unusually built around an extra-biblical concept.
 4. That which was taken (spoiled) from the Egyptians was silver, gold, and garments, not ideas and beliefs. Col. 2:3, 8-10 Lev. 18:3f I Cor. 3:19
- D. Biblical counseling: the Bible is the sole and sufficient authority in counseling.**
II Tim. 3:16-17 II Pet. 1:3 Heb. 4:12 Ps. 19:7-14
1. The Bible is a fully sufficient textbook for counseling. I Cor. 10:13
 2. The goal of Biblical Counseling is to give instruction from the Bible so the counselee can achieve God’s goals in his/her life. I Tim. 1:5 Col. 1:27-29
 3. Counselor qualifications are spiritual, not merely academic. Gal. 6:1-2 I Tim. 4:12, 16
 4. Counseling is not the responsibility of an elite group of professionals, but of every member of Christ’s Church. Rom. 15:14 Heb. 10:24-25 Js. 5:19-20

5. Ultimately counseling is God's work. Rom. 15:13 I Cor. 10:13 Ph. 4:13 Is. 9:6 11:1f
 - a. It is only in Christ that people have hope.

 - b. The Holy Spirit is the ultimate counselor. John 14:16-17 Gal. 5:16-25

IV. Other critical concerns.

- A. Is there any value to secular psychology?
 1. Isn't all truth God's truth? Yes, and all error is the devil's error.

 2. Relying upon secular psychology is a denial of the sufficiency of Scripture.

 3. Is there any case in which outside help is needed?

 4. Why might it be useful for Christians to know something of psychology?

- B. How should unbelievers be counseled?
 1. A non-Christian is incapable of seeking after God's goals or doing God's will.
Rom. 8:7-8 Gal 5:18 Heb. 11:6

 2. Unbelievers require pre-counseling: evangelism.

- C. Does Biblical Counseling ever fail? Luke 18:18-25 Gen. 4:6ff

V. Conclusion: you are competent to counsel: biblically.

Jay Adams, Competent to Counsel. The Christian Counselor's Manual, Ready to Restore.

General Principles of Biblical Counseling

I. Introduction and review.

A. Psychology and Christian counseling.

1. Harmful errors of modern psychology.
2. Christian approaches to counseling.

B. The Biblical (nouthetic) Counseling Movement.

C. Some fundamental assumptions.

1. The Bible is sufficient as our textbook for counseling. II Pe. 1:3 II Ti. 3:16-17 Ps. 19:7-14 Heb. 4:12
2. The goal of counseling is change in conformity with God's revealed will, not necessarily the (selfish) desires of the counselee. Col. 1:28
3. Change according to God's standard can only take place by the power of the Holy Spirit. Phil. 4:13 Gal. 5:16f
4. The counselor is qualified through personal holiness and a knowledge of the Word of God. Ga. 6:1 I Ti. 4:16-17,7-8,13 3:1-7

II. Key elements in Biblical Counseling.

A. Involvement. Gal. 6:1

1. Avoid "professionalism" - proud, aloof, distant, mechanical. II Cor. 2:4
2. Instead, be humble and brotherly, treating your counselee with respect. Mark 6:34 Matt. 9:35-36 Heb. 2:14-18 4:15 John 11:33-35 Acts 20:31 II Co. 2:4 4:28-29 I Th. 2:7-8 I Co. 13:7 Rom. 12:10 Phil. 2:3-4
3. Be careful not to fall into their sin! Gal. 6:1b Prov. 1:10f
 - a. Why might this happen?
 - b. What precautions should we take? Titus 2:3-5
 - c. Why shouldn't women counsel men? I Tim 2:12

4. **Don't become an emotional crutch - make them dependent upon God, not you!**
II Chron. 24:2

5. **Pray with and for your counselee. Phil. 1:3-4**

6. **Hope must be built from the earliest stages of counseling. I Cor. 10:13
Rom. 15:4-5,13 Phil. 1:6 II Cor. 5:17 Prov. 12:25 15:13 17:22 18:14
Mt. 11:28-30**
 - a. **What is our basis of hope? I Tim. 1:1**
 - b. **What is the nature of our hope? Heb. 11:1**
 - c. **What can be done to build hope?**
 - d. **Give manageable homework assignments to build hope.**

B. Investigation. Prov. 18:15

1. **Begin with a plan. Pr. 21:5**

2. **Don't jump to conclusions. Prov. 18:13 14:15**

3. **Learn to ask good questions and to listen. Pr. 20:5**

4. **Characteristics of good questions (see Mack p. 223f)**
 - a. **Thoughtful and gracious**
 - b. **Relevant**
 - c. **Produce facts**
 - d. **Open-ended**

5. **The PREACH principle for investigating**
 - a. **Physical: sleep, diet, exercise, drugs, alcohol, medications (Many psychotropic), caffeine II Co. 4:6 Ecc. 5:12**
 - b. **Resources: what help is available: church, family, friends: accountability?**
 - c. **Emotional: fear, worry, anxiety, bitterness, loneliness, depression, Anger**
 - d. **Action: Ps. 32 Gen. 4:5-8 Js. 1:22,25**
 - e. **Conceptual Mark 7:19-23 Eph. 4:23 Ro. 12:2 Heb. 4:12**
 - f. **Historical**

6. **Where possible, hear from all parties involved. Prov. 18:17**

7. **Not all problems are caused by personal sin.**
 - a. **Organic problems should be referred to physicians.**

 - b. **You may need to get the client stabilized physically before you can have a meaningful session - i.e. lack of sleep, under the influence.**

8. **One of the most important issues to determine is whether the counselee is a believer. I Jo. 5:1 2:3-4 4:7-8 Mt. 7:21-23**

9. **A tool - the Personal Data Inventory.**

10. **Also gather non-verbal data. Pr. 6:13 Gen. 4:5**

C. Interpretation. Rom. 12:2 Pr. 3:5-7

1. **After you have gathered adequate data, you need to draw some conclusions.**

2. **You need to evaluate your counselee's spiritual condition. I Th. 5:14**

3. **Often the counselee will not know what his problem is, or he will have incorrectly identified it. Pr. 14:12 16**

4. **You want to give biblical labels to the counselee's situation. Pr. 3:5-7**
 - a. **What biblical language best describes this person's problem?**

 - b. **What insights does the Bible give for the probable causes of such problems?**
Js. 4:1f

5. **Distinguish between the symptoms and the causes of problems.**

6. Often your greatest challenge will be to sort out and prioritize the counselee's issues.
7. Problems stem from the heart. Jer. 17:5-10 Mark 7:18-23

D. Instruction. II Tim. 3:16-17 Eph. 4:17-28

1. Rely Upon the Inerrant and Powerful Word of God. Pr. 3:5-7
 - a. Handle the Scriptures carefully. Js. 3:1f II Tim. 2:15
 - b. Use texts for the purpose God gave them.
2. Prepare counseling outlines.
3. Teach interactively and creatively.
4. Teach redemptively (answers are in Christ). Rom 6:1f
5. You must deal firmly with sin. Eph. 4:17-22 I Thess. 5:14 I Jo. 1:8-10 Acts 20:31 Ga. 2:11 II Ti. 3:16-17 Mt. 5:21f
6. Sin must be repented of - put off. I John 1:9 Ps. 32:3-5 Prov. 28:13 Mt. 5:29-30 II Cor. 7:8-11
7. New life patterns must be established - put on. Eph. 4:22-28
8. Be careful not to be legalistic: commanding beyond what the Bible says.
9. Resources - The Christian Counselor's Manual, Helps for Counselors, (Adams)

E. Intention. Luke 9:23-24 14:25-34 Phil. 2:12-13 Pr. 14:23

1. **Counseling is more than instruction. Js. 1:22 Luke 14:25f**

2. **The counselee is responsible to commit to obedience to God. II Co. 7:8-11**

3. **Motives are crucial. Rom. 14:23 Col. 3:20**
What does real repentance look like? II Co. 7:8-11 Ps. 51

4. **Deal with behavior, not mere feelings. The counselee must agree to obey God, whether he feels like it or not.**

5. **Be prepared to meet with resistance. Mt. 21:28-30**

6. **Continue to offer hope: faith in Christ works. Ro. 6:1-14 II Co. 5:17 Mk. 9:22-24 I Co. 10:13 John 15:5 Phil. 4:13**

7. **If a counselee refuses to commit to do God's will, you may need to end the counseling relationship. Matt. 7:6 18:15-18 Pr. 13:15 29:1 II Th. 3:14**

F. Implementation.

1. **The counselee cannot expect the counselor to change him. Phil. 2:12-13**

2. **The counseling sessions are not ends in and of themselves.**
 - a. **Action and obedience are needed. Mark 10:17-22**

 - b. **Explain to your counselee how progressive sanctification works. Ro. 6:11 Eph. 4:22f Phil. 1:6**

3. **The greatest progress in counseling is made in between sessions.**
 - a. **Prepare for temptation: concrete steps: call someone, go outside, etc.**
II Tim. 2:22 Pr. 22:3
 - b. **Prepare for failures. I Jo. 1:9 Pr. 24:16 Ps. 43:5**
 - c. **Expect growth. II Co. 3:17-18**

4. **Concrete homework assignments should be given. Why give homework?**
 - a. **Actions and behavior. I Cor. 15:33 Pr. 13:20 Mt. 5:29-30 25:40**
Eph. 4:28

 - b. **Scripture reading and memory.**

 - c. **Christian books, pamphlets, and tapes.**

 - d. **Journals.**

 - e. **Other assignments.**

5. **Resource: A Homework Manual for Biblical Counseling I & II, (Mack)**

G. Integration.

1. **The structure of the local church should be used in maintaining accountability.**
 - a. **We do not want to become substitute psychologists (*professionals*).**

 - b. **Ideally, a pastor or other church leader should attend counseling.**

 - c. **Sometimes church discipline may be required. Matt. 18:15-17**

 - d. **What about confidentiality in counseling?**

2. **You are not seeking merely a solution to one problem, but a total restructuring of a life over the period of time.**

3. **New, godly habits are built over time. Eph. 4:13-14**

4. **The goal is that the counselee will be able to counsel himself and others. Gal. 6:6**

III. Conclusion.

The Doctrine of Sanctification and Biblical Counseling (Romans 6)

I. Introduction.

- A. Does grace promote sin? 6:1, 15
- B. How does grace make you holy?

II. First, you must be in Christ.

- A. Unbelievers are enslaved to sin: *Not able not to sin...* Rom. 6:17 8:7-8 3:10f
- B. God is at work in believers. Phil. 1:6

III. Second, remember who you are in Christ. Rom. 6:11

- A. Biblical commands are based upon who you are in Christ.
- B. The key to holiness is understanding your union with Christ.
 - 1. You are united with Christ in His death and resurrection. Rom. 6:1-10 Col. 3:1-5
 - 2. You have been freed from sin and enslaved to righteousness. Rom. 6:15-18 II Cor. 5:17 *Grace has emancipated you from sin's tyranny: able not to sin.*
 - 3. This does not mean that you will live in sinless perfection, but the power of sin over you has been broken.

IV. Third, act according to who you are in Christ. Rom. 6:12-13, 19b Eph, 4:22f

- A. Sanctification involves effort and action.
- B. Put off sin. Rom. 6:12-13a, 19b
- C. Put on righteousness. Rom. 6:13b, 19c 12:1
- D. Victory is assured. Rom. 6:14 Titus 2:11-14 Phil. 2:12-13

V. Do you want to be holy?

- A. Unbiblical views of sanctification will impede your spiritual growth.
 - 1. Sanctification by mere law.
 - 2. Sudden sanctification by formula or experience.
 - 3. Passive sanctification.
- B. Remember who you are in Christ.
- C. By grace, fight your sinful flesh and use your body to serve God.

How Do People Change?

I. Introduction.

- A. Counseling is about helping people to change.
- B. The change we, as biblical counselors, seek is unique. Col. 1:28 I Tim. 1:5
- C. Unbiblical approaches to change (sanctification) will impede your spiritual growth.
 - 1. Mysticism.
 - 2. Deliverance ministry.
 - 3. Self-improvement formulas.
 - 4. Moralism. Rom. 5:20 8:3 Gal. 3:3 4:9
 - 5. Passivism.
 - 6. The recovery movement blends several unbiblical approaches.
- D. The Bible sets forth a balanced perspective on how change takes place. Romans 6 John 15:1-11

II. Change begins by understanding and applying the gospel.

- A. Some wrongfully start with the imperative - what we must do for God, which leads to unbiblical moralism.
 - 1. Scripture begins with the indicative, what God has done for us in Christ, as the ground for imperatives. Ro. 1-11 Ephesians 1-3 Colossians 1-2
 - 2. Specific New Testament exhortations are grounded in the gospel. Eph. 4:20,24,32 5:2,25ff 6:6 Rom. 15:2-3,7
 - 3. Of course this implies that only Christians are able to change according to the will of God. Romans 8:5-8 14:23 Heb. 11:6
 - 4. What about cases in which unbelievers appear to change (i.e. lose weight, quit smoking, no longer drunkards)? Mt. 12:43-45 Rom. 14:23 I Co. 10:31 Heb. 11:6
 - 5. The change we need is inward and Godward. Mark 7:14-23 Col. 2:20-23
- B. We and our counselees need to comprehend that who we are in Christ is the basis for the changed lives we want to live. Romans 6:11 Col. 3:1ff II Pet. 1:3-4
 - 1. Some think of the gospel exclusively for justification, but don't see its relevance for sanctification. Gal. 3:3
 - 2. The gospel is just as important for your sanctification as it was for your justification.
 - 3. Some nouthetic counselors move too quickly to the imperative, without placing enough emphasis on who we are in Christ and how the gospel relates to change.
 - 4. Many counselees have a false identity in which they label themselves according to their past sin rather than their new identity in Christ. I Cor. 6:9-11 II Co. 5:17
 - 5. The first imperative in Romans is to consider your identity in Christ – remember who you are. Rom. 6:11 also see v. 3,6,9
- C. Understanding your union with Christ is the key to your growth in holiness. Ro. 6:1ff
 - 1. Paul anticipates an objection. Romans 6:1-2
 - a. If salvation is by grace, apart from works, why bother to be holy since the more we sin the more God's grace is displayed? v. 1 5:20
 - b. The gospel, rightly understood, promotes holiness. 6:2bff I Th. 4:3 Titus 2:14

2. You can't go on sinning because you are united to Christ. 6:2b
3. Your old self has died in union with Christ. v. 2b-4a,6 Col. 2:12 Ga. 2:20
4. You died to sin in the same sense in which Jesus died to sin. v. 8-10 He. 7:27 9:12
5. You are a new person, united with Christ in His resurrection. v. 4b-5,8
6. You have been set free from slavery to sin to serve righteousness. v. 6-7,9b,15-22
7. This is true of every believer.
8. Now, live in light of who you are. v. 12-13
 - a. The fact that you are united with Christ does not mean that it is no longer possible for you to sin. 7:14ff Phil. 3:12
 - b. The point is that the power of sin over you has been broken.
 - c. Nor does it mean that you no longer need to pursue holiness and fight sin.
9. How does this work itself out in practical terms?

D. Other ways in which the gospel contributes to change (sanctification).

1. We are able to bear fruit only through our union with Christ. Jo. 15:1-11 Ga. 2:20
2. A key to change is to recognize that Christ is better than the idols which tempt us. Isa. 55:1-2 John 4:10 7:38 6:35,48-51 Gen. 39:9b Proverbs 9:1ff
3. Comprehending God's love and grace to us motivates and enables us to show love and grace. I John 4:19

III. We and our counselees are responsible to exert effort towards change.

A. Some wrongfully stop with the indicative, declaring what God has done for us in Christ, while neglecting the imperatives of what God calls us to do.

B. What is the use of biblical imperatives (God's law)?

1. God's law shows us our need for Christ who alone meets God's standard and provides the righteousness we lack. Gal. 3:24 2:16 Phil. 3:9
2. God's law also shows us how He desires His redeemed people to live. I Th. 4:1 Eph. 5:10 John 14:15

C. Biblical examples.

1. Immediately after telling us to consider our identity in Christ, Paul exhorts us to take action against the lusts of the flesh. Romans 6:12ff
2. Jesus tells us what we must do in order to abide in Him. John 15:1-11
 - a. Have His Word in ourselves. John 15:3,7
 - b. Seek His glory in prayer. John 15:7
 - c. Obey His commandments. John 15:10 14:15 I Jo. 2:6
 - d. Love the brethren. John 15:12-13,17 I Jo. 2:10
3. The typical pattern in many New Testament epistles is to begin with the indicative as the basis for the imperative. Rom. 12:1ff Eph. 4:1ff Col. 3:1ff
4. Our responsibility and God's work in us are placed side by side. Phil. 2:12-13 4:13
5. The New Testament is filled with specific exhortations to actively fight sin and to faithfully and diligently pursue righteousness.
 - a. Put off sin (repent). Mt. 5:29-30 Eph. 4:17,22,25,28,29 Rom. 6:12-13a
 - b. Put on righteousness. Eph. 4:24,25,28b,29b Rom. 6:13b,19c 12:1ff
6. It is not enough to merely hear God's word or even to agree with it. We must do what God commands. Mt. 7:24-27 James 1:22

D. Our motive for obedience is crucial.

IV. What determines when and whether change takes place?

- A. We experience a variety of outcomes in our counseling.**
- B. Sometimes change doesn't take place in the life of a counselee because he/she is not regenerate. John 15:2,6 Phil. 1:6 I John 2:3-4 Mt. 7:16ff**
- C. Personal revival is like corporate revival: God sees fit to sovereignly work in powerful ways in the lives of His people at certain times. Jo. 3:8 15:5 Ps. 71:20 85:6**
- D. God uses various means to accomplish change.**
 - 1. His Word is a powerful agent for change. II Ti. 3:16-17 Heb. 4:12-13 Ps. 119:25 John 15:7**
 - 2. We should pray for God to revive us and our counselees. Ps. 119:25,37,40,88,107,149,154,156,159**
 - 3. Sometimes the Lord brings circumstances into our lives to change our course. Ps. 119:67,71 Heb. 12:4-11 John 15:2 James 1:2ff**
 - 4. Sometimes God sends a Nathan to admonish us. Ro. 15:14 Ga. 6:1-2 II Sam. 12**

V. Conclusion.

- A. God wants us to change and to bear fruit for His glory. John 15:8**
- B. The gospel is the key to change.**
 - 1. Understand your union with Christ. Rom. 6:11**
 - 2. Abide in Christ. John 15:1ff**
 - 3. Delight in Christ. Isa. 55:1-2**
- C. We are responsible to exert effort to change.**

Theology and Biblical Counseling

I. Introduction: Why do you need theology to counsel?

II. Key areas of doctrine. (Answer with Scripture references)

- A. **Epistemology.**
1. How can we know God's truth?
 2. What place does natural revelation have in Biblical Counseling?
 3. Why is the Bible necessary?
- B. **Bibliology.**
1. Explain the terms inspiration, authority, infallibility, inerrancy, and sufficiency.
 2. Is there continuing revelation?
 3. How does your view of Scripture affect your approach to counseling?
 4. How would belief in continuing revelation affect your counseling?
- C. **Theology proper.**
1. Explain and state the biblical basis for the doctrine of the Trinity.
 2. How is each person of the Trinity involved in your counseling?
 3. List ten attributes of God and explain how they relate to your counseling.
 4. How does the truth that God is Creator and Lord impact your counseling?
- D. **Christology.**
1. Who is Jesus Christ?
 2. How does Jesus' endurance of temptation affect your counseling?
 3. What is the nature of His work on the cross?
 4. How can the work of Jesus be applied in counseling?
- E. **Anthropology.**
1. What is man's essential nature?
 2. What does it mean to be in the image of God?
- F. **Hamartology.**
1. Why is mankind sinful?
 2. In what ways and to what extent has sin affected mankind?
 3. How will this affect your counseling?
- G. **Soteriology.**
1. What is justification and how does the counselee's view of justification affect counseling?
 2. What is your view of sanctification, and how does your view affect counseling?
 3. How does the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints affect your counseling?
- H. **Pneumatology.**
1. Who is the Holy Spirit?
 2. What role does the Holy Spirit play in salvation?
 3. What role does the Holy Spirit play in counseling?
- I. **Ecclesiology.**
1. What is the church?
 2. What role should the church play in the counseling process?
- J. **Eschatology.**
1. How does eschatology affect counseling?
 2. How could faulty eschatology affect a counselee?

❖ **Biblical Vs Materialist View of Human Nature**

○ **Biblical View**

- **Duplex beings: inner and outer person**

- **Body responds to activity of inner person with noticeable physical changes**

- **Body can influence thoughts, feelings, choices**

○ **Materialist View**

❖ **Is Emotional Pain a Disease?**

○ **What Is Pain?**

○ **Is Physical Pain a Disease?**

○ **Why Do We Have Emotions?**

○ **Emotional Pain Is Not Always a Sign of “Heart Trouble”**

- **But it often is**

○ **What About Brain Diseases?**

- **Is emotional pain a brain disease?**

❖ **Biblical Implications of the Disease Model**

❖ **Can Medicine Help?**

- **Do Psychiatric Medicines Cure a Chemical Imbalance?**

- **Factors Complicating Biblical Counseling**
 - **Difficulty understanding biblical truth**
 - **Not saved**
 - **Suicidal/homicidal**
 - **Severe emotional overwhelm**

- **What Can We Expect From Medicine?**
 - **Suppress hallucinations and delusions**
 - **Decrease anxiety and depression**

- **A Medicine Can't**
 - **Teach biblical change**

❖ **What Medicines Are Given For Emotional Pain?**

○ **Drugs That Improve Feelings**

▪ **Drugs that induce relaxation**

• **Medicine for serious pain**

- **Oxycontin, Percocet, Vicodin**
- **Often given to those who have emotional pain**
 - **Because pain and depression co-occur**
 - **Because pain feels worse when depressed**
- **Relaxation is a side effect of pain meds**
 - **Can lead to addiction**
- **Confusion is also a side effect, anxiety, depression**

• **Alcohol and street drugs**

- **Act in similar manner to pain meds**
- **Produce less pain relief and more relaxation**
- **Even more addiction danger**
- **Can produce confusion, anxiety, depression**

• **Tranquilizers**

- **Xanax, Ativan**
- **Also act similarly, but with more relaxation**
- **Addiction potential**
- **Can produce confusion, anxiety, depression**
- **Sleeping pills**

- **Antidepressants**
 - **Celexa, Lexapro, Zoloft, Paxil, Prozac...**
 - **Change feelings, but not circumstances**
- **Drugs That Clear Confused Thinking**
 - **Antipsychotic medicines**
 - **Risperdal, Zyprexa, Abilify**
 - **Psychosis**
 - **Effect of antipsychotic drugs**
 - **Mood stabilizing medicines**
 - **Lithium, anti-epilepsy drugs**
 - **For psychosis with unstable emotions**
 - **Often used today for those with mood swings**
- ❖ **Understanding Drug Dependence and Withdrawal**
 - **Dependence**
 - **Withdrawal**
 - **How Dependence Develops**
 - **What Happens In Withdrawal**

❖ **Understanding “Poop-Out” and “Therapeutic Tail-Chasing”**

- **Poop-Out**

- **Tail Chasing**

- **“Unmasking Underlying Bipolar Disorder?”**

❖ **Understanding Antidepressant-Related Violence and Suicide**

- **Serious danger—FDA black box warning**

- **Probably linked to side effects of:**
 - **Insomnia**
 - **Anxiety and panic attacks**
 - **Akathisia**
 - **Mania**
 - **Irritability**
 - **Paranoia and psychosis**

❖ **Side Effects of Psychotropic Drugs**

❖ **When Might a Psychotropic Drug Help?**

❖ **Cognitive-Perceptual Disorders**

- **Cognitive—ability to think clearly**
- **Perceptual—ability to perceive correctly**
- **Due to physical disease of the brain**

❖ **Dementia (Alzheimer's disease and others like it)**

❖ **All C-P Disorders Have Features In Common With Dementia**

- **Prominent Features of C-P Disorders**
 - **Poor executive function, memory, insight, judgment, self-control—due to frontal lobe involvement**
- **Types of C-P disorders include:**
 - **Head injury**
 - **Frontal lobe stroke**
 - **Dementia**
 - **Schizophrenia**
 - **Autism**

- **Other Cognitive Features**
 - **Paralysis**

 - **Loss of prior knowledge/abilities (or failure to acquire them)**

 - **Cerebral palsy or other movement disorders**

- **Perceptual Symptoms**
 - **Hallucinations and Delusions**

- ❖ **Do People With Brain Disorders Sin?**

- ❖ **Exploring The Sin-Sickness Connection**

- ❖ **What C-P Symptoms Can Medicine Help?**
 - **Medicines that slow cognitive decline**

 - **Medicines that suppress hallucinations and delusions**

❖ **Special Temptations Those With C-P Problems Face**

- **Denial**

- **Lying and covering up inability**

- **Anger**

❖ **Accepting Help With Hallucinations And Delusions**

❖ **Accepting Help With Cognitive Limitations**

Part II: Common Counseling Issues

Peacemaking. Romans 12:18

I. Introduction and review: God tells you how to make peace.

II. You cannot completely avoid conflict. v. 18a

A. All conflict is the result of sin: Man/God. Man/Man. 5:10 Gen. 3:10,12 Js. 4:1-2

B. Peace is sometimes out of your reach.

1. You cannot make peace at the expense of truth and righteousness. 16:17-18 Mt. 10:34-38 18:15f Jer. 8:11 Acts 20:28 Pr. 23:23 Jude 3 I Co. 5:6-7 15:33 Titus 3:9-11 II Jo. 1:9-11 Lu. 12:15f Ga. 1:9 2:11f Heb. 2:14 Col. 2:15
2. There are some people with whom it is impossible to make peace. I Co. 7:15
3. God does not hold you responsible for the sinful failures of others.

C. Conflict is very dangerous (The Slippery Slope, from *The Peacemaker*). Don't make things worse through unbiblical methods of handling conflict.

1. Some fight: revenge, verbal attacks, gossip, slander, assault, murder, lawsuits. 12:17-21 Mt. 5:21-22 Pr. 11:9 29:22 12:18 14:17 18:8 16:28 11:13 I Co. 6:1-8
2. Others flee: denial, escape, suicide. Eph. 4:26b I Sam. 2:22-25 Heb. 12:15

D. Conflict brings opportunity: to glorify God, to be more like Christ, to serve others, and to bear witness to a watching world. Ro. 8:28-29 12:14,20 I Co. 10:31

III. Do all that is within your power to pursue peace. Mt. 5:9 Heb. 12:14

A. Don't stir up strife. 16:17 Pr. 6:19 26:21 18:21 10:19 Ti. 3:10 Eph. 4:29 Js. 1:19 3:1f

B. Overlook minor offenses. 14:19 I Pe. 4:8 Pr. 10:12 17:14 19:11 29:11,20,22 25:28 15:18 14:19 Mt. 5:39-40 I Co. 6:7 Phil. 2:5f Mt. 5:39-40 I Co. 6:7

C. Confess your sins: Get the log out of your eye. Mt. 7:1-5 5:23-24 Pr. 28:13

1. You must deal with your own sin before you can help others to overcome theirs.
2. Face up to the root of sin in your own heart. James 4:1-2 Pr. 2:24 Mt. 15:18
3. Seek forgiveness for whatever fault you may have (*even if it is only 10%*).
4. Seek forgiveness biblically. (7 A's from *The Peacemaker*) Mt. 5:23-24 II Co. 7:10-11 Address everyone involved, Avoid if, but, maybe, Admit specifically, Acknowledge the hurt, Accept the consequences, Alter your behavior, Ask for forgiveness.

D. Be ready to forgive others as God has forgiven you. Ps. 86:5 Eph. 4:32 Col. 3:12-14

1. Forgiveness is not optional for forgiven people. Mt. 6:12 Mt. 18:21-35 Jer. 31:34
2. Make the promises of forgiveness (from *The Peacemaker*). Mt. 6:12 I Co. 13:5
 - a. I will not think about this incident.
 - b. I will not bring this incident up and use it against you.
 - c. I will not talk to others about this incident.
 - d. I will not allow this incident to stand between us.

E. Use the PAUSE principle in negotiating/peacemaking (from *The Peacemaker*).

1. Prepare for peacemaking. I Co. 4:13
2. Affirm relationships. I Co. 13:7
3. Understand the interests of others: listen! Phil. 2:3-4 Js. 1:19 I Pe. 3:7 Pr. 20:5
4. Search for creative solutions. Daniel 1 Ecc. 9:16
5. Evaluate options objectively and reasonably.

IV. Promote peace by confronting sin biblically.

- A. Love sometimes requires you to *go and show your brother his fault*. 15:14 Lev. 19:17
Which sins *must* you confront?**
- 1. Notorious sins which could damage the Lord's reputation. I Co. 5:1,11**
 - 2. Sins which endanger the purity and unity of the church. 16:16-17 I Co. 5:6-7 15:33**
 - 3. Sins which could ruin the offender. Js. 5:19-20 Gal. 6:1**
 - 4. Sins which could affect your relationship with this person. Mt. 18:15 Eph. 4:26-27**
- B. First, practice personal peacemaking. Matthew 18:15 5:23-24**
- 1. Go to the individual first before involving others.**
 - 2. Go gently, lovingly, and humbly for the purpose of restoration. Gal. 6:1-2**
 - 3. If he repents, rejoice and forgive. Mt. 18:21-22 Js. 5:19-20 Pr. 11:30**
- C. Then, if necessary seek help in making peace (assisted peacemaking). Matt. 18:16**
- 1. Others can bear witness and join in admonishing the sinner to repent. Dt. 19:15**
 - 2. If you can't resolve a conflict on your own, seek godly counsel to help you.**
 - 3. Sometimes mediation or binding arbitration may be appropriate. I Co. 6:5**
- D. Finally, if necessary, take it to the church. Mt. 18:17a**
- 1. The leaders of the church will determine the validity of the charges and the means of dealing with the matter publicly.**
 - 2. The other members join in to plead with the sinner to repent. II Th. 3:14-15**
- E. If he refuses to listen to the church, he is to be put out of the assembly. Mt. 18:17b-20
I Co. 5:4-5,13b I Ti. 1:19-20 Ps. 1:6**
- 1. He is to be regarded as an unbeliever and an outsider. Mt. 18:17b**
 - 2. Church discipline takes place with the authority of the Lord. Mt. 18:18-20**
 - 3. What is the purpose of church discipline? I Co. 5:5-7 15:33 Dt. 13:11 II Co. 2:6-8**

V. Questions.

- A. Does this approach to confronting sin violate confidentiality or one's right to privacy?
I Tim. 1:19-20 Pr. 29:25 Eph. 5:11**
- B. Do these peacemaking techniques ever fail? Prov. 3:5-6**
- C. How can these principles be applied with unbelievers?**
- D. Is there ever a time when it is appropriate for Christians to go to court?**

VI. Conclusion: Before you can make peace with men, you must have peace with God. 5:1,10 8:6 Isa. 9:6 57:21 Lu. 1:79 2:14 19:38 Eph. 2:17,14 Jo. 17:20-21 II Co. 5:18-20

Forgiving Others. Genesis 45

I. Introduction and review.

II. Joseph is reconciled to his brothers. 45:1-28

- A. Joseph reveals his true identity. v. 1-3 Acts 7:13
- B. Joseph comforts his brothers. v. 3b
 - 1. What must the brothers have been thinking and feeling? v. 3b 50:15
 - 2. Joseph makes every effort to reassure his brothers. v. 4
 - 3. Joseph acknowledges God's hand in all that has happened. v. 5-8 50:20
 - 4. He even encourages them to forgive themselves for what they had done. v. 5
 - 5. God's plan all along has been for the house of Israel to go to Egypt for four hundred years to become a nation there. 15:13-14
 - 6. Joseph offers to generously provide for his family in Egypt. v. 9-11,13 Ruth 4:15
 - 7. Joseph showers loving affection upon his brothers. v. 12,14-15
- C. Pharaoh expands upon Joseph's generosity. v. 16-20 Pr. 21:1
- D. Joseph sends his brothers back to retrieve Jacob and all their clan. v. 21-24
 - 1. His gifts will verify the brothers' report to Jacob. v. 21-23,27b
 - 2. Why does he warn them not to quarrel? v. 24 42:22 Mt. 5:9
- E. Jacob receives the amazing news and is revived. v. 25-28 43:14

III. Forgive one another as Joseph forgave his brothers and as God has forgiven you. Eph. 4:32 Mt. 6:12,14-15 Ps. 103:10-12

- A. Forget the offense. Jer. 31:34
 - 1. In what sense does God forget our sins? 41:51 Jer. 31:34 Ps. 103:10-12 Ro. 5
 - 2. Forgiveness involves treating the offender as if the offense had never occurred.
 - 3. Forgiveness includes not bringing it up against them, nor talking about it with others, nor even thinking about it. 41:51 Jer. 31:34 I Co. 13:5
- B. Show love to the offender. 45:10-13 II Co. 2:7-8
 - 1. Never take revenge. 50:18-19 Rom. 12:17-21
 - 2. Take initiative in restoring the relationship.
 - 3. Comfort them in their guilt, fear and grief. 45:3-5 Num. 21:8-9
 - 4. Openly express your affection to them. 45:14-15
 - 5. Rather than expecting them to try to make it up to you, minister to their needs.
- C. What if you don't want to forgive? Mt. 6:14-15 Eph. 4:32 I Co. 10:13 Phil. 4:13
 - 1. Forgiveness is not optional. The Bible commands us to forgive.
 - 2. Sometimes it is very hard to forgive. Forgiveness is granted, not necessarily felt.
 - 3. Those who don't forgive suffer the consequences. Heb. 12:15 I Pe. 3:7
 - 4. God will equip and enable you to forgive and minister grace to those who hurt you.

- D. Trust God, recognizing His sovereign hand is at work when others sin against you. 45:5-8 50:19-21 42:36 Rom. 8:28 11:33 II Cor. 12:7-9 Js. 1:2f Prov. 16:1-4 19:21
1. God is able to use human sin to bring about His good plan. Acts 2:23 Ro. 8:28
 2. This does not excuse their sin. Sometimes God punishes those He uses. Is. 10:4f
 3. When you are hurt by someone, thank God for the good He is accomplishing.
- E. Remember how God has first freely forgiven you. Eph. 4:32 Mt. 6:12,14-15 18:21f Titus 3:5-7 Col. 3:12-13 Luke 7:40f
- F. What should you do if your brother is not repentant? Mt. 18:15f Gal. 6:1f
1. There is a sense in which forgiveness and reconciliation cannot fully take place if the other party is not repentant.
 2. If the other person says they are repentant, assume the best. Mt. 18:21-22
 3. You may need to graciously confront the one who has wronged you. Mt. 18
 4. Sometimes it is impossible to bring about reconciliation. Mt. 18:17-18 Rom. 12:18
 5. You never have license to be bitter. Always be ready to forgive.

IV. How does this passage point to Christ?

- A. God predetermined that Jesus, like Joseph, must suffer that he might save His people. John 18:11 Acts 2:23 4:28 13:27
1. God's plan of salvation requires sacrifice. Acts 7:9-10 John 3:14
 2. God determined beforehand that He would suffer through wicked hands and so save the world. Acts 2:23 4:28 Isa. 53:10
 3. The Father's beloved Son is sent to His wicked brethren who reject him.
 4. Jesus, like Joseph, accepted the Father's will concerning His suffering. Jo. 18:11
 5. He has accomplished a great deliverance, bringing reconciliation. 45:7
 6. One day those who rejected Him will bow and weep. Zec.. 12:10 Jo. 19:37 Ro. 11 Phil. 2:9-11 Re. 1:7 20:11-15
- B. Joseph's forgiveness of his brothers beautifully portrays Christ's forgiveness of us.
1. He does not count our sins against us.
 2. He receives and embraces us. Luke 15:20
 3. He not only forgives us, but enriches us. II Co. 8:9 II Pe. 1:2-3 Ro. 8:32 II Co. 8:9
 4. He invites us to draw near unto Him. 45:4 Mt. 11:28-30
 5. He gladly receives all who humble themselves before Him. Js. 4:6 I Pe. 5:5
- C. Other parallels.
1. Like Joseph, Jesus knew His brothers before they knew Him. Is. 1:3 John 1:10-11
 2. God's Son finds refuge in Egypt. Mt. 2:15 Hos. 11:1 Ex. 4:22
 3. As Joseph's family gained favor in Pharaoh's eyes because of his relationship to Joseph, we find favor in God's eyes because of Christ. Phil. 3:9
 4. Like Jacob, who thought the news about Joseph was too good to be true, some doubt the gospel of grace because it seems too good to be true.

V. Concluding applications.

Church Discipline: I Cor. 5:1-13 Mt. 18:15-20

I. Introduction.

- A. Why is church discipline important? I Cor. 5 Acts 20:28 Rev. 2:14-15,20
- B. Why don't many churches practice discipline?
- C. To what two extremes do churches go in the practice of church discipline?
III Jn. 9-10
- D. When is the best time to teach your church about church discipline?
 - 1. I recommend the *Peacemakers* materials.
- E. You learn much through experience.

II. Stage 1: Go to your brother privately. Matthew 18:15

- A. Some suggest a step 0: self discipline: Mt. 18:8-9 I Cor. 10:12 Gal. 5:23
- B. Which sins must be confronted?
 - 1. Minor offenses should be overlooked. I Peter 4:8 Pr. 10:12 19:11
 - 2. Sins which endanger the moral purity and reputation of Christ's church.
I Cor. 5:1,5-6,11 15:33
 - 3. Errors which endanger the doctrinal purity of the church. I John 2:22-23 4:1
II John 1:9-11
 - 4. Notorious sins which could damage the reputation of the Lord.
 - 5. Sins which endanger the doctrinal and moral purity of the church.
I Cor. 5:6b-7 15:33 II Jn. 9-11
 - 6. Divisiveness which endangers the unity of the church. Ro. 16:17-18 I Co. 3:3
Titus 3:9-11 Heb. 13:17 III John 9
 - 7. Sins which could ruin your brother. Js. 5:19-20
 - 8. Sins which threaten your relationship with the other person. Mt. 18
- C. What should you do before you go?
 - 1. Make sure that there are no beams in your eye. Mt. 7:5
 - 2. Be certain that you have a clear-cut case.
 - 3. Behavior is easier to prove than motives and attitudes.
 - 4. Strive to assume the best. I Cor. 13:7
 - 5. Test your motives.
- D. Do not first go to others: gossip. Lev. 19:16
 - 1. This principle applies in every sphere. (Family, workplace, etc.)
 - 2. What should you do if someone improperly tells you the sin of another?
- E. Why should you confront him?
 - 1. Love demands that you confront him. Lev. 19:17 Pr. 27:6 3:5-6 17:5-6
 - 2. What excuses do people make in order to avoid confrontation? Ro. 15:14
Pr. 27:6
- F. In what manner should you confront him? Gal. 6:1-2
 - 1. Go gently, carefully, and lovingly.
 - 2. Your purpose is to restore. Gal. 6:1-2.

- G. What should you do if he repents? Mt. 18:15b 21-22 Js. 5:19-20 Pr. 11:30 Eph. 4:32
1. If he repents, rejoice and forgive. Eph. 4:32
 2. Repentance may involve restitution and seeking the forgiveness of other parties.

H. Other questions:

1. Do those who are under authority (i.e. a wife or a child) have the right to confront those over them (i.e. a husband or a parent)?
2. How can you know someone is really repentant? II Cor. 7:10-11
3. If you doubt his repentance, can you move on to stage 2?
4. If he professes repentance, but keeps sinning, can you move on to stage 2? Mt. 18:21-22
5. Are there cases in which a man may repent, but the church will still need to be told? I Tim. 5:20
6. What level of confidentiality should you offer in counseling?
7. How long should you wait before moving to stage 2?

III. Stage 2: If he will not listen to you, take two or three witnesses. Mt. 18:16 Dt. 19:15

- A. What is the function of the two or three?
They come to bear witness against his sin and to admonish him to repent.
- B. Whom should you bring? Gal. 6:1
- C. Are there cases in which those you bring may not agree that he is guilty?
1. You may lack decisive evidence.
 2. They may not agree the matter is a sin issue.
- D. Are there sins which may warrant admonition, but don't require going to stage 3?
Can every sin potentially lead to public discipline?
- E. What should be done in disputes in which counter-charges are being made?
1. Jesus is addressing clear-cut cases of sin in Matthew 18.
 2. Disputes among brothers require application of additional scriptural principles. I Co. 6:1-8 Phil. 4:2-3 Pr. 18:17
- F. What should you do if the erring brother repents?
- G. Other questions.
1. What should you tell a "witness" when asking him to serve?
 2. What if the accused party refuses to meet with the witness(es)?

IV. Stage 3: If he still refuses to repent, tell it to the church. Mt. 18:17a

- A. Who tells the church? The leaders of the church must be involved in determining the validity of the charges and the means of dealing with the matter publicly.
- B. How should the situation be communicated to the church?
- C. How much should the church be told?
The presentation to the congregation must be open and above-board.

- D. Is this a violation of the sinner's right to privacy? I Cor. 1:20 Eph. 5:11
- E. What should the members of the church do when they hear the charges against their brother? The other members join in to pressure the sinner to repent. II Th. 3:14
- F. If the sinner repents, he is to be forgiven and restored.
- G. Other questions.
 - 1. What if someone has charges against the leaders of the church?
 - 2. Can a person resign his membership in the church to avoid discipline?

V. Finally the sinner is to be removed from the church. Mt. 18:17b-20 I Cor. 5:3f

- A. What is the purpose of removing someone from the church?
 - 1. To protect the church from impurity (leaven). I Cor. 5:6-7 15:33 Dt. 13:11
 - 2. To bring about restoration of the fallen brother. v. 20b I Cor. 5:5
II Cor. 2:6-8
Gal. 6:1-2 Js. 5:19-20
 - 3. For the sake of the reputation of Christ.
- B. What is the status of one who has been put out of the church? Mt. 18:17-20
I Jo. 2:19
 - 1. He is to be regarded as an unbeliever and an outsider. Mt. 18:17
 - 2. Church discipline takes place under the Lord's authority. Mt. 18:18-20
 - 3. Does this mean he actually is an unbeliever?
- C. Once someone is excommunicated, can Christians take him to court? I Co. 6:1ff
7:12
- D. How should the people in the church act towards him? I Cor. 5:9-13 II Th. 3:6,14
- E. Should he be allowed to attend worship services or other meetings of the church?
I Cor 5:13 Deut. 17:7 19:19 21:21 22:24
- F. What are the usual responses of people under discipline?
 - 1. People who deserve discipline often try to get themselves off on technicalities.
 - 2. People who are under discipline often put their accusers on trial.
- G. Questions:
 - 1. What does it mean to be *delivered to Satan for the destruction of the flesh*?
I Cor. 5:5 I Tim. 1:19-20
 - 2. How should discipline be handled if the person agrees that he is not a Christian?
I Cor. 5:10
 - 3. Who decides the person should be excommunicated?
Is there to be a congregational vote?
 - 4. Is there a court of appeals beyond the local church level?
 - 5. Must family members cease socializing with other family members who have been disciplined?
 - 6. How should we deal with members who do not attend?

7. What is the status of someone who is removed from membership for non-attendance?
8. What is the difference when someone simply resigns his membership?
9. Do we have any duty/right to discipline professing Christians who regularly attend our churches, but are not members? I Cor. 5:11
10. Are there levels of church discipline which fall short of removal? II Th. 3:14-15
11. Why is it important to keep written records of church discipline cases?

VI. Restoration after excommunication.

- A. Are there cases of restoration after someone has been removed from the church?
 1. Even after “excommunication” the hope of repentance and restoration remains.
 2. Church discipline works! II Cor. 2:6-8
- B. How quickly can a person be restored?
- C. How can you know his repentance is genuine? II Cor. 7:8-11
- D. How should a restored person be treated? Forgiven, loved, and helped.
- E. Is it legitimate to place some restrictions upon a brother who has been restored?
- F. How should restoration be communicated to the church?

VII. Other considerations.

- A. Are there situations in which sin should be dealt with publicly without having to go through all of the steps in Matthew 18:15-20? . I Cor. 5:9-11 6:9-10 I Tim. 5:19-20 Gal. 2:11ff II John 10 Titus 3:9-11 Rom. 16:17-18 Heb. 13:17 III John 9-10
There are some sins of such a public and heinous nature that do not require all of the above steps. I Cor 5:1
- B. How should churches work together in the area of church discipline?
 1. Churches should respect one another’s discipline. Prov. 18:15,17
 2. Churches should work together when disputes arise among their members.
 3. How can you find out if a person is under discipline from another church?
 4. What should you do to be sure your ex-member doesn’t join another church?
 5. How should you handle a situation in which someone who was disciplined by another church begins attending your church?
 6. Are there cases in which a church might rightly receive someone who was under discipline from another local church? III John 10-11
 7. How should churches which refuse to cooperate in these matters be regarded?
- C. Church discipline requires a biblical church structure.
 1. What is the role of the elders in church discipline? Acts 20:28
 2. Why is it important for churches to have a defined membership?

- D. A problem of our day: many refuse to commit themselves to a church.**
- 1. Why do many refuse to commit to membership?**
 - 2. Why is formal membership in a local church necessary? See “Why Should I Join a Church,” by Jim Elliff and Darly Wingerd; and Life in the Father’s House, by Wayne Mack and David Swavely.**
 - a. While the word membership is not used in the Bible in this sense, the concept is biblical (like the word “Trinity”).**
 - b. Every Christian is to be a committed part of a local body.**
 - c. Those converted in the book of Acts were added to particular local churches. Acts 2:41,47**
 - d. Unlike the early church, we have multiple local churches in one geographical area; therefore, we need to define to which congregation one is committed.**
 - e. Every believer is to be under the oversight and discipline of particular elders who need to know for which sheep they are accountable. He. 13:17 I Pet. 5:2-3 I Th. 5:12-13**
 - f. You are to love a local body of believers and use your gifts to benefit it. Jo. 13:34**
 - g. If you are not committed and accountable, your opportunity to use your gifts will be significantly diminished.**
 - h. Membership causes the visible church to better reflect the invisible and clarifies the difference between believers and unbelievers.**
 - i. If a person can be put out of the church through discipline, there must be a means by which he came to be in the local church. Mt. 18:15f I Cor. 5**
 - j. Recognition of membership helps local churches to work together.**
 - k. Those who desire the benefits of church membership without taking on the responsibilities want to live together without making the commitment of marriage.**
 - 3. How should we view those who refuse to join the church?**
 - 4. Can a non-member be disciplined? I Cor. 5:11**
 - 5. What are the responsibilities of church members?**
 - a. Regular attendance. Heb. 10:24-25**
 - b. Involvement in ministry through service, love and giving. I Co. 12:7 I Pe. 4:10f**
 - c. Submission to the leaders of the church. Heb. 13:17 I Th. 5:12**
 - d. Is church membership lifelong?**
 - 6. What are the privileges of church membership?**
 - a. Communion.**
 - b. Service.**
 - c. Receiving ministry from the church. Gal. 6:10**
 - d. Pastoral oversight. I Th. 5:12 Heb 13:17**
 - 7. What are the conditions of church membership?**
 - a. Profession of faith.**
 - b. Willingness to love and serve the brethren.**
 - c. Willingness to submit to the leadership of the church.**

E. Questions:

- 1. What is the status of a professing Christian who is the member of no church?**
- 2. What are the risks of being a member of no church?**
- 3. What should be done with professing Christians who refuse to join a church?**
- 4. How long should we wait before receiving a person into church membership?**
- 5. On what grounds may we legitimately refuse church membership to a believer?**

VIII. Conclusion.

- A. Preserve the unity and purity of the church through following biblical principles for church discipline. I Tim. 3:15 Mt. 16:18. Rev. 2:5**

- B. Recommended reading: Jay Adams, Handbook of Church Discipline**

Confess Your Sins: I John 1:8-10

I. Introduction and review.

- A. John writes that you may enjoy fellowship with God. 1:3,5
- B. John refutes three big lies of those who reject the Apostolic witness. 1:6-2:2
 - 1. They lie by claiming fellowship with God, while walking in the darkness. 1:6-7
 - 2. They deceive themselves by claiming to have no sin (nature). 1:8-9
 - 3. They call God a liar by claiming not to have sinned. 1:10-2:2
- C. The doctrine of sin is still under attack.

II. Don't deny your sin! 1:8,10

- A. What is sin?
 - 1. God made mankind perfect, but we rebelled. Gen. 3 Rom. 5:12 Ecc. 7:29
 - 2. Sin is a violation of God's law. 3:4 Ex. 20:1f Mt. 22:36-40
 - 3. Sin is rejecting God's way and going your own way. Isa. 53:6
 - 4. You can be guilty of sin by commission or omission. 3:17 Js. 4:17 2:15f 1:27
 - 5. It is possible to sin without fully realizing it. Ps. 90:8
- B. What is the difference between the false boasts in verses 8 and 10?
 - 1. In verse 8 there is a denial of a sin nature.
 - 2. In verse 10 they deny that they have committed acts of sin.
- C. Who could possibly say he has no sin?
 - 1. The gnostics of John's day believed that their spiritual enlightenment exempted them from sin.
 - 2. Some professing Christians claim to have reached a state of spiritual perfection. I Kings 8:46 Phil. 3:12-14 Rom. 7:25 Pr. 20:9
 - 3. Most people presume they are basically good.
 - 4. Many think their good deeds offset their bad deeds. Luke 18:11-12 Isa. 64:6
 - 5. We blame our bad acts on others. Rom. 2:15
 - 6. Do some blame God for their sin? Js. 1:13 I Co. 10:13
 - 7. Most people minimize their sins.
 - 8. Some will admit they are sinful, but will not confess to particular sins. 1:10
 - 9. Some reject the very concept of sin. Isa. 5:20
- D. When you deny your sinfulness: v. 8b
 - 1. You delude yourself. Dt. 13:6
 - 2. You prove that you do not possess the truth. 2:4 John 8:44
- E. When you boast that you have not sinned: v. 10b
 - 1. You call God a liar. 5:10 Ro. 3:4,10f,23 Isa. 53:6 Pr. 20:9 I Kings 8:46 Ps. 14:3
 - 2. His Word has no place in your life. John 17:17,20 4:50 8:51-52
- F. How should you approach a person who denies his sinfulness?
 - 1. Deep down you know about God and His righteous law. Rom. 1:18-20,32
 - 2. You need to understand the heart meaning of God's law. Mt. 5:21f 22:36f Ex. 20

III. Confess your sins and God will forgive you. 1:9

- A. What kind of confession does God seek? 2:23
1. Agree with God that you are a sinner. Ps. 32:3-5 Pr. 28:13
 2. Accept full responsibility for your sins.
 3. Come with a heart of repentance.
 4. Confess your particular sins to Him.
 5. Is John speaking of the initial confession of sin at conversion, or ongoing confession in the life of a believer? 2:1,12 Ps. 32:5 51:1f 139:23-24 Mt. 6:11
 6. Is John speaking of confession to men or to God? Ps. 51:4 I Tim. 2:5
- B. Hope in the character of God! Ex. 34:6-7 Micah 7:18-20
1. He is faithful to His Word. 1:9 Deut. 32:4 Jer. 31:34 Isa. 1:18 Ps. 103:8-14 89:1-4 I Cor. 1:9 II Ti. 2:13 He. 10:23
 2. He is just. 1:7 2:2,29 Rom. 3:23-26 Isa. 51:5 53:4-6,11
- C. His promises are great.
1. He will forgive you. Lu. 15:20-24 Ps. 103:12
 2. He will cleanse you. 1:7 Ti. 2:14 Heb. 9:23 Isa. 1:18 Ps. 51:1-2 Eph. 5:27 Co. 1:22
 3. What a blessing it is to finally stop hiding and to be right with God! Ps. 32:1
 4. Without confession there is no forgiveness or cleansing.
- D. Apply these principles in relation to one another. Eph. 4:32 Mt. 18:21f 5:23-24
1. If you have wronged your brother, seek his forgiveness. Mt. 5:23-24
 2. Forgive as you have been forgiven. Eph. 4:32 Mt. 18:21f

IV. Concluding applications.

- A. Confess your sins.
- B. Look to Jesus Whose blood cleanses repentant sinners. 1:7

Discussion questions.

1. What is sin?
2. Why don't people want to admit they are sinners?
3. What kinds of excuses do people use to avoid being charged with sin?
4. What are the consequences of denying one's sin(s)?
5. How does one's denial of sin make God a liar?
6. How would you try to prove to someone that he/she is a sinner?
7. What kind of confession does God seek?
8. How would you answer someone who says you only have to ask God for forgiveness once, at conversion, and that Christians need make no more confession?
9. How does God's character (faithfulness and justice) give comfort to sinners?
10. How can God justly forgive sin?

Anger

I. Understanding anger.

- A. Anger is not necessarily sinful.
 - 1. God gets angry. Ex. 4:14 Num. 25:4 Ps. 7:11
 - 2. Jesus was angry. Mark 3:5 John 2:13ff
 - 3. Righteous anger, which arises solely from a passion for God, is rare! Eph. 4:26f
 - 4. Usually we are angry for selfish reasons: pride, hurt feelings, etc.
 - 5. Then we express anger in sinful ways.

- B. All anger seems righteous.
 - 1. People get angry because they believe they have been treated unjustly. Js. 1:20

 - 2. They desire revenge to make things even. Rom. 12:17-21

 - 3. Some justify anger saying they can't help themselves.

 - 4. Some become angry with God. Job 2:9 Rom. 9:20

- C. Anger is a heart issue. Mark 7:21 Mt. 12:34

- D. Anger has a physical component. Gen. 4:5 Ps. 4:4

- E. Anger is dangerous and destructive. Eph. 4:26-27 Ecc. 7:9
 - 1. It is murderous by nature. Mt. 5:21f Gen. 4:6-7

 - 2. Those who give into anger are at risk of being out of control. Pr. 25:28

- F. There are many sinful ways people deal with anger. Pr. 29:22
 - 1. Ventilation. Pr. 12:18 29:11 25:29 Eph. 4:29,31

 - 2. Displacement.

 - 3. Internalizing. Lev. 19:17-18

 - 4. Denial.

- G. Anger must be dealt with biblically.
 - 1. Sinful anger must be put off. Eph. 4:26-27 Pr. 22:24

 - 2. Learn self control. Js. 1:19 Titus 1:7 Pr. 14:29 16:32

 - 3. Put out the fires of anger by remembering how God's anger against you was turned away by Christ. Eph. 4:32 Mt. 18:22-35 Pr. 19:11

 - 4. Trust that God will judge the wicked in due time. Ro. 12:19 Gen. 50:19

 - 5. Do good to your enemy, as God has done good to you. Ro. 12:20 Mt. 5:43ff

 - 6. Build others up rather than tearing them down. Eph. 4:29 Pr. 15:1

II. Exposition of key texts.

A. Matthew 5:21-26

B. James 1:19-20

C. James 4:1-2

D. Romans 12:17-21

E. Matthew 18:21-35

III. Data gathering/interpretation.

A. What does this person want so badly that he is willing to kill to get it? Js. 4:1ff

B. What does this person believe which in the moment makes him feel just in becoming angry and expressing his anger?

C. Is physical abuse taking place? Is anyone in danger?

IV. Homework for those who give in to anger.

A. Confess unrighteous anger as murder. Mt. 5:21-26

B. Humble yourself. Abandon your “rights”. Phil. 2:3ff

C. Make a plan for dealing with anger. Pr. 27:12

D. Keep an anger journal.

E. Meditate upon and memorize key texts (listed above).

F. Reading.

1. “What to Do When Anger Gets the Upper Hand”, Jay Adams (pamphlet)

2. Anger: Escaping the Maze, David Powlison (booklet: CCEF/RFCL)

3. Angry at God: Bring Him Your Doubts and Questions, Robert D. Jones (booklet: CCEF/RFCL)

4. War of Words, Paul Tripp

5. Uprooting Anger, Robert D. Jones Anger and Stress Management God’s Way, Wayne Mack

6. The Heart of Anger, Lou Priolo (primarily for angry kids)

G. Audio

1. “War of Words”, Paul Tripp

2. “Helping Angry Kids”, Lou Priolo

3. “Counseling Angry People”, Wayne Mack

4. “Who is a Murderer? Matt. 5:21-26”, Jim Newheiser

5. “Love Your Enemies. Romans 12:17-21”, Jim Newheiser

H. Workbook: Homework Manual for Biblical Living: Volume 1, Mack, “Anger Homework”

Who is a Murderer? Matt. 5:21-26

I. Introduction and review: Jesus lays down the Law. v. 21-48

- A. Jesus corrects the abuses of the Law by the scribes and Pharisees. v. 20, 43

- B. Jesus speaks with authority. 7:28-29
 - 1. His authority surpasses that of the teachers of the Jews. Mark 1:22
 - 2. He proclaims the true meaning of the Law of Moses.
 - 3. His authority and teaching surpass that of Moses. John 1:17
 - a. Jesus is the authoritative expounder of God's will for God's people.
 - b. Is the Mosaic Law the supreme declaration of God's moral law?

- C. He expands our understanding of the Law of God. (Lloyd-Jones)
 - 1. The Law goes beyond the letter and also includes the Spirit.
 - 2. The Law goes beyond actions and includes the heart. 15:19 I Sam. 16:7 Lk. 16:15
 - 3. The Law is not merely negative, preventing sin; but is also positive, commanding virtues that promote righteousness.
 - 4. The Law is not an end of itself but a means to know and glorify God.
 - 5. The Law is not oppressive and constraining, but it is a blessing, bringing freedom to God's people. I Jn 5:3 Ps. 19:7-14 119:70-72

II. Are you a murderer?

- A. Murder goes beyond the act. v. 21
 - 1. The Pharisees were right to condemn the deed of murder. Gen. 9:6
 - a. Not all killing is murder, but only the unjust taking of human life. Gen. 4:8
 - b. The death penalty is imposed because murderers have attacked the image of God.
 - 2. The Jews erred by limiting the sixth commandment to one outward act and its civil penalty.

- B. You can commit murder without shedding blood. v. 22 John 8:44
 - 1. Mental murder: anger and hatred. I Jn. 3:15 Js. 4:2 Pr. 14:17 22:24 Ecc. 7:9
 - 2. Verbal murder. 12:34 Lev. 20:9 Js. 3:1-12
 - 3. Other kinds of murder.
 - a. Physical harm.
 - b. Economic or legal oppression. James 5:6 2:13
 - c. Racial prejudice.
 - d. Even a look can kill.

- C. Such hate crimes deserve God's justice.
 - 1. Jesus is not saying that the state is authorized to punish words and thoughts.
 - 2. God, who knows the heart, will bring justice: everlasting wrath. 12:36 Js. 2:13
 - 3. Jesus believes in hell!

III. Repent of your murderous anger.

A. Don't make excuses.

1. *My anger is righteous anger (like Jesus).* Eph. 4:26
 - a. Jesus in His office as Messiah expresses God's holy judicial hatred of sin. Mat t. 21:12f 23:17 Jn. 2:14-17 Ps. 7:11 97:10 Mark 3:5
 - b. Righteous anger is a zeal for God's honor, not self interest.
 - c. The best sin to be angry with is your own. Js. 4:1ff
 - d. Jesus patiently suffered wrongs against Himself. I Pet. 2:23 Lk. 23:34
2. *I was provoked. I couldn't help myself!*
 - a. You are still responsible for your thoughts, words, and deeds.
 - b. Circumstances simply reveal what is already in the heart.
 - c. God will not tempt you beyond what you are able. I Cor. 10:13
3. *That's just the way I am. I have a short fuse.*
4. *I was simply exercising my authority.* Authority does not give license to verbal or physical abuse. (Government, family, church, work)
5. *I'm just being honest about my thoughts and feelings.*
 - a. Some feelings are sinful: hatred.
 - b. Some thoughts best remain unspoken and repented of.
6. *I'm not angry. I'm hurt, bothered, upset, offended, annoyed, irritated, resentful, disturbed, frustrated, and ticked off.* Heb. 3:13

B. In Christ, you can conquer sinful anger. II Cor. 5:17 Phil. 4:13 Co. 3:8 Js. 1:19-20 Ps. 37:8 Pr. 15:18 16:32 25:28

1. Recognize that you are dealing with dangerous sin. Eph. 4:26-27 Js. 3:1ff
2. Don't seek revenge. Rom. 12:17-21 Gen. 50:19
3. Don't vent your emotions. Gal. 5:23
4. Don't just hold it all in. Eph. 4:26
5. But entrust your situation to God. 6:12 18:21ff I Pet. 2:23-24 Eph. 4:26-27,32

IV. Seek harmonious relationships with your adversaries. v. 23-26

A. Jesus pronounces the positive claim of the sixth commandment.

B. Personal reconciliation must take place before you can worship. v. 23-24

1. Jesus' example of sacrifice illustrates how the Old Covenant truths can be applied under the New Covenant. Heb. 13:10,15-16 II Cor. 6:16 Eph. 2:21
2. Some try to use religious ritual to coverup their sins. I Sam. 15:15
3. God will not accept such sham worship. I Sam. 15:22 I John 4:20 Isa. 1:15 58:4 Jer. 7:8-11 Amos 5:21-24 Mic. 6:6-8 Ps. 24:3-4 66:18
4. Postpone sacrifice, rather than postponing reconciliation. I Pet. 3:7 I Cor. 13:3
5. In which cases must I do this?
 - a. What if it is not a major issue? I Pet. 4:8
 - b. What if I am not at fault? Prov. 16:2
 - c. What if he will not reconcile? Rom. 12:18
6. Are you ready to worship today? Will you be tonight? I Cor. 11:27-29

C. Deal with your wrongs against others as quickly as possible. v. 25-26

1. Confess your fault.
2. Where appropriate, make restitution. Luke 19:8
3. Act before it is too late. Eph. 4:26 Heb. 12:14-15

V. Concluding applications.

- A. You are a murderer under a sentence of condemnation. v. 22 Rev. 22:15 Rom. 6:23**
- B. You are, by nature, God's enemy.**
- C. God offers a way of reconciliation. Rom. 5:8-11**
- D. The time for reconciliation is now! II Cor. 5:20**

Counseling in Cases of Abuse

I. Introduction: Defining abuse.

A. A dictionary definition. *Abuse is an improper treatment towards another when one abuses his natural powers, privileges, or advantages.*

B. Government definitions of abuse.

1. Government categories of child abuse. (San Diego Sheriff's Guide to Abuse)

a. Physical abuse. *Physical abuse is defined as behavior that results in the non-accidental injury of a child.*

b. Physical neglect. *Neglect is the failure to provide the basic necessities of life to the extent that a child's well-being is endangered.*

c. Sexual abuse and exploitation. *Sexual abuse is any use of a child by an adult for the purpose of providing sexual gratification to the adult or the child.*

d. Emotional abuse.

2. Spouse abuse.

a. Physical assault

b. Threats.

c. Emotional abuse.

3. Problems with secular definitions of abuse.

C. A Biblical understanding of abuse. Mt. 5:21f 18:6 Js. 4:1-2 Pr. 15:32-33 16:32 25:28

D. Understand the difference between child abuse and legitimate discipline.

1. The Bible authorizes disciplinary spanking: inflicting physical pain as part of training. Prov. 22:15 13:24 23:13-14 29:15

2. The Bible does not authorize personal revenge, including a parent to a child. Rom. 12:19

3. Parental discipline is to be loving correction on God's behalf.

4. When an angry parent takes revenge on a child:

a. He is guilty of serious sin. Mt. 5:21f

b. He is likely going to provoke the child to anger. Col. 3:21

c. He is in danger of becoming guilty of a crime punishable by the government.

E. The Bible never authorizes the use of force against a spouse.

F. When should abuse be reported?

1. Some cases of abuse are crimes and must immediately be reported to the authorities.

2. Some counselors and pastors are mandated reporters of child abuse. Ro. 13:1-7

3. It is desirable to use the biblical means of confronting sin through the church. Matt. 18:15f I Co. 5

4. If the abuser will not submit to the authority of the church, it is appropriate to involve the civil authorities.

5. How much discretion may you use?

G. Churches, schools, and families should take precautions to prevent abuse. Pr. 27:12

II. Counseling the abused.

- A. You have a duty to protect victims of abuse. Ps. 82:3-4 Pr. 31:8-9 22:22-23**
- 1. Do whatever is necessary to ensure the victims are safe.**
 - 2. Is violent abuse grounds for separation or divorce? I Co. 7:12-16 I Ti. 5:8**
- B. How can you know someone has been abused? Prov. 18:17**
- 1. All claims of abuse have to be taken seriously.**
 - 2. It is also important to protect people from being falsely accused.**
 - 3. Do extensive data gathering.**
 - 4. Abuse is often hard to prove because it usually takes place without third party witnesses. Deut. 19:15**
 - 5. Some “victims” have used false claims of abuse to seek revenge or control.**
 - 6. Some counseling appears to have created false memories of abuse (False Memory Syndrome).**
 - 7. Many victims refuse to report their abusers.**
 - a. False guilt.**
 - b. Fear.**
 - c. Wrong views of submission.**
 - d. Confusion.**
- C. Help the victim of abuse to biblically understand what has happened to her.**
- 1. She needs to honestly face personal sinfulness. Mt. 7:3-5 I Jo. 1:9 Dt. 22:23-24**
 - 2. She needs to honestly face the sinfulness of others. Dt. 22:25-27**
 - 3. Help her to confront the abuser when appropriate and feasible. Mt. 18:15f Lu. 17:3**
 - 4. Is it sinfully vengeful and unforgiving to report abuse? Rom. 12:19 13:4**
- D. Victims of abuse can become overcomers, by God’s grace. Rom. 12:21 I Co. 10:13**
- 1. Offer biblical hope and comfort. Ro. 15:4 II Co. 1:3f 4:7-10 Re. 7:17 21:4 He. 4:15**
 - 2. Build a biblical view of suffering. II Co. 4:16-17**
 - a. Recognize that God is sovereign over suffering. Eph. 1:11 Job 1-2**
 - b. Why does God allow abuse? (From Elyse Fitzpatrick).**
 - (1) To bring deliverance to others. Gen. 50:20**
 - (2) To build character in us.. Rom. 5:3-5 James 1:2-5 I Pet. 1:6-9**
 - (3) To equip us to comfort others. II Co. 1:3-11**
 - (4) To display the works of God. John 9:1-3**
 - (5) To help us to appreciate the hope we have in Christ. Rom. 8:18,28-29**
 - 3. Teach her how to forgive biblically. Mt. 6:12 18:21f Eph. 4:32**
 - a. When should a victim forgive an abuser?**
 - b. She needs to recognize the characteristics of true repentance. II Co. 7:10-11**
 - c. Does forgiveness require that charges not be pressed?**
 - d. Forgiveness is only possible because Christ has forgiven us. Eph. 4:32**
 - e. Forgiveness is freeing.**
 - f. Can she forgive if the abuser is not repentant?**
 - 4. Believers have resources to gain victory over the effects of abuse. Rom. 6:1f II Co. 5:17 II Pe. 1:3 Phil. 1:6**

5. She does not have to fall into sins of:
 - a. Being angry and abusive themselves. Rom. 12:17-21
 - b. Having a “dysfunctional” family.
 - c. Lifelong bitterness. Heb. 12:15
 - d. Being angry with God.
 - e. Fear and worry. Mt. 6:25f Phil. 4:6-9
 - f. Self pity.
 - g. Self-righteousness.
6. Help her to rid her life of idols common to victims of abuse.
 - a. Desire for safety/security
 - b. Desire for control.
 - c. Man pleasing/fear of man. Pr. 29:25
 - d. Self indulgence. Ga. 5:19-22
7. Teach her to give thanks for God’s blessings in her life. I Th. 5:18
8. Teach her to live by faith, not feelings. II Co. 5:7

E. Homework for victims of abuse.

1. Learn from Joseph. Gen. 50:17-21
 - a. He was horribly abused by family members. Gen. 37
 - b. He was able to thrive for many years before his abusers sought his forgiveness.
 - c. He recognized the sovereignty and goodness of God, even in what happened to him. Gen. 50:20 41:51
 - d. He refused to take revenge, trusting God to deal with those who wronged him. Gen. 50:19 Rom. 12:19 I Pet. 2:23
 - e. He was able to forgive and bless his abusers. Gen. 50:21 Rom. 12:20-21
2. Women Helping Women, by Elyse Fitzpatrick, chapter 14: *Counseling Women Abused as Children*.
3. What To Do When You’re Abused by Your Husband, Needham and Pryde.
4. Abused? How You Can Find God’s Help, by Richard and Lois Klempel
5. Confront/report the abuser.
6. Emergency phone numbers, safe houses, etc.

III. Counseling the abuser.

A. Understand why people abuse.

1. It is important to address not merely the behavior, but the attitude of the heart behind the behavior. Mark 7:20-23
2. People abuse because they want something (badly enough to kill). Js. 4:1-2
Even legitimate desires can become idols.
3. When they don’t get what they want, they become angry and abusive.
4. Expressions of anger (verbal tirades, threats, physical violence) are often very effective means of controlling and manipulating people. Js. 1:19-20
5. Characteristics of abusers.
 - a. Controlling and manipulative.
 - b. Blames others and minimizes own sin.
 - c. Impulsive and aggressive. Prov. 25:28
 - d. Low tolerance for stress.
 - e. Self-centered.
 - f. Deceitful.
 - g. Charming.

6. Abusers tend to follow a cycle:
 - a. Build up stage. Tension building
 - b. Blow up stage. Battering verbal or physical.
 - c. Remorse stage. Apologizing.
 - d. Build up stage...

B. The abuser must repent. Pr. 28:13

1. Don't let him excuse or minimize what he has done.
2. First he must repent before God not only for his sinful actions, but for the evil attitudes and beliefs behind the actions. Ps. 51 Rom. 12:19
3. How can you know he is repentant? II Co. 7:10-11
 - a. Worldly sorrow is common among abusers.
 - b. What are the characteristics of godly sorrow?
4. He must seek forgiveness from those whom he has wronged. Mt. 5:23-24
5. He should willingly submit to accountability and safeguards.
6. What punishment is appropriate for an abuser? Deut. 25:1-3 Mt. 18:6

C. Teach the abuser how to change.

1. Go over patterns of abuse in great detail.
2. Teach him how to deal with anger. Eph. 4:26-27,32 Js. 1:19-20 Pr. 25:28 Ge. 4:6-7
 - a. Allowing anger to continue in the heart is to give the devil an opportunity.
 - b. Human anger cannot achieve God's righteousness.
 - c. Remember God's anger has been turned away from you. Eph. 4:32 Mt. 18:21f
3. Make a specific plan to deal with temptation.
 - a. Never spank in anger.
 - b. Stage 1 anger: put children in room: go alone & pray.
 - c. Stage 2: call friend: pray over phone.
 - d. Stage 3: someone come over immediately.
4. Teach the abuser to become a servant. Mark 10:42-45 John 13:1f
5. Can an abuser be rehabilitated?
 - a. Christ transforms sinners into saints. II Co. 5:17
 - b. This does not mean that the consequences of sin are removed or that you should put potential victims at risk.

D. Homework for abusers.

1. Confession.
 - a. Seeking forgiveness from all those affected.
 - b. Turning himself in to the authorities, if appropriate.
2. Have him/her keep an anger journal (Priolo).
3. Reading.
 - a. Anger pamphlet, Adams
 - b. War of Words, Tripp
 - c. The Heart of Anger, Priolo
 - d. Introduction to Biblical Counseling: Anger, Scipione
4. Exercises: *Anger*, Homework Manual for Biblical Living, by Wayne Mack

IV. Conclusion: Advice for counselors (from Needham and Pryde).

- A. Count the cost of getting involved.
- B. Be cautious in assessing those caught in abusive situations
- C. Don't let the abuser shift blame. There is never an excuse for violence.
- D. Be extremely careful about the advice you give a woman with regard to submission.

Dealing with Abusers and Their Victims: Discussion Questions

1. What are some legal definitions of abuse?
2. What biblical terminology should be used to describe abuse?
3. What is the difference between child abuse and legitimate spanking?
4. When should abuse be reported to the authorities?
5. What steps can churches and Christian schools take to prevent abuse?
6. What can you do to protect victims of abuse?
7. Is physical abuse a biblical ground for separation or divorce?
8. How should a claim of abuse be investigated?
9. Why do many victims fail to report that they have been abused?
10. How can you help a victim to biblically understand what has happened to him or her?
11. How can victims of abuse become overcomers?
12. What sins become particular temptations for victims of abuse?
13. What biblical homework can be given to victims of abuse?
14. Why do people abuse?
15. What is a typical cycle of abuse?
16. How can you help an abuser come to full repentance?
17. How can an abuser learn to change?
18. What homework can be given to an abuser?

Depression

I. Understanding depression.

A. Depression is more than feeling a bit down. II Co. 4:8 Pr. 18:14

B. What brings on depression?

1. Sin and guilt. Ps. 32 Mt. 27:3
2. Hard circumstances. Ps. 73 I Kings 19 II Sam. 16:23 17:14,23 Jer. 17:5-6
3. Physical causes: brain tumor, drugs, exhaustion.
4. Depression often occurs when we respond badly (sinfully) to a situation (either circumstances or sin).

C. Is depression itself a disease?

1. Most depression has spiritual roots.
2. Spiritual depression affects one physically.
3. Some people are more prone to depression than others.
4. Such people should use the spiritual resources God has provided. I Co. 10:13
5. Drugs address the symptoms of depression, but not the cause.
6. Calling depression a disease is depressing because it offers no hope. Recognizing the spiritual causes of depression gives hope for transformation.

D. Depression works in cycles.

1. Depression cycles down.
 - a. Depression begins with a problem followed by a sinful response to that problem which leads to a complicating problem.
 - b. Hopeless thoughts lead to greater hopelessness.
2. Depression can cycle back up again.
 - a. Reverse cycle of depression: repent of complicating problems.
 - b. Assume your responsibilities.
 - c. Faithfulness to duty will make one feel better which makes it easier to be more faithful to duty.
3. People who are prone to depression tend to cycle in and out of depression over time.

E. Depression is very serious.

1. Some are debilitated.
2. Those who despair are at risk of suicide. II Sam. 16:23 17:14,23 Jonah 4:3
3. Help the family and friends of depressed people.

II. Exposition of key texts.

- A. Psalm 32

- B. Psalm 73

- C. I Kings 19

III. Data gathering/interpretation.

- A. What is the cause of this depression?

- B. What is the history/pattern of depression?

- C. Are the counselee's physical needs being met? Sleep, food, bathing.

IV. Homework for those who are depressed.

- A. Make sure physical needs are being met: sleep, food, etc. I Kings 19:4, 9-10

- B. Deal biblically with depression. Pr. 25:20
 - 1. Confess and repent of sin. Ps. 32:5
 - 2. Submit to God's sovereignty over your circumstances. Ps. 73:15f Ro. 8:28 Gen. 50:20
 - 3. "Stop listening to yourself and start talking to yourself." Phil. 4:8-9
 - 4. Start to cycle out of depression by fulfilling your duties. I Kings 19:12-17

- C. Reading:
 - 1. "What do you do when you become depressed?", by Jay Adams (pamphlet).
 - 2. Depression: The Way Up When You Are Down, Edward Welch, (CCEF/Resources for Changing lives booklet).
 - 3. Suicide: Understanding and Intervening, Jeffrey S. Black, (CCEF/RFCL booklet)
 - 4. Spiritual Depression, Lloyd-Jones
 - 5. Down but not Out, by Wayne Mack
 - 6. Depression: A Stubborn Darkness, by Ed Welch

- D. Audio
 - 1. "Depression", George Scipione
 - 2. "Rejoice in God's Forgiveness: Psalm 32", Jim Newheiser
 - 3. "Why do the Wicked Prosper?: Psalm 73", Jim Newheiser

- E. Biblical memory and study.
 - 1. Psalm 32
 - 2. Psalm 73
 - 3. Jeremiah 17:5-8

- F. Workbook: Homework Manual for Biblical Living Volume 1, Mack, "Depression Homework"

- G. Worksheets
 - 1. "The Spiral of Depression", Darrel Gustafson
 - 2. "Possible Homework Assignments and Strategies", Ed Welch.

Rejoice in God's Forgiveness. Psalm 32

I. Introduction: A Gospel Psalm. Rom. 4:6-8 I Kings 15:5 Psalm 51

II. Sin makes your life miserable! v. 1-4

A. The nature of sin. v. 1-2 Ps. 51:3-5

1. Transgression: revolt against God's authority, treason. 19:13 Isa. 53:6
2. Sin: missing the mark: falling short of God's standard. 107:17
 - a. Not a matter of meeting society's expectations.
 - b. Nor merely being true to yourself. Ps. 51:4
3. Iniquity: moral perversion, twistedness. Num. 32:23 I Kn. 17:18 Ex. 20:5
Isa. 53:5,6,11 30:13
4. Deceit (guile): trying to fool yourself and God. v. 2b,5b Gen. 3:7f Job 31:33

B. Sin is physically and psychologically devastating. v. 3-4 II Sam. 12:1f Ps. 38:1ff

1. Physical wretchedness. I Cor. 11:30 5:5 Js. 5:14-16
 - a. Sin affects your body directly.
 - b. The link between spiritual condition and physical health: Indirect effects of sin.
 - c. Not all physical problems are the direct result of personal sin. John 9:1ff
2. Mental misery. 22:15 Job. 23:2 spiritual depression.
3. Sin is never worth it!
4. God brings trouble upon you (for your good). v. 4a,9 94:12 139:23-24 Heb. 12:5f

C. The ultimate result of the life of sin is God's wrath. v. 10a Ps. 1:6

III. If you confess your guilt, God will pardon you. v. 5 103:3

A. First, you must repent. v. 5

1. Stop deceiving yourself and recognize your sin for what it is! v. 1-2
Prov. 14:12
2. Openly confess your guilt to God. v. 5a-c 51:3ff I Jn. 1:9 II Sam. 12:13 Is. 59:12
 - a. Approach Him directly. Ps. 51:4
 - b. Specifically name how you have sinned against Him. Neh. 9:2-3 I Kings 8:33
3. Repentance is more than merely saying that you are sorry. Prov. 28:13
 - a. You can't be forgiven by going through outward motions of confession. (Guile)
 - b. Many professing Christians have never truly repented.

B. God graciously forgives. v. 5d, 1-2 Ps. 103:10-12 Jer. 31:34

He is more ready to pardon than you are to seek His mercy.

1. Your transgression is *forgiven*: removed, carried away. v. 1a 25:18 Ex. 34:7
Lev. 10:17 Isa. 53:4,12 *Surely our griefs He Himself bore & our sorrows He carried.*
 - a. Your mere act of confession is not the meritorious cause of His grace.
 - b. The blood of Jesus Christ has cleansed you. I John 1:8-2:2 Heb. 9:2
 - c. He has lifted and borne the burden of your sin. Mt. 11:28
2. Your sin is *covered*. v. 1b Isa. 53:5,8 51:9 Ezek. 18:22,30-31 Gen. 9:23 Rev. 3:18
3. Your iniquity is *not counted (imputed) against you*. v. 2a Num. 12:11 Rom. 4:6-8
 - a. How can a righteous God overlook sin?
 - b. He does not just ignore sin, but He deals with it.
 - c. Your guilt has been imputed to Christ who died in your place. Rom. 5:1ff
 - d. His righteousness has been imputed to you.

4. Salvation has always been by grace through faith. Rom. 4:1-9 Gen. 15:6 3:15
 - a. Old Testament saints looked forward to God's fulfillment of His promise.
 - b. We look back upon what Christ has done for us. I Pet. 2:22-24
5. Forgiveness comes immediately after confession. v. 5d

C. Learn how to treat one-another. Mt. 6:12, 14-15 18:21-35 Eph. 4:32

1. When you wrong someone else:
 - a. First deal with your sin before God. Ps. 51:4
 - b. Openly and honestly confess where you were wrong.
 - c. Don't make excuses or shift blame.
 - d. Repentance must be heartfelt.
2. You must forgive as you have been forgiven. Eph. 4:32
 - a. A great debt has been paid on your behalf. Matt. 18:27
 - b. Forgiveness is granted freely - by grace, not works.
 - c. Forgiveness means that the sin is removed, covered over, and pardoned.
You renounce all right to count it against him (her).
 - d. You must treat the person as if they had not sinned against you.

IV. Rejoice in God's care for you! v. 6-11 Ps. 51:13 David's instructions for happiness.

A. Turn to God. 6-7 Phil. 4:6-7 Isa. 55:6-7

1. Are you converted?
Who are the "godly" and the "righteous"? v. 6,10
2. Seek the Lord before it is too late. Isa. 55:6-7
3. Do believers need to confess their sins? I John 1:8-10 Matt. 6:12 Ps. 139:23-24
4. He will protect you from trouble. v. 6b-7a 31:20,23 61:4 91:1 105:15 I Jn. 5:18
How does this relate to forgiveness of sin?
 - a. We sin when we think we can take better care of ourselves than God can.
 - b. Repentance involves trusting God for your happiness, wealth, and security. v. 10b
5. He will surround you with rejoicing. v. 7b 51:14

B. Be teachable, not stubborn. v. 8-9

1. The LORD makes the right way clear. v. 8 34:8
2. If you continue in your own way, He will break you. v. 9, 10a Acts 26:14
Isa. 1:3 37:29 Jer. 2:24 Pr. 26:3 Heb. 12:5-6

C. Rejoice for the benefits of godliness are great! v. 10-11

1. Your confidence in him is well placed. 31:14
Your joy is in proportion to your trust in Him.
2. You will always be surrounded by God's covenant mercy.
3. Shout and rejoice in the LORD! 31:7 95:1 98:4 118:24 122:1 132:4 Phil. 4:4
4. Are You fully expressing the joy of your salvation?
 - a. Are you thrilled and exuberant when you worship God?
 - b. Loudly tell of God's holy character and his great works.

V. Conclusion: Isa. 55:6-7

Why Do the Wicked Prosper? Psalm 73

I. Introduction. v. 1

- A. Injustice can test your faith.
- B. The Psalmist begins by stating his conclusion: Surely God is good to His people. v. 1

II. Don't be shortsighted, envying the wicked. v. 2-14

- A. Asaph confesses, *I nearly fell because I questioned God's goodness and justice.* v. 2-3a
 - 1. He is brutally honest about his own failings. v. 2,21
 - 2. Even good men can lapse into sin and error. v. 3a
 - 3. Why did Asaph nearly fall? *He was walking by sight rather than by faith.* II Co. 5:7

- B. The wicked appear to abundantly prosper. v. 3b-5
 - 1. They have the smallest share of earthly sorrows. v. 4a,5 Gen. 3:17-19 Ecc. 1:3
 - a. They live long healthy lives.
 - b. They don't seem to have the usual troubles of mankind. Ps. 90:10 Job 1:11 5:7
 - 2. They seem to enjoy the greatest share of outward blessings. v. 4b, 12b

- C. They abuse their power over other men. v. 6-8a
 - 1. They believe earthly blessings make them better than others. v. 6a, 3a
 - 2. They violently mistreat their fellow men. v. 6b
 - 3. They live extravagantly. v. 7
 - 4. They mock at and slander the righteous. v. 8a

- D. They oppose God. v. 8b-11
 - 1. They speak as if they are gods. v. 8b-10 Ps. 75:5 James 4:6
 - 2. They dare to challenge God himself. v. 11 Psalm 10:4

- E. It appears that God is not good and just. v. 12-14
 - 1. The wicked, instead of being punished, are wealthy and at ease. v. 12
 - 2. The righteous, instead of being rewarded, have all kinds of troubles. v. 14 26:6
 - 3. It seems that it doesn't pay to be good. v. 13
 - 4. Such thinking puts you in a precarious position.

III. See this life from God's perspective. v. 15-28

- A. You need a major change in outlook. v. 15-17a Col. 3:1-3
 - 1. If you cannot explain God's ways, remain quiet. v. 15 Ps. 39:2 Js. 1:19 Ecc. 5:2
 - 2. There are some issues which natural understanding cannot fathom. v. 16 Is. 55:8
 - 3. Asaph, when troubled, went to God's sanctuary. v. 17a Ps. 68:35 Isa. 8:14
 - 4. How can you enter God's sanctuary when you are troubled?
 - 5. What should you hope will happen there?

- B. You will see the destiny of the wicked. v. 17b-20
 - 1. While their present may be pleasant, their end will be horrible. v. 17b Pr. 5:4-5,11
 - a. God will avenge all evil. Ps. 37:38 Deut. 32:35 Ro. 12:19
 - b. He will act in His own time and in His own way. Gen. 15:16
 - 2. God is already preparing their doom. v. 18 Ps 35:6 Deut. 32:35
 - 3. They will be suddenly destroyed. v. 19 Luke 12:19-20 Rev. 2:27 19:21
 - 4. They will ultimately be forgotten. v. 20 Ps. 35:23 39:6 44:23 Mt. 7:23 Dan. 12:2
 - 5. None of us can fully comprehend how awful it is to experience God's holy wrath.
 - 6. What will be your end?

C. You will see the folly of your own doubts. v. 21-22

1. Asaph not only has a new perspective on the wicked, he also sees himself from the divine perspective.
2. There was never any valid excuse for your envy and bitterness. God never, for a moment, ceased to be good and just.
3. You were acting like a beast, living by feeling and sight, rather than acting as a child of God, walking by faith. Ps. 49:12,20 92:6

D. You will see God's faithfulness. v. 23-24

1. God was always with you in the past, even when you were beastly. v. 23 Ps. 139:10 63:8 Isa. 41:10 Heb. 13:5-6 II Pe. 2:9 John 10:28-29
2. God will guide you in the present. v. v. 24a Prov. 3:5-6
3. God will receive you into glory in the future. v. 24b Ps. 23:3 49:15 Ex. 33:18f

E. You will find full satisfaction in God alone. v. 25-26

1. There is nothing and no one who can fill your soul. v. 25 Phil. 1:21a Gal. 2:20
2. Your body and soul are frail, but God is your strength (Rock). v. 26 Psalm 18:2 119:57 16:4-6
3. Do you desire God more than all earthly things? Ps. 42:1f Luke 14:26
4. You envy the wicked only because you desire what they have more than you desire God.
5. Sometimes you have to endure a great trial in order to realize your need for God.
6. Do you know God the way the Psalmist knew him?

IV. Concluding applications: Stop doubting, and believe. v. 27-28

- A. You have no reason to envy the wicked who are unfaithful to God. v. 27 Ps. 37:20 1:6 2:12 44:23 35:23 Deut. 28:63 Pr. 23:17 24:1,19 3:31 James 4:4**
- B. Your spiritual blessings as God's child make you rich. v. 28**
1. God is always near you. Heb. 13:5 Rom. 8:31f
 2. He is your refuge. Ps. 46:1 Pr. 14:26 Isa. 58:2
 3. Tell of His works. v. 28b

Discussion Questions

1. What injustices test your faith?
2. What faulty conclusions could one draw from the prosperity of the wicked?
3. What was the Psalmist's real problem?
4. How did the Psalmist gain a new perspective?
5. What must you do to gain a true perspective on your problems?
6. What is the true view of the wicked?
7. What is the true view of your own doubts?
8. Why didn't Asaph fall?
9. What does it mean to find satisfaction in God alone?

Worry/Anxiety

I. Understanding worry.

- A. Worry is a problem of the mind.
- B. Worry is sin. Phil. 4:6-7 Mt. 6:34
- C. Worry is rooted in unbelief. Mt. 6:30
- D. The person who worries desires something in the place of God.
- E. Worry can become life dominating.
 - 1. Worry can lead to depression.
 - 2. Worry can affect you physically. I Cor. 6:19-20
- F. Worry, stress, and fear are closely related.
- G. Don't deal with worry sinfully.
 - 1. By trying to control whatever it is that worries you.
 - 2. By misusing drugs, alcohol, shopping, etc.
- H. It is not wrong to plan, so long as you leave the outcome to God. Pr. 21:5 Mt. 6:34 Pr. 16:9

II. Explanation of key texts.

- A. Matthew 6:25-34
See "Don't Worry, Be Holy!" outline
- B. Philippians 4:4-9
See "How to Have Joy and Peace" outline

III. Data gathering/interpretation.

- A. What is the focus of worry?
- B. What is this person seeking?
- C. What is the history/pattern of worry?
- D. How is this person seeking to deal with worry in a sinful way?

IV. Homework for those who are anxious.

- A. Pray. Phil. 4:6-7
 - 1. Adoration.
 - 2. Confession.
 - 3. Thanksgiving. Recall His past faithfulness.
 - 4. Supplication. I Pe. 5:7
- B. Rejoice in the Lord. Phil. 4:4-5
- C. Trust God for the outcome. Js. 4:13-17
- D. Meditate upon what is profitable. Phil. 4:8-9

- E. Desire and seek first God's kingdom. Mt. 6:33 Mt. 6:19-24**
 - 1. Focus upon fulfilling your calling in life.**
 - 2. Don't follow your feelings.**

- F. Keep an anxiety and prayer journal.**

- G. Reading.**
 - 1. "What Do You Do When You Worry All the Time?", Jay Adams (Pamphlet)**
 - 2. Worry: Pursuing a Better Path to Peace, David Powlison (CCEF/RFCL booklet)**
 - 3. Thankfulness: Even When it Hurts, Susan Lutz (CCEF/RFCL booklet)**
 - 4. Overcoming Fear, Worry and Anxiety, Elyse Fitzpatrick**
 - 5. The Fear Factor, Wayne Mack**

- H. Audios**
 - 1. "Don't Worry, Be Holy. Matt. 6:25-34", Jim Newheiser**
 - 2. "How to Have Joy and Peace. Philippians 4:4-7", Jim Newheiser**
 - 3. "What, Me Worry?", by George Scipione**
 - 4. "For Women Worriers", Elyse Fitzpatrick**

- I. Workbook: Homework Manual for Biblical Living Volume 1, Mack, "Anxiety and Worry Homework"**

How to Have Joy and Peace. Philippians 4:4-7

I. Introduction.

II. Rejoice in the Lord always. v. 4

- A. God commands you to be joyful. 3:1 I Thess. 5:16
1. How can Paul tell you to be joyful?
 2. You are responsible for how you feel.
- B. True and lasting joy is found only in the Lord. I Pet. 1:8
1. Any other source of joy will let you down. Pr. 23:4-5
 2. Joy is a fruit of the Holy Spirit. Gal. 5:22f
 3. The Lord is sufficient cause for continual joy. 3:8-10 3:20-21 4:5 Ps. 37:4 16:11 John 15:11 Lu. 1:14 19:37 Acts 8:39 13:48 Rev. 19:6
 4. Paul certainly lived this out. Acts 16:22f Philippians 1:18 2:17-18 II Cor. 11:23f
- C. You are to rejoice *always*. John 16:22 Ro. 8:38-39
1. You can experience godly joy in the midst of trouble. Hab. 3:17-19 II Co. 6:10 Mt. 5:11-12 Col. 1:24 Acts 5:41
 2. If you lack joy, you dishonor the Lord.
 3. Why do Christians lose their joy? Ps. 51:12 Mt. 6:24
- D. How, practical terms, can you rejoice in the Lord?
1. Pursue joyous fellowship with God through the Word and prayer.
 2. Rejoice in particular things about God.
 3. Rejoice in the particular things God does. Phil. 4:10 2:5f II Jo. 1:3-4
 4. Rejoice as you praise and worship Him. Ps. 100:3
 5. Rejoice even in your trials. I Pe. 4:13

III. Be yielding and gentle towards all people. v. 5

- A. How does forbearance relate to joy and peace?
- B. What character quality is Paul encouraging? v. 5a 2:3-4 4:2-3
1. Don't be the kind of person who is always frantically looking out for himself.
 2. Don't be unduly rigorous about secondary matters.
 3. Instead of pursuing your own happiness, focus on the needs of others.
 4. Treat everyone with consideration.
 5. This involves conscious effort.
 6. Our Lord Jesus exemplifies gentle forbearance. 2:5f Mark 10:45 Mt. 11:29
- C. Your motivation is that the Lord is near. v. 5b
1. He is with us now. Heb. 13:5b Mt. 28:20
 2. He is coming soon. 3:20-21 James 5:8 Rev. 1:3 22:10 Heb. 12:2 Luke 12:42-48

IV. Instead of being anxious, pray. v. 6-7.

- A. Never worry. v. 6a Matt. 6:25-34
1. What kinds of things make you anxious?
 2. You are not enslaved to anxiety and fear.
 3. Paul is not encouraging irresponsibility or making light of your troubles. 1:27 II Th. 3:10 II Co. 8:1-2

B. Why is worry sin?

1. Anxiety, like joylessness, dishonors God. Mt. 6:25f
2. Worry is due to a lack of trust in God's sovereignty and goodness. I Cor. 10:13 Isa. 59:1
Luke 10:41 Mt. 10:19
3. Anxiety is self-destructive. Mt. 6:34

C. Instead, turn to God with all your concerns. I Pet. 5:7 Heb. 11:6

1. Prayer. Col. 4:2 Mt. 6:32
2. Supplication. Eph. 6:18 Heb. 5:7 I Pe. 3:12
3. Thanksgiving. Eph. 5:4 Col. 4:2 I Ti. 2:1f Rom. 1:21 Phil. 1:12-17 2:17-18
4. Make your requests to God. I Jo. 5:15

D. God's own peace shall guard your hearts and your minds. I Pe. 1:5 John 14:27

1. Notice what Paul doesn't promise.
2. God's own peace is of surpassing value.

V. Concluding applications.

Discussion questions

1. Why should Christians be joyful?
2. How can we be joyful all of the time?
Does this mean Christians will never be sad or mourn?
3. What does a gentle (or forbearing) spirit look like?
4. Why is worry sinful?
5. What is the antidote to worry?
6. List 15 things for which you are most thankful. Pray through the list.
7. How does thankfulness help you to overcome anxiety?
8. Make a list of 5 issues about which you are most prone to worry. Pray through the list.

Don't Worry, Be Holy! Matthew 6:25-34

I. Why shouldn't you worry? The disease. v. 25-32, 34

- A. Worry is *senseless* because your Heavenly Father cares for you v. 25-26, 28-30**
1. Because God has already given you the greater gift of life, you can trust Him to provide the lesser needs of sustenance. v. 25 7:9-11 Rom. 8:32
 2. If God provides for the physical needs of the lesser creation, surely he will take care of you, His children. v. 26, 28-30 Ps. 147:9 104:25,27 Rom. 1:20
- B. Worry is *useless* because it accomplishes nothing. v. 27,34**
1. Anxiety is futile. v. 27 Heb. 9:27 Ps. 31:15 39:4-6 Luke 12:20 Job 14:5
 2. While fretting cannot lengthen your life, it may shorten it!
 3. Worry about tomorrow keeps you from being productive today. v. 34
 - a. Worry is hard work.
 - b. Most of what you worry about never comes to pass.
 - c. God gives grace and strength as you need it. 6:11 Lam. 3:22-23 I Cor. 10:13
 4. You are immortal until your work for the Lord is complete. Phil. 1:21-25
- C. Worry is *faithless* because it denies God's loving care for you. v. 30b-32 8:26**
1. Ultimately anxiety is due to unbelief. v. 30b 8:26 14:30-31 16:8 17:20
 2. By worrying you are behaving like an unbeliever. v. 31-32a
 3. Fretting is unworthy of a child of the King. v. 32b 10:29-31 Ps. 84:11
 - a. God knows what you need better than you do. v. 11 Heb. 4:13 Rev. 2:9
 - b. God will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able. I Cor. 10:13
 4. Worry is serious sin. Rom. 8:28

II. You can stop worrying. The cure . v. 33

- A. Commit yourself to the Lord's business. v. 33a**
1. Don't seek to overcome anxiety in the world's way.
 2. The problem of worry is not negative thinking, but godless thinking.
 - a. The answer is not positive thinking, but a renewed mind. Rom. 12:2
 3. Serve God with an undivided heart. v. 24 13:44-46 Luke 10:38-42 I Kings 3:5-9
 - a. It is good to be concerned about certain things. II Cor. 11:28f Phil. 2:20
 4. How, in practical terms can you seek His kingdom first? 5:6
Priorities, righteousness, gifts, vocation, prayer.
- B. Trust God to meet your needs. v. 33b Heb. 4:15 13:5-6 Isa. 26:3 Ps. 55:22 46:1-2**
1. Cast your cares upon the Lord. I Pet. 5:7 Phil. 4:6
If you take care of His business, He will take care of yours. I Kings 3:10-14
 2. How can the person undergoing severe trials find help? 11:28-30
 3. If you rely upon Him, he will not disappoint you. Ps. 37:25 34:10 Rom. 9:33 10:11 I Pet. 2:6 I Cor. 10:13
- C. Give thanks for His bountiful provision and be content. Phil. 4:6 I Thess. 5:18
Phil. 4:12 I Tim . 6:6-8 Heb. 13:5-6**

III. Don't misunderstand or abuse God's promises!

- A. Jesus is not saying that you won't have any problems. v. 34b Gen. 3:17-19
- B. Jesus is not advocating carefree irresponsibility. 25:14-30
 - 1. God ordinarily provides through means – sowing and reaping. v. 26 Gen. 3:19
Believers are not exempt from having to earn a living. II Thess. 3:10
 - 2. You are responsible to take care of today's troubles today, as God enables you.
v. 34 I Tim. 5:8, 13 II Thess. 3:10 Lam. 3:22-23
 - 3. There is a legitimate concern for others. II Cor. 8:15 11:28f Phil. 2:20
I Cor. 7:32-34

IV. Concluding applications.

- A. God tells you why not to worry.
- B. The antidote to worry is a radical change of priority. Phil. 4:4-9
- C. If you are not a child of God – you ought to worry! v. 32a
Is God calling you to be His child today? John 1:12-13 Eph. 3:20

Fear

I. Understanding fear

A. Fear is not necessarily sinful.

1. We are to fear God. Prov. 1:7 Ps. 90:11 Isa. 6:1ff
2. Fear is a reasonable and helpful response to danger. I Co. 10:12

B. Fear has physical manifestations. Deut. 2:25 Ex. 15:16 Isa. 35:3-4 I Sam. 25:37 Gen. 27:33

C. Fear can be very damaging.

1. Fear can keep one from fulfilling his duties to God and others. Pr. 22:13 28:1
2. Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.

D. Fear becomes sinful when...

1. You fear men more than God. Prov. 29:25 Isa. 29:13
2. You fail to trust God.
3. You want control and certainty which belong to God alone.
4. Fear keeps you from fulfilling your responsibilities to God.

E. Keys to overcoming fear.

1. That which is to be most feared, God's wrath, has been removed by Christ. Mt. 10:28 Heb. 2:14-15 I Jo. 4:18
2. The Lord is your shepherd. Psalm 23
3. The righteous are characterized by boldness, not fear. Pr. 28:1 Rev. 21:8
4. When facing fears the crucial question is: What does God want you to do?
5. For those who fear imperfection, your perfection is in Christ.
6. Only God possesses certainty and control. You must trust Him. Ro. 8:28 Deut. 29:29 Pr. 3:23-26

II. Exposition of key texts

A. Jer. 17:5-8

See "In Whom Do You Trust?" outline

B. Psalm 23

C. Prov. 1:7

D. Prov. 29:25

III. Data gathering/interpretation

- A. Of what is the counselee afraid?**
- B. Why is the counselee afraid?**
 - 1. Past experience (i.e. abuse, lice, etc.).**
 - 2. Experiences of others (e.g. friend died of cancer).**
- C. What is the counselee's view of God?**

IV. Homework for those who fear

- A. Follow the same assignments as listed in the section on worry.**
- B. Learn to trust God, focusing upon the keys to overcoming fear. Pr. 3:5-6 Js. 4:13-17**
- C. Keep a fear journal.**
- D. Reading**
 - 1. "What Do You Do When Fear Overcomes You?", Jay Adams (pamphlet)**
 - 2. OCD: Freedom for the Obsessive-Compulsive, Michael R. Emler (Booklet: CCEF/RFCL)**
 - 3. Overcoming Fear, Worry and Anxiety, Elyse Fitzpatrick**
 - 4. The Fear Factor, Wayne Mack**
 - 5. When People Are Big and God Is Small, Ed Welch**
- E. Audios**
 - 1. "Don't Worry, Be Holy. Matt. 6:25-34", Jim Newheiser**
 - 2. "How to Have Joy and Peace. Philippians 4:4-7", Jim Newheiser**
 - 3. "What, Me Worry?", by George Scipione**
 - 4. "For Women Worriers", Elyse Fitzpatrick**
- F. Workbook: Homework Manual for Biblical Living Volume 1, Mack, "Fear Homework"**
- G. Worksheet: "The Panic 'Fear' Attack"**

In Whom Do You Trust? Jer. 17:5-10

I. Introduction

II. If you trust in mankind, you will be cursed. v. 5-6 11:3 Gen. 3:14,17 Same word: Eden

A. Don't rely upon the flesh. v. 5

1. Israel was inclined to trust men. 2:14-19 46:25
 - a. She claimed to hope in God.
 - b. Yet she was resorting to her own devices. 5:31
 - c. She trusted false prophets. 7:4,8
 - d. She sought help from foreign alliances. Isa. 31:1-3 Ezek. 29:16 II Kn. 24:1
 - e. She forgot God's great deeds of the past, despised God's gracious promises, and ignored His threats.
2. Man in all of his power and glory is but frail flesh. v. 5a
3. When you trust mankind, your heart is turned away from the Lord. v. 5b 2:13 5:23 3:2,6-10 2:20
 - a. He alone is to be the arm of your strength. 27:5 32:17 Isa. 33:2
 - b. Trust in anyone or anything else is nothing less than idolatry (spiritual adultery).
 - c. You violate the greatest commandment. Dt. 6:5

B. If you do, your life will wither away. v. 6

1. You will be desolate and hopeless.
2. Such was the condition of Israel as Jeremiah wrote: under God's curse: exile. 8:13 11:16 1:15 25:9 Dt. 28:15ff 29:22-23 Ezek. 17:8-10 19:10-13
3. Such is the condition of all humanity apart from divine grace. Ps. 129:6

C. Application: like Israel, the church is inclined to unfaithfulness to God.

1. Don't entrust yourself to people in the world!
 - a. Government leaders/military power. Ps. 146:3-5 44:6 20:7 Dt. 28:52 Isa. 31:1-2
 - b. Employers and doctors.
2. Don't wrongfully entrust yourself to others in relationships.
 - a. Family. Ps. 27:10 Is. 49:15
 - b. Friendship. Pr. 25:19
 - c. Co-dependency (*co-idolatry*).
3. Don't entrust your spiritual life to frail men.
 - a. Christian leaders. Gal. 2:11ff
 - b. The church itself has become reliant upon worldly methodologies (management, marketing, psychology); denying the sufficiency of Scripture. II Tim. 3:16-17
4. Don't trust yourself. Pr. 28:26
 - a. Self righteousness/religion. 7:4,14 12:2 Ezek. 33:13 Rom. 3:20
 - b. Money, education, skills, wisdom. 48:7 Pr. 11:28
5. Questions.
 - a. Is there any sense in which you should be self reliant?
 - b. Is there any sense in which you are to trust others? Pr. 31:11
6. Summary: if you rely upon man, you will be cursed!
Does your life have a wooden roof?

III. Trust God and you will be blessed. v. 7-8

- A. Will you entrust yourself to the LORD? v. 7 Ps. 31:24**
- 1. Hope in God alone. Pr. 3:5-6 Isa. 26:3-4**
 - a. Repent of all other hopes. John 15:5**
 - b. Acknowledge Him in everything you do.**
 - c. Entrust yourself by following His Word. Pr. 16:20**
 - d. The issue is not mere outward works or ceremony, but your heart!**
 - 2. God alone is trustworthy. Ps. 27:3 118:8-9 40:4 62:5-6 22:5 Isa. 50:10 Pr. 14:26**
- B. You will flourish. Ps. 52:8 1:3 92:13-14**
- 1. Your security will be unshakeable. Ps. 34:8 Isa. 44:4. Phil. 1:6 Ezek. 47:12**
 - 2. When hard times come, you will endure. II Cor. 4:8-11,16-18**
 - a. There is no promise that those who trust God will avoid trials. 14:1 42:16,**
 - b. The believer lives above circumstances.**
 - c. These trials are used by God to strengthen you. Heb. 12:6-11 Rom. 5:3-4**
 - d. The remnant will take root and be renewed. Isa. 37:31**
 - 3. You will flourish: continually bearing fruit unto the glory of God. John 15:5**
- C. Application: whom are you trusting?**
- 1. Are you controlled by circumstances?**
 - 2. Or is your trust in the Lord?**
 - 3. Depression is not caused by circumstances, but failure to trust Christ.**

IV. Concluding application: you must choose whom you will trust. v. 9-10

- A. Why would anyone be so foolish as to trust man instead of God? v. 9**
- 1. Your problem is a heart problem. Pr. 4:23**
 - 2. Your heart is utterly sinful: totally depraved. Rom. 8:7-8**
 - 3. Your heart is deceitful. Isa. 5:20**
 - a. The worst deceit is the deceit of self-righteousness.**
 - b. You may think that you are trusting in God when really you are not.**
 - 4. You cannot cure your own heart condition. 13:23 15:18 30:12**
 - 5. You need regeneration, not mere outward reform! Titus. 3:5 John 3:5f**
- B. God knows your heart. v. 10 Ps. 139:1,23 44:21**
- 1. Your sin cannot be hidden from him. v. 10a**
 - 2. He tests your motives. 11:20 20:12 Pr. 17:3**
 - 3. He will bring judgment upon you. 32:19**
- C. God alone can change your heart. Jer. 31:31-34**
- 1. Confess your desperate condition.**
 - 2. Ask Him to heal you. v. 14**
- D. A clear choice.**
- 1. You are without excuse.**
 - 2. God invites you to Himself. 3:12ff Isa. 30:18.**

Temptation

I. Understanding temptation.

- A. Temptation follows a pattern. James 1:13-15
- B. The problem is in the heart. Mark 7:14-23 Prov. 4:23 Mt. 5:22,28
- C. Addictions are not diseases.
- D. God will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able. I Cor. 10:13
- E. Christ has set you free from slavery to sin. Ro. 6:11,18
- F. You are responsible to fight sin. Rom. 6:12ff
- G. Temptation needs to be dealt with radically. Mt. 5:29-30 II Tim. 2:22
- H. You need to see that God is most desirable. Isa. 55:1-2 Proverbs 9 John 7:38

II. Scripture exposition.

- A. Sexual temptation.
 - 1. II Samuel 11, “Learning from King David’s Mid-Life Failure”
 - 2. Genesis 39, “Learning from Joseph’s Temptation”
 - 3. “The Pain of Porn”
 - 4. Proverbs 5-7, 9
- B. Substance Abuse
 - 1. “Wisdom from Proverbs about Substance Abuse”
 - 2. “Life Dominating Problems: Drugs, Alcohol, Etc.”
- C. Isa. 55:1-2, “Satisfaction for the Thirsty”

III. Data gathering.

- A. What is the counselee’s history in dealing with this temptation?
- B. What is the counselee’s pattern of falling into this temptation?
- C. Are you sure the counselee is a Christian?

IV. Homework.

- A. Keep a temptation log.
- B. Radically deal with sources of temptation. Mt. 5:29-30 Prov. 5:8 II Tim. 2:22
- C. Fill your mind with what is best. Phil. 4:8-9
- D. Be busy serving God and others.
- E. Establish accountability.

F. Reading

1. **“What Do You Do When You Know You’re Hooked?”**, Jay Adams (Pamphlet)
2. **Just One More: When Desires Don’t Take No for an Answer**, Edward Welch (CCEF/RFCL booklet)
3. **Pornography: Slaying the Dragon**, David Powlison, (CCEF/RFCL booklet).
4. **Not Even a Hint**, Joshua Harris
5. **Addictions: A Banquet in the Grave**, Edward Welch
6. **The Useful Lie**, Playfair
7. **Love to Eat, Hate to Eat**, Elyse Fitzpatrick

G. Workbook:

1. **Homework Manual for Biblical Living, Volume 1**, “Life Dominating Sins”, Wayne Mack
2. **Pure Freedom: Breaking the Addiction to Pornography**, Mike Cleveland
3. **The Lord’s Table: A Biblical Approach to Weight Loss**, Mike Cleveland

H. Audios

1. **“Substance Abuse Counseling”**, Ed Welch
2. **“Helping Addicts”**, Dr. Playfair
3. **“Helping Alcoholics”**, Dr. Playfair
4. **“The Twelve Steps and AA”**, Dr. Playfair
5. **“Drug and Alcohol Abuse”**, Bob Needham
6. **“Love to Eat, Hate to Eat”**, Elyse Fitzpatrick
7. **“Life Dominating Sins”**, George Scipione
8. **“Dealing with Lustful Temptation”**, Wayne Mack
9. **“The Pain of Porn”**, Jim Newheiser
10. **“Sexual Wisdom: Proverbs 5-7”**, Jim Newheiser
11. **“Satisfaction for the Thirsty: Isa. 55”**, Jim Newheiser

Learning from King David's Mid-Life Failure

Charles was a highly respected pastor.¹ The church he planted many years ago has survived some hard times and is now flourishing. He is well respected in his denominational circles. He is a popular conference speaker and he has even published several articles and one book. His family seems exemplary. He has been happily married for twenty-five years and he and his wife have successfully raised their four children, the last of whom starts college next year. We were shocked last week when we heard that Charles had been caught in a pattern of adultery and deceit and had been removed from office. How could such a thing happen to a man who seemed to have it all together, who had successfully passed through the temptations of his younger years, who seemed to have everything a minister could want? Does this mean that his entire ministry had been a lie? Are the books, articles and tapes he produced worthless? Or did something happen to take a man who had been qualified and used of God and ruin him?

Stephen is a lay leader in his church. He has a lovely wife with whom he has enjoyed a close relationship. He has been very successful in his business. He is knowledgeable in the Scriptures, is involved in the life of the church, and is leading Bible studies discipling younger men. He has been close to his pastor for many years. Imagine his pastor's grief when Stephen's wife came for counsel complaining she has found evidence Stephen has returned to the excessive drinking of his pre-conversion days. Also, she has caught him viewing pornography on the internet. Most evenings he comes home from work and sits in front of the television. He doesn't interact with his children and he is very distant from his wife.

Modern people would say Charles and Stephen are exhibiting the classic symptoms of the "mid-life crisis".² Their experience is not, however, unique or particularly modern. What happened to Charles and Stephen is similar to what happened to King David in II Samuel 11-12. David seemed to have achieved his life's goals. He had been greatly used of God. He was truly a man after God's own heart. Yet in middle age, he fell into sin and brought disgrace upon himself and trouble to the people of God. Studying David's fall and restoration will give us insight as to how a man can fall into a mid-life crisis, the heart problems behind it, and how we can help the man who is struggling.

How does a godly man fail in mid-life?

Different phases of life present different challenges. Youthful lusts may give way to the dissatisfied boredom of mid-life. Both are equally dangerous.

A. No more worlds to conquer. David's fall in II Samuel 11 is alarming. His life's goals have, for the most part, been achieved. His domestic enemies have been vanquished and he is securely established on the throne as king over all Israel (II Sam. 1-4). The Philistines, Arameans, Moabites and Edomites have been subdued (II Sam. 8,10). The ark of the covenant has entered Jerusalem (II Sam. 6). He has multiple wives of beauty and at least one of character (Abigail). Yet David's success may have provided the circumstances which led to his great sin. Alexander the Great is said to have wept because there were no more worlds to conquer. It appears that David's most glorious victories were behind him.

B. Facing his limitations. After conquering the land, he sought to embark on one more grand project. He aspired to see the temple built in Jerusalem, but God revealed that this honor would go to his son (II Sam. 7:1-2,12-13). David's life had settled down to administering the kingdom he had established. There were no more great dreams to be realized in his lifetime.

¹ Charles and Stephen are fictional characters whose experience is a compilation of men known to me.

² Mid-life crisis is not a biblical term. It is used in popular literature to describe the experience, primarily of men between 35 and 50, who become dissatisfied with their lives. People in mid-life crisis can become depressed and often engage in impulsive and risky behavior.

C. Lethargy sets in. “Then it happened in the spring, at the time when kings go out to battle that David sent Joab and his servants with him and all Israel. But David stayed at Jerusalem” (II Sam. 11:1). Like many driven men, David appears to have functioned better in the midst of great challenges. Once his kingdom was established, he seemed to lose heart for his life’s work. The defeat of the sons of Ammon wouldn’t add much to his already illustrious record as a warrior. Perhaps David decided that he had already fought in his share of battles. Now he had underlings whom he could send in his place to fight his wars. As King, he could still receive the glory for the conquest without having to go to the field.

D. Idleness and boredom lead to temptation. David’s lack of attention to his calling put him in a situation in which he was vulnerable to the temptation which resulted in his wicked liaison with Bathsheba.

The pattern repeated today.

David’s mid-life failure continues to be repeated in the lives of many men today. Just as different phases of life present different challenges, circumstances of mid-life may affect men in various ways according to their personalities. Driven men who are leaders seem especially prone to stumble as David did.

A. They have achieved success in their life’s work. The pastor has spent his early adult life seeing his ministry established. He has completed his formal training. His own theology is settled and he has driven out the doctrinal Philistines. No more personal theological journeys or battles are anticipated. The followers of Saul who would have divided the church have been subdued. Perhaps he has seen the church through a building program.

In the same way a Christian businessman may have worked his way through school, landed the good job, and fought his way up the corporate ladder. At the same time he has enjoyed a successful marriage, raised his children, and been active in his church. He owns his home, has put his kids through college, and is saving towards retirement.

A Christian wife and mother may also be tempted. Twenty-five years ago she gave up her career in order to take care of her husband and children. Now her daughter is getting married and her son is going off to college.

There may be greater danger in times of peace and prosperity than in the midst of the battle. Spurgeon points out, *It is not easy to carry a full cup with a steady hand, and, smooth places are slippery places.*³

B. They have reached a plateau and dreams have died. From childhood life is seen as a sequence of ever increasing challenges and opportunities. One looks ahead to completing his education, establishing a career, marriage, and raising children. The horizons continue to broaden. He is always looking forward to the challenges of the next phase of life. As he gets older, for the first time the horizons begin to narrow. Perhaps for some men reality hits in their twenties when they realize their childhood dream of playing in a Super Bowl will never be realized. As he gets older, the limitations become more serious. He is a mid-level manager, but he will never be the president, or even the vice president of the company. Or as a minister, his church is of a certain size, but it has leveled off. He realizes he will probably never be the leader of a mega-church. Nor will he have a national radio ministry or publish a best-selling book. He also senses the beginning of a gradual physical decline. He can’t run as fast or lift as much weight. Those aches and pains don’t go away as quickly as in the past. Nor do the extra pounds he (and his once slim wife) seems to put on all too easily.

After sacrificing her best years to care for her family, the Christian woman may find that not only do her children, into whom she has poured out her life, not need her anymore, but also they aren’t living as she

³ Spurgeon, Charles Haddon. Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Volume 8. Pilgrim Publications, Pasadena, TX. Page 278

taught them. She and her husband have grown apart during these busy years of his career and her child rearing. Now she feels unneeded. What can she do with the rest of her life?

The seeming termination of the sequence of challenge and opportunity can come as quite a shock to a driven man. What is the next phase to which he can look forward? Is it retirement and then death? Furthermore, as he looks back, he has regrets. *Why didn't anyone tell me that my youth would pass by so quickly? Why didn't I realize how soon my children would be gone? Why didn't I make better choices in these crucial phases of life? Why didn't someone prepare me for this mid-life phase? I couldn't wait for each new challenge in life. One man said, I rushed through my twenties and thirties and then when I hit middle age and tried to put on the brakes, I discovered that the accelerator was stuck!*⁴

C. Boredom and laziness set in. Just as David could get Joab to fight Israel's battles, the seasoned pastor can meet people's expectations with much less effort. He can delegate much of his work to his assistants or to eager young interns. He can prepare an acceptable sermon in less time, or recycle an old message. Those engaged in vocational ministry have flexible working hours. A driven man can work 80 hours a week (sometimes to the detriment of his family). A lazy man can work very little and go undetected. At this stage of one's career his fellow leaders trust him and don't feel the need to check up on him (just as David's staying behind in Jerusalem when the battle raged probably went unchallenged). The distractions of surfing the net (where Bathsheba may be found) can even enable the pastor to give the appearance of working while he is really wasting time.

In the same way, the established businessman can meet his supervisor's (or his customer's) expectations in less time. He has learned how to delegate his work to his underlings. He is trusted by his superiors, and therefore is not held accountable for his time. The stay-at-home wife no longer has to drive to orchestra rehearsal, soccer practice and ballet. Watching the television, reading the newspapers, or shopping can fill her days.

D. He seeks sinful diversions. A man in mid-life may be able to put much of his life on autopilot and coast, but with the idleness and the resulting boredom will come temptation to sinful diversions such as immorality and covetousness (I Tim. 5:13). Calvin warns, *David did not carry out his duty. By thus sparing himself and staying in his house in order to be at his ease, he threw himself into the net of Satan.*⁵ Spurgeon reminds us that *idleness is the mother of mischief*, and that *David was safer in the midst of raging battles than inside his own palace when he was being lazy.*⁶

What are the spiritual causes of a mid-life failure?

Calvin says of David's fall, *Now here is a story which should make our hair stand straight up on end whenever we think of it - that a servant of God as excellent as David should fall into such a serious and enormous sin...*⁷

When a man of God falls, we all wonder how it could have happened. Jesus tells us sin proceeds from the heart (Mark 7:21-23). After being caught in his sin, David's prayer reveals the state of his heart, "Create in me a clean heart O God and renew a steadfast spirit within me... Restore to me the joy of Your salvation" (Psalm. 51:10,12). I don't believe David suddenly fell into this condition on the day he fell into sin with Bathsheba. Instead, the sin with Bathsheba was an expression of the sorry state into which his inner

⁴ I am unable to identify the source of this quote.

⁵ Calvin, John. Sermons on 2 Samuel. Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh, 1992. Page 479

⁶ Spurgeon, Charles Haddon. Metropolitan Pulpit Volume 8. Pilgrim Publications, Pasadena, TX 1985. Page 278

⁷ Calvin, John. Sermons on 2 Samuel. Banner of Truth Trust, 1992. Page 476

spiritual life had already deteriorated. Inward spiritual deterioration leads to acts of sin (James 1:14-15). In II Samuel 12 the prophet Nathan gives explanation for David's fall.

A. Ingratitude. *Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'It is I who anointed you king over Israel and it is I who delivered you from the hand of Saul. I also gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your care, and I gave you the house of Israel and Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added to you many more things like these' (II Samuel 12:7-8).* Sin blinds us to the goodness of God. David had lost sight of the great blessings God had bestowed upon him. He was no longer mindful of and thankful for his elevation from being a shepherd boy to becoming the anointed of God. He seemed to have lost his sense of reverent amazement at his deliverance from Goliath, from Saul, and from the enemies of Israel. Perhaps he had forgotten the land was united by the power of God (not David). The joy he had experienced when the Ark of the Covenant entered Jerusalem (II Sam. 6:12-15) seems to have dissipated. Rather than being content with his own wives and property he coveted the wife of another man.

In the same way, the Christian leader can begin to take God's kindness for granted. Like David, he has been blessed immeasurably! He can lose sight of the wonder of Christ's amazing work of delivering him from slavery to the world, sin and death. He can take lightly the privilege of his calling to the ministry. He may no longer marvel at how God has used him to lead others to faith and to build up the church. Perhaps he has slipped into a mind set in which he takes much of the credit for the success of his ministry.

The businessman no longer "rejoices in the wife of his youth" (Pr. 5:18f), perhaps noticing she is no longer so young and attractive as other women around him. He tends to see his wealth and position as the fruit of his own labor. He is no longer filled with awe and wonder at God's goodness to him.

The homemaker forgets how God has blessed her by giving her a faithful husband, blessing their marriage with children, and providing so she could stay at home.

B. Undervaluing the things of God. *Why have you despised the Word of the LORD by doing evil in his sight?... Because you have despised Me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife... (II Sam. 12:9-10).* Just as Esau was guilty of despising his birthright (Gen. 25:9), David was guilty of counting God Himself of little value. At the same time, David had counted his flesh of great value. He had exchanged the sweetness of pure fellowship with God for a few moments of pleasure. Then he sought to cover his guilt by bringing Uriah back from the battle. Uriah, in contrast, placed high value on the things of God, *The ark and Israel and Judah are staying in temporary shelters, and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field. Shall I then go to my house to eat and to drink and to lie with my wife? By your life and the life of your soul, I will not do this thing (II Samuel 11:11).* David should have been pierced by Uriah's piety; instead he shows the folly and hardness of his sin by murdering this loyal servant of God. Like his predecessor Saul (see I Samuel 15:22,30), David seemed to no longer care what God thinks, so long as he could maintain his personal comfort and his status before men.

C. Idolatry. Isaiah 55:2 scolds, *Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy?* David chose to spend himself on the bread of fleshly indulgence, rather than valuing the free wine and milk offered by the Lord (Isa. 55:1). He thought sinful pleasures could provide greater fulfillment than walking with God.

The onset of the mid-life crisis may reveal how a man's accomplishments have been motivated too much by a love for the world (or the human glory of achievement) and not enough by a love for God. In mid-life the old bread of the world starts losing its taste, so a man may be driven to overcome his boredom and dissatisfaction by pursuing worldliness in new ways. His response to these difficulties exposes how weak his trust in God really is, and how far away he is planted from the satisfying rivers of His grace (Jer. 17:5-8).

Perhaps when David's greatest victories (and the accompanying adulation of the people) were behind him, his motivation for battle dried up. In the same way, the man who has made an idol out of sexual pleasure

will be severely tempted when the flower of his wife's beauty begins to fade and his own virility is waning. He will seek out lustful diversions, not because of raging hormones (II Tim. 2:22), but rather because he is desperately trying to recapture the passion of his youth. Others may try to use material possessions to fill the void, hoping that their toys (i.e. the red convertible) will satisfy them. Others try to recapture their youth with a new wardrobe, an intense fitness program, or even plastic surgery. Many eat or drink too much as they try to overcome their spiritual emptiness. Some may try to recapture a dream of their youth. One successful businessman tried to turn back the clock by spending thousands of dollars buying musical instruments and building a recording studio.

The man in a mid-life crisis needs to realize his problem is not that the world is passing him by, but rather that he is not valuing God and finding fulfillment in Him. People still turn to idols seeking the satisfaction only God can provide.

How can you help counselees to overcome (or avoid) mid-life failure?

Teach them these principles from Scripture.

A. Be on your guard. Paul tells the Ephesian elders, *Be on guard for yourselves* (Acts 20:28). He also tells Timothy, *Pay close attention to yourself...* (I Tim. 4:16). The Proverb reminds us, *Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life* (Prov. 4:23).

1. Don't think it can't happen to you. *Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall* (I Cor. 10:12). The scriptural examples of David, Noah, and others; along with men of God in recent years who have fallen should serve as a warning to all of us. It is possible for a person to have a true walk with God (David was a man after God's own heart), to be used of God, and yet to fall.⁸ Perhaps Christian leaders are most vulnerable because they may think they are so spiritual that they are beyond such sins. Beware that Satan will never stop trying to destroy you (I Pet. 5:8).

2. Neglect of the small things can lead to a big disaster. Just as a newly conceived life in the womb is tiny, sin which is conceived in the heart can seem very small (James 1:15). The neglect of private Bible reading to feed one's own soul or a loss of fervency in private prayer will long be unnoticed by others. Lowered personal standards for the use of the television or the internet, or indulging private lusts and fantasies can seem harmless. A man may become slack in his work habits with no visible impact on the results of his job or ministry performance. Sooner or later the embryonic lust will give birth to sin which has deadly consequences. Small sins must be aborted in the womb of the heart before they grow to full term.

3. It is possible for a spiritual leader to carry on his official duties with apparent success while harboring secret sin. David continued to function as king and as judge (II Sam. 12:1-5). He probably continued to participate in the external rituals of worship (lest he be suspected). I never cease to be amazed at how fallen pastors can continue to preach the Word of God, give counsel, and administer the church until they are caught. An experienced man may be able to fool the people in his church, his spouse, and perhaps even himself. The ability to go through the motions of ministry reflects a frightening hardness of heart.

4. Remember the consequences of your fall. Even though David was forgiven by God, he paid a steep price for his wickedness (II Sam. 12:10-15). Men who stray fail to count the cost to their wives, their children, their personal reputations and to the Name of Christ.⁹ It may take many years for a church to recover from the betrayal of an unfaithful shepherd. His family may never recover. The man who falls into immorality is like a stupid ox going to the slaughter (Pr. 7:22). He doesn't realize the calamity he is bringing upon himself and others.

⁸The fact that a man has fallen does not invalidate his past ministry. We don't remove David's early Psalms from the Canon because they were written by a man who later committed murder and adultery. In the same way the work of a man who has badly stumbled is not necessarily invalidated. This does not, however, change the fact that he is no longer qualified for office (See I Tim. 3:1f).

⁹Perhaps the sternest indictment of David was that his actions had given the enemies of the LORD occasion to blaspheme (II Sam. 12:14).

B. Seek help. Don't wait for Nathan to appear on your doorstep.

1. Make yourself accountable. Be open with your wife and with your fellow church leaders about the state of your soul. Pray with them. Invite them to ask you the hard questions about your contentment, your zeal, your use of your time, etc.

2. If you are living a lie, come clean. One thing that grieves me about Christian leaders who have fallen into sin is that they seem to only confess after they are caught. The cost of exposing themselves seems to be too great. They fool themselves into thinking they can free themselves from bondage and then go on as if it had never happened. When David kept silent about his sin he was miserable (Ps. 32:3-4). When he confessed his sin, God forgave him (Ps. 32:1-2,5). Though David despised God, God does not despise a broken and contrite heart (Ps. 51:17). It is better to face your sin, even with its consequences, and be right with God than to live a lie.

C. Remain faithful to your present call.

1. Continue to cultivate the gifts and opportunities God has given you. Paul encouraged Timothy to “kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you” (II Tim. 1:6). The fire which remains unkindled will go out. Continue to make a study of ministry: preaching, counseling, and shepherding God's flock. Learn new and better ways you can serve the Lord.

2. Pursue every phase of your life as a vocation from God. *Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord, not men* (Co. 3:23). If it is conquering nations, do it as unto the Lord. If it is establishing new churches which grow to thousands in attendance, do it to the glory of God. But if God has called you to something less exciting, be satisfied with the place God has given you and do it with all of your heart. If it was David's calling in the last half of his life to faithfully administer the land, he should have done it with the same faithfulness and zeal by which he conquered it. If it is God's call for you to be a faithful pastor of a small flock, without receiving human recognition, then do it with all of your heart. If your career has reached its plateau, then serve God in that job with all of your strength. If you need to find a new vocation, pursue it heartily.

3. Make good use of the time God has given you. He is not done with you yet. He has allotted you a fixed amount of time on this earth to serve him. Every hour should be carefully used for His glory. “*So teach us to number our days, that we may present to You a heart of wisdom*” (Psalm 90:12). He has kept you here for a reason. You may have many more years of fruitful labor ahead of you. Even though our culture worships youth, Scripture honors the wisdom of those with age and experience (Pr. 20:29). Pray God will continue to favor your life's labor and establish the works of your hands (Ps. 90:17).

4. Be determined to finish well. David wanted to quit before the warfare had ended. In contrast, the Apostle Paul expressed a passionate desire to complete his race without being disqualified (I Cor. 9:27 II Tim. 4:6-8). As you see others stumble into immorality, greed, or simply losing heart, pray God will give you the endurance to run with all of your heart until the end, without falling.

D. Find your joy in the LORD.

1. Put off the false hope of satisfaction or bliss from earthly things (Isa. 55:2). Like Solomon in Ecclesiastes, you will discover worldly pleasures and treasures are vain. If your hope is not heavenly, you will be bored, for there truly is nothing new under the sun. Deal honestly with your idols. Destroy them before they destroy you.

2. Cultivate a living relationship with God. Feed upon Christ as the bread of life (John 6:51). Be satisfied with the wine and milk which God offers without money and without cost (Isa. 55:1). Be alert to any pharasaical formalism in your personal devotional life.

3. Be thankful for God's past faithfulness to you (I Thess. 5:18). David had forgotten all of the wonderful things God had done for him. We should follow the pattern of some of the Psalms by continually reminding ourselves of all of the great things God has done in our lives. He has always met our material needs. He has blessed us in our homes and in our churches. His past faithfulness, in the earlier phases of our lives, is the basis for our confidence in the future.

4. Learn the secret of being content in the present (Phil. 4:11f). Remember God's sovereignty. He has given you what is best: your wife, your children, your ministry, your money, your health, your friends, etc.

5. Keep a redemptive focus. Your value and significance are based upon the work of Christ, not your earthly achievements. Find your delight and identity in what Christ has done for you.

6. Live in light of the future (I John 3:2-3 II Pet. 3:11 II Cor. 4:17-18). If age 40 were truly mid-life, it would be a crisis. If the only phases of life to look forward to were retirement and death, you would have cause for alarm. The believer always has a hope beyond earthly dreams of marriage, children, and vocational success. One day we will be with Christ and we will be like Him. The years we spend here are to be spent in light of the eternity we will enjoy in His presence.

7. Your legacy is in heaven. If the Lord tarries, you almost certainly will be forgotten after two generations pass (Ecc. 2:16). Earthly treasures and reputations are fading. Store up treasure in heaven which is secure and eternal! (Mt. 6:19-21).

David's Catastrophic Sin. II Samuel 11:1-5

I. Introduction.

- A. We have come to one of the most tragic chapters in the entire Bible.
- B. I thank God for recording this incident in His perfect Word.
 - 1. It shows that the Bible is honest about its heroes. Jer. 17:5-6
 - 2. It serves as a warning to us against sin and presumption. I Co. 10:12
 - 3. It is instructive about how temptation and sin occur, so that we might be able to resist and escape.
 - 4. It accurately portrays the ugliness and the consequences of sin.
 - 5. It offers hope to the worst of sinners who repents. Ps. 32 51
 - 6. It reminds us that no earthly hero will suffice. We need a better king than David.

II. David falls into sin. v. 1-5

- A. David did not fall suddenly – there were harbingers to David's fall. v. 1-2a
 - 1. Rather than seeking and enjoying personal intimacy with one wife, David had acquired many wives for his own power and pleasure. 5:13 Gen. 2:18ff Dt. 17:17
 - 2. Apparently prosperity and security had put David off his guard. Prov. 30:8-9
 - 3. David has drifted into ingratitude and undervaluing the things of God. 12:7-9
 - 4. David was guilty of neglecting his duties as king. v. 1-2a 10:9ff I Sam. 8:20
- B. Sin follows a progression -- first, sin is conceived in the heart. v. 2b-3 James 1:13-14
 - 1. Don't try to blame God when you are tempted. Js. 1:13-14 Gen. 3:12
 - 2. Sin occurs, not because of temptation from the outside, but from within our hearts. Js. 1:13-14 Mark 7:14-23
 - 3. David sees beautiful Bathsheba bathing. v. 2a I Sa. 16:12
 - 4. Temptation often enters through the 'eye-gate'. Gen. 3:6 I Jo. 2:16 II Pe. 2:14 Num. 15:39
 - 5. David then moves from looking, to entertaining lustful thoughts as he inquires about the bathing woman. v. 3a Mt. 5:28
 - 6. The answer David received should have stopped him in his tracks. v. 3b 23:39,34
- C. Sinful desire in the heart ultimately results in the tragic act of sin. v. 4 Js. 1
 - 1. David sends for Bathsheba, thus involving others in his crime.
 - 2. He takes her. 12:4,9,11 Lev. 18:22
 - 3. The description of David's sin with Bathsheba is succinct. v. 4a
 - 4. Afterwards Bathsheba went home.
- D. What responsibility does Bathsheba bear?
 - 1. Shouldn't she been more modest, realizing that she could be seen? I Tim. 2:9
 - 2. Shouldn't she have refused David's advances? Deut. 22:22-24
 - 3. Her husband Uriah was not afraid to stand up to David. v. 11
 - 4. It is ironic that she is so concerned about outward ceremonial cleanness while violating the seventh commandment against adultery. v. 4b Lev. 15:25ff
- E. Finally sin brings forth deadly consequences. v. 5 Js. 1:15b Pr. 6:32-33 7:26f Dt. 22:22
 - 1. The conception of a child, which should be an occasion for great joy, is seen as a tragedy. I Sam. 1:19ff Ps. 127:1ff
 - 2. David's attempts to cover up his guilt will only compound his sin. v. 6ff Nu. 32:23
 - 3. David's sin will affect him and many others for the rest of his life. Gal. 6:7f
 - 4. Sexual sin is not merely a private matter which involves only two people.

III. How can we avoid falling into sin?

- A. Be on your guard.**
1. Don't think that it can't happen to you. I Co. 10:12 I Pe. 5:8
 2. Guard your heart. Prov. 4:23
 3. Guard your eyes. II Tim. 2:22
 4. Also protect your thoughts. Phil. 4:8-9
 5. Neglect of the small things can lead to a big fall. Js. 1:15
 6. Don't think that you can toy with sin without experiencing the consequences.
 7. Sinful desire indulged will produce sinful acts.
 8. Don't be a stumbling block to others.
- B. Nurture your own relationship with the Lord - don't let your love for Him grow cold.**
Mt. 22:37 II Tim. 2:22 Rev. 2:5 Rom. 8:13
1. If you are walking closely with God, you will not be vulnerable to sin. Gen. 39:9
 2. Remember who you are. Rom. 6:11 Col. 3:5
 3. Pray that He will keep you from temptation. Mt. 6:13 Luke 22:40 Jude 1:24
- C. Stay busy fulfilling God's calling on your life. Col. 3:23 II Ti. 1:6**
1. You are especially vulnerable to temptation when you are negligent of your duties. I Th. 5:7
 2. Stay busy in your vocation, in your family and in your church.
- D. Guard your marriage. Gen. 2:18ff Eph. 5:22ff Prov. 5:15ff I Co. 7:2ff
Song of Solomon**
- E. If you have started to give in to temptation, abort the sin before it is too late.**
Gen. 39:6ff II Tim. 2:22 Mt. 5:29-30 Rom. 6:12-14 8:13 I Co. 10:13
1. At every stage David could have chosen to turn from his sin. Job 31:1
 2. Take radical action to kill your sin before it kills you. Mt. 5:29f Rom. 8:13
 3. Seek accountability.
 4. The longer you wait, the worse the consequences will become.
- F. God offers hope and grace to fallen sinners.**
1. The significance of David's fall goes beyond merely warning us about temptation. I Co. 10:11
 2. David, for all of his excellent qualities, was not able to fulfill God's covenant.
 3. We need someone greater than David to be our King.
 4. Jesus is the Son of David who never sins or fails. He is a King who gives.
 5. Jesus comes to the aid of those who are tempted. Heb. 2:18
 6. Jesus forgives those who confess and forsake their sin. I Jo. 1:8-10 Ps. 32

Discussion questions

1. What in David's life made him vulnerable to temptation?
2. How does David's fall into sin follow the progression described in James 1:14-15?
3. How could and should David have aborted his sin at every stage?
4. What other temptations can enter through the 'eye gate'?
5. Was Bathsheba guilty or was she merely a victim of David's sin?
6. How would you answer the person who says that sexual sin is a private matter which involves only two people?
7. What can you do to protect yourself from falling into serious sin?
8. Why is idleness dangerous?
9. How does this passage point to Christ?

The LORD Confronts David's Sin. II Samuel 12:1-12

I. Introduction and review.

II. The LORD pursues wayward David. v. 1a

A. The LORD takes action.

1. In the previous chapter David seemed to be in control – *sending*. 11:1,3,4,6,14,27
2. Now the LORD finally takes action and sends someone. Deut. 17:15,20
3. Why does God wait so long? Ps. 32:3-4

B. The LORD's action was necessary.

1. David would not have sought God on his own.
2. How do we hide from God? Gen. 3:8 Jonah 1

C. The LORD's action is comforting – pursuing grace. Pr. 3:11-12 Heb. 12:5-11

1. Though real believers may fall into sin, the LORD will not let them remain in sin. Isa. 49:14-16 Mt. 18:12-14 Hosea
2. Because our eternal security depends upon God and not us, a true believer cannot lose his or her salvation. John 10:27-29 Rom. 8:29-30 I Pe. 1:3-5
3. God's work of preserving us includes not merely our eternal security, but also our perseverance in following Him. John 10:27 I Jo. 2:3-4 Eph. 2:10
4. The LORD's process of disciplinary restoration may be hard and unpleasant. Jonah 1:4ff Ps. 119:67,71 He. 12:11,8
5. It is possible for a person who professes to be a believer to have never been truly converted. Mt. 7:21-23 I Jo. 2:3-4 Heb. 12:8

D. The LORD sends Nathan to confront David.

1. Nathan is given a dangerous and difficult assignment. Pr. 20:2 Mt. 14:3-10
2. The fact that a prophet could speak this way to a ruler is a reminder that the LORD is the true king of Israel.

E. The LORD still uses human messengers to confront and restore His wayward people.

1. Shepherds (Pastors/Elders) have a special duty to seek out wandering sheep. I Pe. 5:1-5 Acts 20:28 Ps. 23
2. God calls upon each of us to do what Nathan did in confronting sin. Gal. 6:1 Matthew 18:15-20 Heb. 10:24 Rom. 15:14 James 5:20 Pr. 27:5-6 Lev. 19:17
3. We have to overcome our own reluctance and fear. Pr. 29:25
4. Not every sinner responds as well as David ultimately does. Pr. 9:7-8a 15:12
5. Do you welcome rebuke and admonition? Pr. 9:8b-9 17:10
6. We all need people who love us enough to confront us when we are in sin. Pr. 27:6

III. The LORD, through Nathan, exposes David's sin. v. 1b-6

A. Nathan uses a parable to reach David. v. 1b-4

1. How does he come up with such a great story? II Pe. 1:21
2. Why is this story especially appropriate for David? 5:2 I Sam. 16:11 Ezek. 34:23
3. The parable is wonderfully crafted. 12:8-9 16:21 Pr. 6:30ff
4. Such parables are used elsewhere in the Scripture. 14:1-20 Jdg. 9:6ff Isa. 5:1ff I Ki. 20:35ff Ezek. 17:2-10 Mt. 13:3
5. Does David realize that this is merely a story?

- B. David reacts in judgmental anger. v. 5-6**
1. Even though David's conscience has been hardened, he still has a strong sense of right and wrong. Ex. 22:1 Luke 19:8
 2. Those who are caught up in sin still function as moral agents – at least when it comes to others. Mt. 7:1ff
 3. David unknowingly pronounces sentence upon himself.
 4. This is a reminder of how we can be blinded and deceived by our sin. Heb. 3:13
- C. How can we be wise and creative (like Nathan) in confronting one another?**
1. We must keep in mind that most people don't like to be confronted.
 2. Before you go, pray and prepare. Pr. 25:11-12 Mt. 7:1ff
 3. Be sure you have proof.
 4. It is often much better to help the guilty party form his or her own conclusion.
 5. Approach one another gently: your goal is not to crush, but to bring to healing repentance. Gal. 6:1 Pr. 15:1,4
 6. The sharpest sword you have is God's Word. Heb. 4:12 Eph. 6:17

IV. The LORD through Nathan condemns David's sin – You are the man! v. 7-12

- A. Nathan follows the typical prophetic pattern of a covenant lawsuit.**
1. Recalling God's faithfulness to the covenant. v. 7-8
 2. Exposing the covenant breaker's unfaithfulness. v. 9
 3. Setting forth the sanctions for disobedience. v. 10-12
- B. I (the LORD) have greatly blessed you -- position, protection, and prosperity. v. 7b-8**
- C. You (David) have broken the covenant through your adultery and murder. v. 9, 14a**
1. You have despised the Word of the LORD. v. 9 Ps. 51:4
 2. You have given the LORD's enemies cause to blaspheme. v. 14
- D. You and your family will suffer the consequences of your sin. v. 10-12,14b**
1. The punishment fits the crime: murder and adultery in David's house. Ex. 21:24 II Sam 12:18 13:8ff 18:14-15 I Ki. 2:24
 2. David's sin has a national and a covenantal dimension.
- E. Application: We need to take our sin seriously.**
1. Ingratitude is at the root of our sin.
 2. When we sin we are guilty of despising God Himself. Ps. 51:4
 3. It is only when we understand the wickedness of our sin that we can fully appreciate the greatness of God's grace. Mark 2:17

V. Concluding applications.

Discussion questions:

1. Have you ever been condemned by the words of your mouth?
2. Whose responsibility is it to confront sin in the church?
3. What is the role of family members in confronting each other with sin?
4. How receptive are you to correction? Do you have any Nathans in your life?
5. How can you follow Nathan's example when you have to correct others?
6. Why do many people lack the courage to confront sin in others?
7. Why do people need to understand God's law and their sin before they can appreciate the gospel?
8. How does this text point to Christ?

Learning from Joseph's Temptation: Genesis 39

I. Introduction and review.

- A. Joseph's jealous brothers sold him as a slave in Egypt. 37:1-36 39:1
- B. Meanwhile, back in Canaan... things are bad in the chosen family. Genesis 38
 - 1. Judah marries a Canaanite woman. v. 1-5 28:1 Mal. 2:15-16 II Co. 6:14
 - 2. His first two sons are so wicked that God takes their lives. v. 6-10
 - 3. Judah breaks his promise to his daughter-in-law, Tamar. v. 11
 - 4. Judah commits immorality with what he thinks to be a shrine prostitute. v. 12-19
 - 5. Tamar has Judah's sons thereby preserving the messianic line. v. 20-30 Mt. 1:3
 - 6. Why is Genesis 38 in the Bible? 35:2 43:32 46:34
 - a. The chosen family needs to get away from the corrupting influence of Canaan.
 - b. Joseph's faithfulness stands in sharp contrast to the wickedness of his family.

II. God prospers Joseph both as a slave and as a prisoner. v. 1-6, 19-23

- A. Joseph resists many temptations while in Egypt.
 - 1. Joseph resists the temptation to conform to Egyptian religion. 39:9b
 - 2. Joseph resists temptations to self pity, despair, and even anger against God.
- B. Joseph is again exalted as he is given significant responsibility.
 - 1. He works hard, as unto the Lord, and gains the trust of his master.
 - 2. He rises from being the lowliest of slaves to the master of Potiphar's house. v. 2-6
 - 3. Later he becomes the manager of the prison. v. 21-23
- C. The secret to Joseph's success is that God is with him. 39:2-3,21,23 Pr. 10:22 Acts 7:9
 - 1. God has given Joseph unique administrative gifts.
 - 2. God supernaturally blesses Joseph's work.
 - 3. Potiphar recognizes that Joseph's success came from God. v. 3 30:27 12:1-3

III. Joseph resists temptation from a *desperate housewife*. v. 6b-18

- A. Why did Mrs. Potiphar seek to seduce Joseph? v. 6b,14 29:17 12:11 27:7 24:11 I Sa. 16:7 Mt. 5:28 I Corinthians. 10:12 Rom. 12:2
- B. Potiphar's wife launches a threefold attack on Joseph's purity.
 - 1. She surprises him with a sudden unexpected proposition. v. 7 Pr. 7:6f
 - 2. She tries to wear him down with a lengthy war of attrition. v. 10 Judg. 14:17 16:16
 - 3. She goes for broke with a final frontal assault. v. 11-12a
- C. Joseph overcomes temptation with a threefold defense.
 - 1. He gives her a well-reasoned refusal. v. 8-9
 - a. Joseph correctly identifies her temptation as wickedness and sin.
 - b. He refuses because of his loyalty to her husband. Pr. 6:32-35
 - c. Sin is unthinkable because of his loyalty to God.
 - 2. He avoids her and keeps busy in his vocation. v. 10b Pr. 5:8 Mt. 5:29-30 I Sa. 11

3. Finally, he flees. II Tim. 2:22.
 4. Joseph succeeds where others have failed. 35:22 38:16 II Sa. 11:1f Jdg. 14:17 16:16
- D. Joseph is falsely accused of attempted rape, leading to his imprisonment. v. 13-20
1. Mrs. Potiphar's lust quickly turns to hatred. v. 13 II Sam. 13
 2. Joseph again suffers for his righteousness. Ps. 105:17-18

IV. How does what happened to Joseph apply to us?

- A. Work hard in your vocation so that you might bring blessing to your employer and glory to God. Gen. 2:2 Ex. 20:9-10 Col. 3:23-24 Eph. 6:5-8 I Pe. 2:18,21 Mt. 5:18
- B. Beware of temptation.
1. You will be tempted, even (especially?) if you are doing God's will.
 2. Don't think you can't fall into sin. I Cor. 10:12 Pr. 7:22
 3. Don't *you* be the tempter. Pr. 7:10f Rom. 12:2 Js. 4:4 I Ti. 2:9
 4. Learn to recognize temptation for what it really is. Pr. 2:16-19
 5. What people often call "love" is often nothing but selfish lust, which can quickly turn to hatred. II Sam. 13:15
- C. You can gain victory over temptation.
1. Overcome temptation by valuing your relationship with God above all else. Pr. 1:7 2:1f 15:3 4:23 Isa. 55:1f I Cor. 6:15-20 Ps. 51:4 Heb. 13:4 Num. 32:23
 2. Overcome temptation by thinking of the rights and welfare of others.
 3. Avoid tempting situations and stay busy. Pr. 5:8 Job 31:1 Mt. 5:29-30
 4. When necessary, flee temptation. II Tim. 2:22 I Cor. 6:18
 5. Count the cost of giving in to temptation. Gal. 6:7 Pr. 6:27f 7:21f
 6. God will not allow you to be tempted beyond your ability. I Cor. 10:13 Rom. 6:18
- D. A believer can overcome any temptation or hardship by God's strength. I Cor. 10:13
1. You don't have to be embittered when others abuse you.
 2. God is with you even in the midst of trials and temptations. Mt. 28:20 Heb. 13:5-6
 3. Your faithfulness to God may not be rewarded in this life. Mt. 5:10-12
 4. You can grow in the midst of adversity. Phil. 1:29 I Pe. 4:12-16 II Cor. 4:7-10

V. Concluding applications.

- A. God is still sovereignly working out His perfect plan. Rom. 8:28
1. Chains cannot hinder God's plan for Joseph. 50:20 II Ti. 2:9 Ps. 105:17f
 2. Joseph is being prepared for his future work. 42:23 43:32 Rom. 8:28
- B. How does our text point to Christ?
1. He successfully resists temptation as he trusts God. Mt. 4:1f
 2. He learns through his suffering. Heb. 5:7-8
 3. He suffers as the result of his faithfulness.
 4. He is falsely accused.
 5. He is silent before his accusers. Isa. 53:7 I Pe. 2:19-23
 6. God prospers Him because of His faithfulness in suffering. Isa. 53:10

Life Dominating Problems: Drugs, Alcohol, Etc.

I. Introduction.

- A. All kinds of addictions/diseases: drugs, alcohol, sex, gambling, etc. I Co. 6:19-20
- B. The problem is not a sickness, but rather sin!
- C. The problems with alcoholics anonymous (and other 12 step programs).
 - 1. A Higher Power, but not necessarily the God of the Scriptures.
 - 2. A counterfeit (replacement) church.
 - 3. You are characterized by your addiction for life.
 - 4. Seeking recovery without biblical repentance, redemption, and reconciliation.

II. The chief problem is idolatry.

- A. Sinners seek to find the satisfaction which is to be found only in the Lord in the things of the world. Pr. 21:17 23:29-35
 - 1. Food and drink which does not satisfy. Isa. 55:1-3
 - 2. Broken cisterns. Jer. 2:13
- B. You are a slave to sin (powerless). Ro. 6:17 Pr. 23:29-35
- C. The good news is that in Christ you can be set free from sin.

III. The answer: put off and put on. Eph. 4:22-24

- A. Put off (quit) the old behavior.
 - 1. In Christ you are a new creation. You are no longer what you used to be. II Co. 5:17 I Co. 6:9-11
 - 2. God will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you can bear. I Co. 10:13
 - 3. Stay away from companions and situations which might bring temptation. Pr. 23:19-20 I Pet. 4:2-5 I Co. 15:33 5:11 Mt. 5:29-30
- B. Put on (start) new behavior.
 - 1. Find your rest, consolation, and pleasure in Christ.
 - 2. Enjoy earthly blessings in moderation with thankfulness to God. I Tim. 4:1-5
 - 3. Invest your time and money in the work God has given you: family, church, etc. Eph. 5:15-18

IV. Conclusion: hope for addicts.

Wisdom from Proverbs about Substance Abuse

I. Introduction and Review.

- A. A controversial subject.
- B. Wine is used to represent both good and evil. 4:17 3:10
- C. Substance abuse is a growing problem.

II. What Does the Bible Say about Drinking?

- A. There is a legitimate use for wine.
 - 1. Wine is a symbol of prosperity, celebration and blessing. 9:2 3:10 Ecc. 9:7 Ps. 104:14-15 Judges. 9:13 Joel 3:18
 - 2. While the alcohol content of wine in biblical times was less than modern liquor, it was still potentially intoxicating. John 2:10 Acts 2:15 Luke 7:33-34
 - 3. Wine was used for medicinal purposes. 31:6-7 Luke 10:34 Mt. 21:28 I Ti. 5:23
 - 4. There is nothing in the Bible condemning the use of alcoholic beverages in moderation.
- B. Drunkenness is sinful and foolish! 20:1 Isa. 5:11-12,22 Eph. 5:18 Gal. 5:21 Dt. 21:20 Ro. 13:13 Lu 21:34
 - 1. You harm yourself. Jer. 51:7
 - a. You lose control of yourself and become unfit for your responsibilities. 31:4-5
 - b. You will hurt physically. 23:29,32-35
 - c. You lose financially: destitution. 23:21 21:17
 - d. You are more prone to indulge in other sins: fighting, sexual immorality, blasphemy, drugs. 23:35 20:1 Gen. 19:32ff
 - 2. You hurt others.
 - 3. Ultimately you are sinning against your Creator and Master. I Co. 6:9,19-20
- C. Why do people abuse intoxicating substances? A problem of the heart.
 - 1. People try to escape reality.
 - 2. People love pleasure rather than God. 23:31 II Tim. 3:4 Phil. 3:19
 - 3. Ultimately the love of pleasure is idolatry: Seeking in substances the satisfaction which can only be found in the LORD. 20:1 Isa. 55:1-2 Ecc. 2:10-11 Luke 16:25
 - 4. The same applications could be made to people who seek satisfaction in food (gluttony), material things (greed), etc. 23:20-21 21:17

III. How can a Substance Abuser be Set Free?

- A. The recovery movement (AA/12 step) is unscientific and unbiblical. (See The Useful Lie, by William L. Playfair, M.D.)
 - 1. AA teaches that substance abuse is a disease: The medical model/recovery.
 - a. The alcoholic is born with the disease and is powerless.
 - b. When he is exposed to the substance, he is under control of the addiction.
 - c. The key to recovery is for the abuser to identify oneself as an alcoholic.
 - d. The alcoholic must participate in AA group meetings for the rest of his life.
 - e. The alcoholic must totally abstain from alcohol.
 - f. The recovery model is also being used for gambling, narcotics, theft, and sexual sin.
 - g. This model of addiction is not supported by medical research (See Playfair).

2. **The Bible teaches that substance abuse is sin: The moral model/redemption.**
 - a. While it is true that we are all born sinful and that some may be more tempted by some sins than others, we are responsible for rebelling against God's law.
 - b. People become addicted by making sinful choices. Jn 8:34 I Co. 6:12
 - c. Believers are no longer enslaved to sin (or substances). Ro. 6:18
 - d. We find our identity in Christ. I Co. 6:9-11
 3. **AA is a counterfeit religion.**
 - a. A counterfeit book (and decalogue).
 - b. A counterfeit theology: The Higher Power: "God as you understand Him"
 - c. A counterfeit anthropology: The disease model, codependency.
 - d. A counterfeit redemption experience: admission that you are an alcoholic.
 - e. A counterfeit identity: Alcoholic versus Christian. I Co. 6:9-12
 - f. A counterfeit church: Fellowship, discipleship, etc.
 - g. Counterfeit evangelism.
 4. **Is it worthwhile to have "Christian" 12 step programs? Lev. 18:3ff Col. 2:3,8-10**
 5. **Should we encourage unbelievers to go into 12 step programs?**
- B. Biblical "recovery" from substance abuse. Eph. 5:18 4:22-24 Ro. 13:13-14**
1. **Put off sin. *Do not get drunk with wine.* Ro. 13:13 I Pet. 4:3**
 - a. Repent: II Co. 7:10-11
 - b. Look to God to forgive you through Christ. I John 1:8-2:2
 - c. As a new creature in Christ. Old things have passed away. II Co. 5:17 I Co. 6:11
 - d. You are no longer a slave to sin. Ro. 6:18
 - e. Live a life of sobriety and self control. Gal. 5:23 I Co. 6:12
 2. **Put on righteousness. *Be filled with the Spirit.* Ro. 13:14 6:18 Gal. 5:16**
 - a. Be controlled by the Holy Spirit instead of substances.
 - b. Find your pleasure and satisfaction in Christ's spiritual blessings. Isa. 55:3
 - c. Enjoy earthly blessings in moderation to the glory of God with thankfulness. 25:16 I Ti. 4:4-5 I Co. 10:31
 - d. Invest your time and energy in your God given vocation. Eph. 5:15-18
- C. Practice Biblical confrontation/discipline. Matt. 18:15-20**
1. **Level 1: Self control.**
 2. **Level 2: Personal confrontation: 1 on 1. Mt. 18:15 Gal. 6:1 Eph. 4:15**
 3. **Level 3: Confrontation with 2 or 3 witnesses. Mt. 18:16**
 4. **Level 4: Tell it to the church. Mt. 18:17a**
 5. **Level 5: Excommunication. Mt. 18:17b-20 I Co. 5:11 6:9-10**
 6. **After repentance there is restoration. II Co. 2:5-11**
- D. Does the biblical method always work? Sometimes people choose to remain in sin.**

IV. Concluding Applications.

- A. **Make wise personal choices with alcoholic beverages.**
1. **Don't abuse your liberty by becoming intoxicated or breaking the law.**
 2. **Don't be enslaved to your appetites. Be self controlled. I Co. 6:12 9:27**
 3. **If your conscience is not clear, it is better to abstain. Ro. 14:23 I Co. 10:31**
 4. **Don't put yourself into situations in which you might be tempted to misuse alcohol. 23:30a I Co. 10:12 I Pet. 2:16 Mt. 5:29-30**
 - a. **Evil companions. 23:20 I Pet. 4:3 I Co. 15:33**
 - b. **Don't assume that it couldn't happen to you. I Co. 10:12 Gen. 9:20ff**
 5. **Don't abuse your liberty by causing a weaker brother to stumble. Ro. 14:21**

Gal. 5:13 I Co. 8:13

- B. **The key issue is your heart. 4:23**

Discussion Questions

1. **What does wine symbolize in the Bible?**
2. **What are some legitimate functions of wine?**
3. **Why is substance abuse sinful?**
4. **What are some of the consequences of drunkenness?**
5. **Why do people drink?**
6. **How is Alcoholics Anonymous a counterfeit religion?**
7. **How can a drunkard or an addict find help to overcome his sin?**
8. **What should you do if someone you love is misusing alcohol?**
9. **When is it wrong to drink wine?**
10. **What is your personal belief about drinking alcoholic beverages?**

The Pain of Porn

I. Introduction.

- A. A growing problem, even among Christians.
- B. The key to sexual purity. Pr. 4:23 I Th. 4:3-5
- C. Three key issues: idolatry, lies, and narcissism.

II. Sex is meant to be a blessing.

- A. God created sex as good.
 - 1. To express the oneness of the marriage covenant. Gen. 2:24 4:1
 - 2. To produce children. Gen. 1:27-18 Ps. 127
 - 3. For the mutual enjoyment of husband and wife. Prov. 5:18-18 Deut. 24:5 Heb. 13:4 Song of Solomon 1:2,13-16 7:1-10 4:1-7 5:10-16
- B. Evil is not merely the opposite of good, but the perversion of the good.
 - 1. The opposite of sexual sin is not no sex, but “good sex”.
 - 2. The opposite of good sex (within marriage) is not no sex, but perverse sex.
- C. God’s ideal is that you direct all of your sexual energy (including thoughts) towards your spouse. Mt. 5:27-28 Pr. 6:25 7:25 Song 4:12-15
 - 1. Don’t try to excuse yourself by narrowing the definition of adultery!
 - 2. Jesus makes God’s standard plain: Purity begins in the heart.
 - 3. Solo sex is a violation of God’s design. Sex is to be relational and other focused.
 - 4. Our culture promotes sexual sin.

III. Lust is very destructive.

- A. It affects your relationship with God. Ps. 51:4 32:3-4 Gen. 39:9
 - 1. Sexual sin is primarily a sin against God. Ps. 51:4 I Cor. 6:15-20
 - 2. Your sin creates separation with God: broken fellowship. Ps. 32:3-4
 - 3. Repent quickly and find grace. Ps. 32:5,9
- B. It affects your relationship with your spouse.
 - 1. You are violating your marriage covenant.
 - 2. You are robbing your wife of what is rightfully her possession: all of your sexuality.
I Cor. 7:4
 - 3. Your attitude towards your wife is affected.
 - 4. She will be wounded. Trust will break down.
 - 5. You put your marriage at risk.
- C. It affects others under your influence: your children.
 - 1. King David’s example. II Sam. 13 16:20-21 I Kings 11
 - 2. Will you be able to provide moral leadership for your family?
- D. It affects you personally. Pr. 5:11-13,22-23
 - 1. Sin makes you miserable. Ps. 32:3-4
 - 2. It leads to more sin. James 1:14-15
 - 3. It can lead to sickness or even death. Pr. 6:25-35 5:21-23 7:22-27 Num. 32:23
- E. Special considerations for single men.
 - 1. Lust now affects your relationship with your future spouse.
 - 2. Getting married will not solve your lust problems.

IV. Guard yourself from lust. *How to counsel someone who struggles with lust.*

- A. **Make a covenant with yourself. Job. 31:1,9**
1. Stay as far away from temptation as possible. Pr. 5:8 *Don't go near her door.*
 2. Set boundaries (hedges).
 - a. I will not be alone in a car or a room with a woman other than my wife.
 - b. I will not become involved in a close friendship with a woman without my wife (and her husband) being a significant part of that relationship.
 - c. Conversations with a woman, in a situation where my wife and her husband are not present, will be brief and businesslike.
 - d. I will not flirt. I Tim. 5:2
 - e. When I see a tempting situation, I (like Job) will look away. II Sam. 11:2
 - f. When I struggle, I will seek help.
 3. Beware of rationalizing. Pr. 30:20
 4. Don't trust yourself. I Co. 10:12 Pr. 5:8 14:12
 5. When does a look become lustful?
- B. **Be prepared to take radical action. Mt. 5:29-30 Rom. 13:14**
1. When tempted, RUN and don't look back. II Tim. 2:22 Gen. 39:8-13
 2. Cut off TV, internet. Get/keep books, magazines, and videos out of house.
 3. Notice patterns of sin: idle time.
 4. Take every thought captive. II Co. 10:5 Phil. 4:8-9. Mt. 15:19
- C. **Seek help: accountability and prayer. Js. 5:16 Pr. 27:17 Be Careful. Gal. 6:1-2**
- D. **Draw near to God.**
1. Delight yourself in God! Isa. 55:1-2 Pr. 9:1-6 7:4-5
 2. Guard your heart. Pr. 4:23 Ps. 51:10
 3. Trust Him to help you in times of temptation. I Cor. 10:13
 4. Stay busy doing the work He has given you to do. Mt. 6:33
- E. **Draw near to your wife. Invest in your marriage. I Cor. 7:3-5. Heb. 13:4 Ecc. 9:9 Pr. 5:15-19**

V. Helping the wife when her husband struggles with lust.

- A. The biggest problem is the loss of trust.
- B. The husband must be honest and accountable.
- C. How much should he tell her?
- D. Help the wife to understand that his lust problem is not due to her physical inadequacy. She needs to find her security in the LORD. Jer. 17:5-8
- E. Help the husband to repent and the wife to forgive.
- F. How much should the wife check up on her husband?

VI. Conclusion: God offers hope and forgiveness. I Cor. 6:9-11 Ps. 51 32

VII. Recommended resources.

- A. An Affair of the Mind, Laurie Hall
- B. At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry, Steve Gallagher
- C. Every Man's Battle, Stephen Arterburn and Fred Stoeker
- D. Fidelity, by Doug Wilson
- E. Not Even a Hint, Joshua Harris
- F. Pornography: Slaying the Dragon, by David Powlison

Gluttony, Diet, Fitness and Body Idolatry

I. Introduction.

- A. Food and body idolatry are “big” issues in our culture.
- B. Food creates many counseling issues.
- C. The Bible has a lot to say about food.
 - 1. God has given us a variety of good food to enjoy to His glory. Gen. 1:29-31 9:3 I Tim. 4:3-5 Ps. 105:14-15
 - 2. The first sin had to do with sinful eating. Gen. 3
 - 3. Many other subsequent sins have had to do with food. Gen. 25:27ff 27:1ff Heb. 12:14-17 Num. 11:4-6 Ps. 78:18 Ex. 16:2ff
 - 4. Plentiful food is a blessing of the Old Covenant. Dt. 28:4-5 Ps. 111:5
 - 5. The curse for covenant unfaithfulness is shortage of food. Dt. 28:17,23-24,33,38-40 Isa. 3:1
 - 6. Plentiful food is also a New Covenant blessing. Mt. 6:31-33
 - 7. God gives food to mankind as a common grace blessing. Acts 14:17 He even feeds animals and enemies. Ps. 136:25 145:15 Mt. 5:45
 - 8. God brings people together in fellowship around food.
 - 9. Your heart is more important than your body. I Ti. 4:8 I Sam. 16:7 Luke 12:23 Pr. 31:30 I Pe. 3:3-4 I Co. 8:8
 - 10. Our need of food reminds us of our complete dependence upon God. I Ki. 17
 - 11. Physical hunger symbolic of our spiritual need. Mt. 5:6 I Pe. 2:2-3 Ps. 34:8
 - 12. Spiritual food is far more important than earthly food. Mt. 4:4 Dt. 8:3 Jo. 6:31ff
 - 13. Will we eat in the New Heavens and the New Earth? Lu. 24:30,41-43 John 12:12 Rev. 2:7 19:9
 - 14. There is no biblical command to be thin.
- D. The Bible also talks about exercise.
 - 1. Bodily discipline does have some profit. I Tim. 4:8
 - 2. Physical exercise is used illustratively of spiritual discipline. I Co. 9:24ff

II. Sins of the body.

- A. Gluttony and overeating. Prov. 23:21
 - 1. The excessive love for and use of food. Phil. 3:19
 - 2. Gluttony violates the sixth commandment. Ex. 20:13 I Co. 6:19-20 Ecc. 5:12
 - 3. Gluttony can be a sin against your spouse. I Cor. 7:3ff Song of Solomon
 - 4. Gluttony is often associated with other sins. Dt. 21:20 Pr. 23:20 28:7 23:21 Mt. 6:25ff Col. 3:9 Eph. 4:25 Phil. 2:3-4 I Cor. 10:10
 - 5. Gluttony can make you less useful to God. I Co. 10:31 6:19-20
 - 6. Not all gluttons are fat.
- B. Excessive devotion to physical fitness can also be sinful.
 - 1. One’s quest to obtain the perfect body can lead to other sins. Js. 4:6 Eph. 4:19 II Pe. 2:2 Luke 21:34 Mt. 6:25ff
 - 2. Making everything in your life revolve around your quest for the perfect body.
 - 3. Some are legalistic about food. I Tim. 4:3 Col. 2:16ff
 - 4. Those who idolize the perfect body sometimes become anorexic or bulimic.

- C. Food is not the problem. The root sin is idolatry. Ex. 20:3-5 Phil. 3:19 Deut. 6:4
Isa. 55:1-2 Ezek. 14:1-11 Jer. 2:13
1. Food idolatry. Js. 4:1-2
 2. Fitness idolatry.
 3. You can be both a glutton and make fitness an idol – exercise bulimia.

III. How can those who are stuck in sinful patterns change?

- A. The change we seek is unique. Col. 1:28 I Tim. 1:5
1. Our goal is not merely to be thin or to impress other people, but to please and glorify God. Col. 1:28 I Co. 10:31 II Co. 5:9
 2. It is not what you eat which makes you a sinner, but what is in your heart. Mark 7:14ff Js. 1:14ff Jer. 17:10
 3. The change we seek is not outward and physical but inward and spiritual.
 4. Seek first God's kingdom and don't worry (think) so much about food. Mt. 6:33
- B. Change begins with the gospel.
1. Law alone will not change you. Col. 2:23,19 Rom. 8:3-4 Gal. 3:3
 - a. Scripture generally begins with the indicative, what God has done for us, as the ground for imperatives.
 - b. New Testament commands and exhortations are grounded in the gospel. Eph. 4:9ff 5:2,25ff Rom. 15:2-3,7
 - c. Some think of the gospel exclusively for justification, but don't realize its relevance for sanctification. Gal. 3:3
 - d. Some biblical counselors move too quickly to the imperative (what we do) without placing enough emphasis upon how the gospel is the basis of change.
 2. You are accepted by God, not based upon how thin you are, but because of the perfect righteousness of Christ. Phil. 3:9
 3. What matters most is not what other people think of you, or even what you think of yourself, but your status with God. Pr. 29:25 I Co. 6:9-11 II Co. 5:17 Ro. 6:11
 4. If change begins with the gospel, how do unbelievers lose weight? Mt. 12:43-45
 5. Only believers are able to please God. Rom. 8:5-8 14:23 Heb. 11:6 I Co. 10:31
 6. We change not through self-reliance, but in total dependance upon God. Jo. 15:5,8
- C. Understanding your union with Christ is the key to your growth in holiness. Ro. 6:1ff
1. Paul anticipates an objection to the gospel. Rom. 6:1-2a
 2. You can't go on sinning because you are united to Christ. Rom. 6:2b
The gospel rightly understood promotes holiness. Titus 2:14
 3. Your old self has died and you are a new person in Christ. Rom. 6:2b-4a,8-10
Gal. 2:20 Col. 3:3-4
 4. You are united with Christ in His resurrection. Rom. 6:4b-5,8
 5. You have been set free from slavery to sin (including gluttony) to serve righteousness. Rom. 6:6-7,9b,15-22 Isa. 61:1
 6. Now, live in light of who you are in Christ. Rom. 6:12-13
 7. No temptation has to overcome you. I Co. 10:13
 8. How does this work itself out in practical terms?
- D. Christ is better than gluttony (and all of the other idols which tempt us). Isa. 55:1-2
Jer. 15:16 Ps. 34:8 Mt. 11:28ff Jo. 6:53ff 4:10 7:38 Gen. 39:9b Prov. 9:1ff
1. Your gluttony never satisfies you. Ecc. 6:7 Micah 6:14
 2. Christ alone satisfies - eat at the Lord's table. Prov. 9:1ff John 6:53-58

IV. We are responsible to exert effort towards change.

- A. Change takes place through the means of our exerting effort and acting obediently. Rom. 6:12-13 8:13 13:14 Titus 2:11-12**
- 1. Some wrongfully stop with the indicative, declaring what God has done for us in Christ, while neglecting the imperatives of what God calls us to do.**
 - 2. Immediately after telling us to consider our identity in Christ, Paul exhorts us to take action against the lusts of the flesh. Rom. 6:12ff**
- B. Repent (put off). Isa. 55:6-7 1:18 II Co. 10:5 I Jo. 5:21**
- 1. Stop blaming God for your failure. James 1:13**
 - 2. Repent of food and body idolatry. I Co. 6:12-13 10:12 Pr. 16:8 11:2 Js. 4:6 Acts 12:22ff**
 - 3. Learn to resist inward temptation. I Cor. 10:12-13 James 1:14ff Mt. 26:41**
 - 4. Take radical steps to remove outward temptation. Mt. 5:29-30**
 - 5. Whatever cannot be eaten in faith is sin. Rom. 14:23**
- C. Put on glorifying God in your eating and how you care for your body. Titus 2:11-12**
- 1. Love the LORD and feast (spiritually) at His table. Ps. 16:11 1:2 73:25 42:2 63:1 Prov. 9:1ff Isa. 6:4 26:9 55:1-2 John 6:53ff Ecc. 6:7**
 - 2. Express prayerful dependence upon God for your food and health. Mt. 6:11 Ps. 40:17 69:33 72:13**
 - 3. Never eat without giving thanks for the food God gives you. I Ti. 4:3-5 I Co. 10:30-31 11:24**
 - 4. Be content with the quantity and quality of food God provides for you. I Ti. 6:6ff Phil. 4:11**
 - 5. Be content with the body God has given you. Ps. 139:13-14**
 - 6. Live a life of self discipline/control. I Co. 9:27 Gal. 5:22-23 II Pe. 1:5-7,9**
 - 7. Honor God with your body. I Co. 3:16-17 6:20**
 - 8. Your motive for obedience is crucial.**
 - 9. Look forward to the day when these bodies will be perfected. Phil. 3:21**
- D. Practical things which you can do.**
- 1. See a physician before attempting any significant change in your lifestyle.**
 - 2. Make a plan for how you will eat and exercise. Prov. 21:5 I Tim. 4:8**
 - 3. Keep a record of what you eat.**
 - 4. Eat slowly and thankfully. I Tim. 4:4-5**
 - 5. It is better to establish wise God-honoring habits which will last a lifetime than to go on a temporary radical diet.**
 - 6. Take a day off from food (fasting) and feast at the Lord's Table.**
 - 7. Seek godly accountability. Heb. 3:13 Ecc. 4:9-12**
 - 8. Beware of legalism. I Tim. 4:3**
- E. Your change can have effects which will glorify God. I Co. 10:31 6:19-20 Acts 12:21ff**

V. What determines when and whether change takes place?

- A. We experience a variety of outcomes in our counseling.**
- B. Sometimes change doesn't take place in the life of a counselee because he/she is not regenerate. John 15:2,6 Phil. 1:6 I John 2:3-4 Mt. 7:16ff**

- C. Be careful not to wrongfully judge someone who is overweight. Mt. 7:1ff
- D. Personal revival is like corporate revival: God sees fit to sovereignly work in powerful ways in the lives of His people at certain times. Jo. 3:8 15:5 Ps. 71:20 85:6
 - 1. We cannot through our counseling skill or technique change people.
 - 2. God alone must do it. John 15:5
- E. God uses various means to bring about change.
 - 1. His Word is a powerful agent for change. II Ti. 3:16-17 Heb. 4:12-13 Ps. 119:25 John 15:7
 - 2. We should pray for God to revive us and our counselees. Ps. 119:25,37,40,88,107,149,154,156,159
 - 3. Sometimes the Lord brings circumstances into our lives to change our course. Ps. 119:67,71 Heb. 12:4-11 John 15:2 James 1:2ff
 - 4. Sometimes God sends a Nathan to admonish us. Ro. 15:14 Ga. 6:1-2 II Sam. 12
 - 5. Participation in the church community encourages to good deeds. Heb. 10:24-25

VI. Conclusion.

- A. Food is important.
- B. Food is a symbol of our need of God.
- C. God wants us to change and to bear fruit for His glory. John 15:8
- D. The gospel is the key to change. Rom. 6:11 John 15:1ff Isa. 55:1-2
- E. We are responsible to exert effort to change. Matthew 14:22-33
- F. Recommended Resources.
 - 1. Cleveland, The Lord's Table.
 - 2. Fitzpatrick, Love to Eat Hate to Eat.
 - 3. McCoy, Shannon, "Help for Habitual Overeaters" in Women Counseling Women, edited by Elyse Fitzpatrick.
 - 4. Piper, A Hunger for God.
 - 5. Welch, Addictions: A Banquet in the Grave.

Biblical Foundations: Marriage Is Made in Heaven. Genesis 2:18-23

I. Introduction and Review.

- A. Belief in origins is foundational.
- B. A foundational passage about the foundational social institution: A creation ordinance.
Mt. 19:4-5 I Cor. 11:8

II. It is not good for you to be alone. v. 18-20

- A. A shocking evaluation. v. 18 1:4,10,12,18,21,25,31
 - 1. How could something be “not good” prior to the fall?
 - 2. The situation was not bad or evil, but instead it was lacking.
- B. The wife is designed by God to make her husband complete.
 - 1. She is not merely a slave girl or a sex object or a bearer of children.
 - 2. She is a companion to assist the man in carrying out God’s mandate to subdue the earth.
2:28
 - 3. Her gifts and abilities complement the strengths and weaknesses of her husband.
- C. Marriage is a lifelong covenant relationship between one woman and one man.
v. 19-20, 24 Mt. 19:4-5
 - 1. Why does God bring all of the animals to the man?
 - 2. No other creature is a suitable helper.
 - 3. Only a woman can complete a man (and only a man can complete a woman).
 - 4. Mankind has perverted God’s design. v. 24 Rom. 1:26-32 Mt. 19:5,8 I Tim. 3:2
Dt. 17:17 I Co. 7:2 (polygamy, divorce, fornication, etc.)
- D. God has a gift for everyone.
 - 1. Most of us are incomplete alone.
 - 2. Some are uniquely called to the single life. I Co. 7:1,7-8 Mt. 19:12
 - 3. God gives His gifts of marriage and singleness, not that we might pursue our selfish pleasures, but that we might glorify Him.
- E. Did God create some people to be homosexuals? Js. 1:13
 - 1. Homosexuality is a perversion of God’s design. Ge. 1:27 2:24 19:5 Lev. 18:22-25 20:13
Dt. 22:5 I Cor. 6:9 Rom. 1:26-27,32 I Ti. 1:10 Jude 7
 - 2. Why are some people homosexual?
 - a. Environmental factors? Genetic factors?
 - b. Such rationale could be used to justify every kind of sin and evil.
 - c. Homosexuality, like every other sin (i.e. adultery, drunkenness, and fornication), is a personal choice to rebel against God.
 - 3. Is it all right to be a non-practicing homosexual? Mt. 5:27-28 15:19
 - a. No more than it is acceptable to be a non-practicing adulterer (lust), murderer (hate), drunk, or rapist.
 - b. Sinful thoughts and desires in the heart will lead to sinful acts. Js. 1:13-15
 - c. We are responsible for how we think. Phi.4:8-9
 - d. God’s grace transforms our thoughts and desires. Ro. 12:2 Ga. 5:24
I Th. 5:23
 - 4. The movement of our society to accept homosexuality is a sign of God’s judgment upon us. Isa. 5:20 Rom. 1:18-27,32 Gen. 19

5. The most loving and courageous thing we can do is to call homosexuality sin because God forgives and transforms. Ps. 119:128. James 5:19-20 I Co. 6:9-11

III. God established your roles as husband and wife from creation.

- A. The wife is to submit to her husband's leadership.
 1. Male headship was God's design from the beginning. I Co. 11:8-9 I Ti. 2:11-13
 2. The woman was made to be a helper to the man. v. 18 I Cor. 11:8-9
 3. The man exercises dominion: naming the animals (and woman). v. 19-20,23 3:20
 4. The creation account refutes the claims of evangelical feminism. Gal. 3:28
 - a. Male dominion did not evolve because of the man's superior size or strength
 - b. Gender roles are not merely a cultural issue.
 - c. Male headship is not the result of the fall.
 - d. Male headship was God's design from the beginning.
 - e. The New Testament proves that wives' submission did not end with the cross Eph. 5:22-24 I Pet. 3:1-6
 5. Women are not demeaned by submission.
 - a. Headship does not imply superiority of personhood, but involves distinction in function according to God's design.
 - b. Subordination does not make the woman inferior. I Co. 11:3
 - c. The servant's role is glorious. Mark 10:42-45
 - d. The submissive wife fulfills God's design in her life.
 6. The fall has distorted the marriage roles. Gen. 3:16 I Pet. 3:1-2,7
 - a. Women tend to reverse the God-given roles and dominate their husbands. 4:7
 - b. Men tend to be domineering and insensitive in their leadership.
- B. The husband should love and honor his wife. v. 21-23
 1. Why did God choose such an unusual method for creating the woman? v. 21-22
 2. The husband should respect his wife because she is equally human, in the image of God. 1:27 I Co. 7:8-9 I Pe. 3:7
 3. The husband ought to love and cherish his wife as part of himself. Eph. 5:25-30
 - a. His leadership is to be loving and sacrificial: Eph. 5:25-27
 - b. He is to care for his wife as part of his own body. v. 23 Eph. 5:28-30

IV. Concluding Applications.

- A. Marriage is a Divine institution:
 1. The first marriage was not just a mating (like animals) but a covenant ceremony at which God gave away the bride.
 2. All subsequent marriages are to follow the pattern of the first.
 3. Every marriage involves 3 persons: Man, Woman, and God.
 4. All people are accountable to God for how they treat marriage.
 5. Those who tamper with marriage will be judged by God. Heb. 13:4
- B. Marriage is meant by God to be a blessing for mankind.
 1. Adam rejoices in the spouse God gives him. v. 23 Pr. 18:22
 2. God still brings together Adams and Eves.
 3. Rejoice in the spouse God has given you. v. 23 Pr. 5:18-19
 4. The primary goal of marriage is to glorify God.
- C. Marriage is designed by God as a picture of our relationship to Him.

Biblical Foundations: God's Directive for Marriage Genesis 2:24

I. Introduction. The “Magna Charta” of Marriage Mt. 19:5 Mk. 10:7 I Co. 6:16 Eph. 5:31

II. Leave: Your marriage creates a new family unit.

- A. Your marriage takes priority over any other human relationship.
 - 1. Even the parent-child relationship is temporary and changing.
 - 2. This truth is reflected in the wedding ceremony: the giving away of the bride.
 - 3. Grown children should still honor their parents. Ex. 20:12 Mark 7:9-13

- B. Failing to leave (or let go) is a violation of God's design.
 - 1. Geographically: Is it wrong to live in proximity to family members?
 - a. There are problems when married children live under their parents' roof
 - b. There are situations in which grown children should take care of their aged parents. Mark 7:9-13 I Tim. 5:8
 - 2. Economically: Is it wrong for parents to help out their children? II Co. 12:14
 - a. Young people should not get married until they are ready to take on the responsibilities of marriage. Eph. 5:29
 - b. Sometimes money comes with strings attached.
 - c. Under some circumstances it can be appropriate for parents to help their children.
 - 3. Emotionally: You can't go back to your mother.
 - a. Some parents won't let go.
 - b. The harm of a child-centered home.
 - c. The best thing you can do for your kids is to invest in your own marriage

III. Cleave: Your marriage is a lifelong covenant of companionship.

- A. Marriage is permanent: “Until death do us part”.
 - 1. Marriage is a commitment (contract).
 - a. *The bond that unites a man & woman is not metaphysical, but covenantal.*
 - b. Remember your wedding vows. Ps. 15:4
 - 2. The key to staying together is to eliminate the option of separation or divorce.
 - 3. Marriage is not eternal. Mt. 22:30

- B. Marriage is designed by God to be the most intimate of human relationships.
 - 1. Your spouse is to be your best friend: companion and “helper”. 2:18
 - 2. It takes time and effort to build intimacy: communication.
 - a. Quantity and quality time.
 - b. Learn to listen. Js. 1:19 Phil. 2:1-5 Pr. 20:5
 - c. Learn to express yourself lovingly and openly. Eph. 4:29

- C. Violations of God's design.
 - 1. A low view of the marriage covenant going into the marriage.
 - 2. Divorce. Mt. 19:3-9 Mal. 2:14-16
 - a. “No fault divorce” compounds the problem.
 - b. Divorce is also widespread in the evangelical church.
 - c. God allows protection for the innocent party when their spouse breaks the marriage covenant through adultery or abandonment. Mt. 5:32 19:9 I Co. 7:15-16
 - 3. Separation: legal or otherwise. Mt. 19:6 I Co. 7:2-5 I Pet. 3:7
 - 4. Lack of communication and love in marriage. Pr. 17:27-28 18:2 10:8 27:2 Ep.4:29

IV. One Flesh: Your marriage is the only place where God's gift of sex is to be enjoyed

- A. Why did God create sex? Heb. 13:4
1. The key to understanding sexual morality is to positively affirm what sex is for.
 2. The physical union is a symbolic expression of the marriage covenant. 2:24 4:1
 3. Sexual union in marriage is meant to produce children. 1:27-28 Ps. 127
 - a. Children are a blessing from God.
 - b. God wisely puts children into families to be raised by a mother and a father
 - c. We are called to fill the earth.
 4. The physical union in marriage is meant by God to be pleasurable for both the husband and the wife. Dt. 24:5 Pr. 5:18-19 Heb. 13:4 Song of Solomon
 5. We need to teach our children a healthy biblical view of sex.
- B. Any other sexual expression is a violation of God's design. Ecc. 7:29 Ro. 1:18-32
1. Lust: fantasies and pornography. Mt. 5:27-28 James 1:15 Job 31:1 II Sa. 11:2
 2. Fornication: Seeking the privileges of marriage without taking on the obligations. Sex between a man and a woman who are not yet married. Heb. 13:4
 3. Adultery: A married person having sex with anyone other than his or her spouse. Ex. 20:14 I Co. 6:16 Pr. 7:27
 4. Other sexual perversion: Homosexuality, etc.

V. Concluding Applications: What God has joined let no man separate! Mt. 19:6

- A. Do your part to protect marriage. *God is involved in every marriage.*
1. Romance is for marriage. If you are single, protect your upcoming marriage by not "leaving, cleaving, and one-fleshing" before you are married.
 2. Marriage is for romance. If you are married, protect your marriage.
 - a. Positively: Invest time and effort in marriage relationship: Enjoy the blessings God has given you!
 - b. Negatively: Ruthlessly deal with threats to your marriage. *Build a hedge*
Pr. 14:12 23:26-28 4:23
 3. Protect the marriages of others. Keep safe distance. Show respect. *Attack: God.*
- B. Why should you follow God's directives for marriage?
1. God's way will bring you the greatest happiness.
 2. God brings consequences to sexual sin. Heb. 13:4
 - a. Sexually transmitted diseases. Ro. 1:27,32
 - b. Financial ruin. Pr. 6:26 5:10
 - c. A Spoiled reputation. Pr. 6:32-33
 - d. Intense personal emotional misery. Pr. 5:22-23 6:32-33 7:23 22:14
 - e. The disintegration of our social order.
 - f. The wrath of God. I Co. 6:9f He. 13:4
 3. Your sin will find you out. Pr. 5:20-21
 4. God Who is sovereign will never let you profit from violating His law.
- C. The key to sexual purity is the fear of God. Pr. 9:10
1. Sexual sin is a heart problem: idolatry. Mark 7:21-23 Pr. 4:23
 2. The reason so many professing evangelicals are failing in their families is that they have lost the fear of God!
 - a. The post-modern evangelical church has become man-centered.
 - b. Before the church can affect the world, we must be different from the world!
 3. If you love God, you will be pure! Gen. 39:9
 4. God offers grace to those who turn to Him.

Are You an Adulterer? (Part 2: Divorce) Matt. 5:31-32

I. Introduction and review

II. Unlawful divorce and remarriage is adultery.

- A. The Jewish teachers corrupted the teaching of the Law. 5:31 Dt. 24:1-4**
1. They taught that divorce was allowed, as long as procedures were followed.
 2. They broke their marriage covenants so that their desires could be gratified with a different woman. *As in our day.*
- B. Jesus corrects the abuse of divorce. 5:32 19:3-9 Gen. 2:24**
1. Marriage is designed by God as a permanent covenant of companionship. 19:4-6
 - a. Death alone is to end a marriage. The survivor is then free to remarry. 1 Cor. 7:39
Rom. 7:2 1 Tim. 5:14
 - b. God hates divorce! Mal. 2:14-17
 - c. God's ideal is higher than what the law allows. Mt. 19:8
 2. Divorce was permitted under the Law only due to hardness of heart.
 - a. Moses never commanded divorce. 19:7
 - b. Deuteronomy 24 was not written to give grounds to justify divorce.
 - c. Divorce was permitted primarily as a safeguard to the one who was put away.
 - d. Moses provides a deterrent to divorce: Once you send her away, you can't get her back if she has since remarried.
 3. Sinful divorce leads to adultery. 5:32 19:9
 - a. He assumes that the one who is divorced will remarry.
 - b. Such remarriage is a breach of the 7th commandment because the first union was unlawfully severed.
 4. Jesus exercises his authority as lawgiver to modify the Mosaic Law.
 - a. The grounds for divorce are defined and narrowed.
 - b. The death penalty for adultery is abrogated. John 8:7
 - c. Polygamy will no longer be tolerated under the New Covenant. 19:5
- C. Don't make pharisaical excuses for divorce.**
1. My spouse is an unbeliever. 1 Cor. 7:12-13
 2. I'm doing it for my kids. 1 Cor. 7:14
 3. My spouse is a major disappointment.
 4. We are incompatible and have irreconcilable differences. I want some peace. 5:9
 5. This relationship is too difficult.
 6. My marriage is too constraining. I need my freedom.
 7. I didn't realize what I was getting into when I got married.
 8. We weren't married in a church.
 9. My spouse mistreats me. 1 Pet. 3:1-2
 10. I owe it to myself to be happy. God wouldn't want me to stay if I am unhappy.
 11. We are no longer "in love."
 12. I married the wrong person.
 13. All my friends tell me that I ought to leave him/her.
 14. God will forgive me. 1 John 2:3ff
 15. We're not getting a divorce. We're getting a legal separation or an annulment. 1 Cor. 7:3-5, 10 Mt. 19:6

- D. Be careful not to contribute to any divorce by your acts or counsel. Matt. 19:6
 - 1. Guard your marriage.
 - 2. Don't become involved with a married person.
 - 3. Don't give bad advice.

III. Can one be lawfully divorced and remarried?

- A. The problem of the exception. 5:32 19:9
 - 1. Divorce and remarriage are clearly forbidden in most situations.
 - 2. All divorce is a sinful violation of God's ideal; however, not all divorced persons are guilty of that sin.

- B. Divorce is permitted on the grounds of sexual promiscuity. 5:32 19:9
 - 1. Sexual unfaithfulness breaks the marriage covenant.
 - a. Under the Old Covenant, the adulterer would have been executed, thereby freeing the innocent party. Deut. 22:22
 - b. This is the ground on which God divorced Israel. Jer. 3:8
 - c. The words Jesus uses (*porneia*) encompasses adultery and other sexual sins.
 - 2. Even in this case divorce is merely permitted, not commanded. Hosea 2
 - a. Where there is repentance, forgiveness and restoration are preferable. Luke 17:3
 - b. The wronged party cannot be compelled to give up the right to divorce.

- C. The person who has been abandoned by an unbelieving spouse is also free. 1 Cor. 7:15-16 Rom. 12:18
 - 1. He or she is the victim of the other party's having severed the marriage covenant.
 - 2. The believer is no longer bound to fulfill the marital duties.
 - 3. What if a believer is abandoned by a professing Christian? Matt. 18:15-17

- D. Those who are lawfully divorced are free to remarry. 1 Cor. 7:27-28
 - 1. They are not under any obligation to remarry. 1 Cor. 7:27-28
 - 2. Usually it is best to wait.

- E. Other questions:
 - 1. Do these exceptions contradict Jesus' teaching against divorce?
 - a. The exceptions occur when the other party breaks the marriage covenant.
 - 2. Do these principles apply equally to men and women? Mark 10:2ff 1 Cor. 7:10ff
 - 3. Is separation ever an option? 1 Cor. 7:10, 5
 - 4. What if one has unlawfully divorced and not remarried? 1 Cor. 7:10-11
 - a. Those who are not lawfully divorced have no right to remarriage.
 - 5. What if one has unlawfully divorced and remarried?
 - a. It is too late to go back. Deut. 24:1-4
 - b. Confess your sin to God and to those whom you have hurt.
 - c. Live faithfully in the situation in which you find yourself. 1 Cor. 7:20, 24
 - 6. What is the role of government in marriage and divorce?
 - a. States which fail to allow divorce on biblical grounds harm the innocent party!
 - b. Laws (no fault divorce) which promote quick and easy divorce without fixing blame and protecting the innocent party are unjust and harmful to the family.

IV. Concluding applications.

- A. For the married: Don't rush out of marriage.**
 - 1. Divorce on unbiblical grounds will not allow you to escape anything!**
 - 2. Commit to working out your problems. No marriage is beyond repair.**
 - 3. Strive for God's ideal in your marriage. Eph. 5:22-33 1 Pet. 3:1-7 Prevention is better than the cure.**
- B. For the single: Don't rush into marriage.**
 - 1. Many make a bad choice which will bring years of sorrow.**
 - 2. Choose your love carefully! I Cor. 7:39 9:5 II Cor. 6:14 Prov. 31:30 Dt. 7:4-5**
- C. For those who have sinned: divorce is not the unforgivable sin. Mt. 12:31**

How to Change Your Husband. Eph. 5:22-24 I Pet. 3:1-6

I. Introduction and review.

- A. Christology is the key to understanding marriage. Eph. 5:32
- B. God's design for marriage is applicable at all times and in all cultures. Isa. 40:8

II. Is submission applicable today?

- A. Many are offended at the biblical teaching concerning the wife's role in marriage.
- B. Why do some professing Christians reject male headship in marriage?
 - 1. They say submission was merely cultural.
 - 2. They say female subordination was a result of the fall. Gen. 3:16
 - 3. They say submission denies our equality in Christ. Gal. 3:28
 - 4. They say we are supposed to equally submit to each other. Eph. 3:21
 - 5. They say submission demeans women.
- C. God has designed marriage to be a partnership in which the wife follows her husband's leadership. Ge. 2:18
 - 1. God ordained male headship from the beginning of creation. I Co. 11:8-9 I Ti. 2:13
 - 2. The fall reinforces the need for male headship. I Tim. 2:14 Gen. 3:16
 - 3. Submission does not imply inferiority. I Co. 11:3 I Pe. 3:7 Ga. 3:28 Luke 2:51
 - 4. God has established order in many relationships. Eph. 6:1,5 Ro. 13:1 Ti. 2:9 3:1 I Pe. 2:13,18 5:5 Heb. 13:17
 - 5. Many objections to submission often stem from an unbiblical concept of equality and significance. Matt. 20:25-28
 - 6. We do not have the right to redefine the gender roles God has established.

III. What is God's design for the wife's role?

- A. Submit to your husband as unto the Lord. Eph. 5:22 Titus 2:5 Col. 3:18 I Pe. 3:1,5
 - 1. Recognize that God has made your husband the head of the family.
 - 2. Follow your husband's leadership. I Pe. 3:6
 - 3. Don't usurp his headship. Gen. 3:16 4:7
 - 4. Your submission is to be comprehensive. Eph. 5:24
 - 5. Your attitude is as important as your actions: respectful and loyal. Pr. 12:4
 - 6. Love your husband. Titus 2:4.
 - 7. Your motive for submission is not your husband's worthiness, but the Lord's.
- B. Be his helper. Gen. 2:18
 - 1. Do everything you can to help your husband to succeed. Pr. 31:23
 - 2. Anticipate your husband's needs and desires.
 - 3. Use your influence over him for good, not evil. Pr. 31:11-12 Gen. 3:6 16:2
- C. Devote yourself to a home-centered ministry. Titus 2:3-5 I Ti. 5:14 Pr. 31:27
 - 1. Put your family ahead of any outside career.
 - 2. Help your husband by managing the home and raising the children.
 - 3. Does this mean your gifts will be suppressed?
 - 4. The calling of a homemaker is a high calling!
 - 5. A husband must work hard so his wife can be free to work in the home.
 - 6. This does not mean wives cannot make any economic contribution to the family. Pr. 31:16,24
 - 7. What should a wife do when her children are grown? Titus 2:3f Pr. 31:20

IV. Submission is God's tool by which you can change your husband. I Pet. 3:1-6

- A. Many women suffer under the authority of sinful husbands.**
 - 1. What if your husband is an unbeliever? I Co. 7:13**
 - 2. What if your husband is selfish and unkind?**
 - 3. What if your husband won't lead in a Christlike way?**

- B. What does Peter mean by saying you should win your husband "without a word"?**
 - 1. He does not mean women can never speak to their husbands.
In a good marriage a husband welcomes his wife's counsel. Pr. 31:11-12,23,26**
 - 2. When a husband makes it clear he doesn't want to hear his wife's admonition, she should not nag and criticize him.**
 - 3. Instead, win him by the attractiveness of your godly life. I Pet. 3:2-4**

- C. How can a wife do this?**
 - 1. Such quiet submission is the opposite of what the flesh tells you to do.**
 - 2. It takes faith to do what the Scripture says.**
 - 3. The key phrase "in the same way" (as Christ). I Pet. 3:1a 2:21-25**
 - 4. Entrust yourself to God. I Pet. 2:23 3:6b Jer. 17:5-8**
 - 5. The same principles can be applied to winning others in authority over us.**

- D. Submission is not absolute.**
 - 1. No husband has a right to tell his wife to sin or to go against her conscience.
Acts 5:29,1-11 Rom. 14:23 Heb. 10:25**
 - 2. Submission is voluntary. Men are never told to subjugate their wives.**
 - 3. Wives are not obligated to endure physical abuse, abandonment, or marital unfaithfulness. I Co. 7:15 Matt. 19:9**
 - 4. Wives do not give up their freedom to confront their husbands' sins using the process in Matthew 18:15f.**

V. Concluding applications.

- A. Wives: Don't let the serpent rob you of the blessings God has for you.**
- B. Single men: Choose a wife whom you can trust to do you good. Pr. 31:10-12,30**
- C. Single women: Prepare yourself for marriage by cultivating the qualities of a godly wife. Don't even think about marrying a man whose leadership you cannot follow for the rest of your life.**
- D. Husbands: Show respect to your wife. I Pet. 3:7 Be the kind of Christlike lover who is easy to follow. Eph. 5:24bf Encourage your wife. Pr. 31:28-31 19:14**
- E. Children: Honor your mother! Pr. 23:25 31:28b**

Discussion questions

- 1. How would you answer the objection that the biblical teaching on submission reflects the chauvinism of an ancient culture?**
- 2. What are some common misunderstandings people have about biblical submission?**
- 3. What does it mean for a wife to submit to her husband?**
- 4. What are some specific ways a wife can be a helper to her husband?**
- 5. Does the Bible teach women should work primarily in the home?**
- 6. What should a woman do if she is married to an unbeliever?**
- 7. How can a godly woman hope to change her husband?**
- 8. Under what circumstances must a wife refuse to obey her husband?**
- 9. What should a woman who is being abused do?**
- 10. What does this message have to say to single men? Single women? Husbands? Children?**

How to Change Your Wife. Eph. 5:25-30 I Pet. 3:7

I. Introduction and review: The buck stops here.

II. Husbands love your wives as Christ loves the church. Eph. 5:25-27

A. Love her unconditionally. v. 25a I Co. 13:4-7

1. The world has cheapened the meaning of love.
2. Your love is not dependent upon the worthiness of the beloved.
3. Christ loved you when you were not worthy to be loved. Eph. 2:1-3 Ro. 5:8,10
I John 4:10
4. Seek the good of your wife, whether she deserves it or not.
5. Christlike love (agape) is not merely a feeling or a passion. It is a commitment.
6. You are to be the initiator in love. I John 4:19
7. Christlike love comes from the heart.

B. Love her sacrificially. Eph. 5:25b

1. Christ's love is demonstrated on the Cross. Eph. 5:2 Ga. 2:20
2. Christ's love for the church is particular. John 10:11
3. Give up your life for your bride.
 - a. Paul is not merely saying you must be *willing* to give up your life.
 - b. Sacrifice your rights and interests for her good. Phil. 2:3f I Co. 7:33
4. Authority has been given to serve. John 13:3f Mark 10:45 Mt. 20:20-28

C. Love her with a purifying love. v. 26-27

1. Christ our Bridegroom is committed to making you holy. Eph. 1:4 Titus 2:14 John 17:19
Phil. 1:6 Col. 1:22 Rev. 19:7
2. Your love for your wife should make her more beautiful spiritually. II Co. 11:2
3. Do you have the courage to make biblical decisions which go against her preferences?
Gen. 3:6 16:2

III. Husbands, love your wives as your own bodies. v. 28-30

A. Love your wife as you love yourself. v. 28

1. You love her because you are united.
2. She is not just *like* a part of yourself. She *is* part of you. Gen. 2:23 .
 - a. Paul assumes every man loves himself unconditionally.
 - b. It is unnatural to abuse your own body. v. 29

B. Nourish your wife. v. 29b

1. Christ has provided richly for you! II Pe. 2:3-4 Eph. 1:7,9 2:5-6 3:6,12 4:11
2. Provide for her materially. Gen. 3:17ff I Tim. 5:8 Titus 2:3f
3. Meet her emotional needs. I Pet. 3:7 Js. 1:19a
4. Meet her spiritual needs.
5. Meet her sexual needs. I Co. 7:3-5 I Tim. 2:15 5:14 Ex. 21:10 Pr. 5:15-19

C. Cherish your wife. v. 29c

1. Understand her. I Pet. 3:7
2. Be patient and gentle with her. Col. 3:19
3. Treat her with respect. Pr. 31:11
4. Express appreciation and affection to her. Pr. 31:28b

D. If you mistreat your wife, your relationship with God will be affected. I Pe. 3:7b

E. Questions.

- 1. What should you do if your wife is hard to love?**
- 2. What should you do if you don't have loving feelings towards your wife?**

IV. Concluding applications. Love her and lead her!

A. Application to singles.

B. Application to husbands: How can anyone love like that? I John 4:19

Discussion questions for family worship

- 1. Why is it hard for husbands to lead these days?**
- 2. What doctrine must you understand if you want to be a good husband?**
- 3. What characteristics of Christ's love are husbands to imitate?**
- 4. What kinds of sacrifices should husbands make for their wives?**
- 5. What can a husband do to make his wife more holy?**
- 6. Why should a husband love his wife as his own body?**
- 7. What does it mean to nourish a wife?**
- 8. Husbands: Ask your wives these questions (From The Complete Husband, by Priolo)**
 - a. If you could change three things about me that would make me more Christ-like, what would you change?**
 - b. Do I have any annoying mannerisms or irritating idiosyncrasies that you would like to see me change?**
 - c. What do you want from me that I'm not giving you?**
 - d. What personal goals do you have for your life? How may I help you achieve them?**

Solving Marriage Problems: Conflict Resolution and Communication

I. Introduction: Communication Breakdown in the Family. Eph. 4:25-32

II. Conflict Resolution: Clean the Slate. (See *The Peacemaker*, by Ken Sande)

A. First, get the log out of your own eye. Mt. 7:1-5

1. The key to your relationship with each other is your relationship with God (and vice versa). I Pet. 3:7 Mt. 5:23-24
2. Focus upon your duties, rather than your rights: expectations! Js. 4:1-4
3. Seek forgiveness where you have wronged your spouse. Mt. 5:23-24 7:3-5 Prov. 28:13
 - a. Address everyone involved.
 - b. Avoid if, but, and maybe.
 - c. Admit specifically where you were wrong.
 - d. Acknowledge the hurt.
 - e. Accept the consequences.
 - f. Alter your behavior.
 - g. Ask for forgiveness.

B. Grant forgiveness when you have been wronged.

1. You have no choice! Mt. 6:14 18:21ff Eph. 4:32
2. Forgive as God has forgiven you: freely and unconditionally.
In what sense does god remember our sin no more? Jer. 31:34
3. The four promises of forgiveness.
 - a. I will not think about this incident. I Cor. 13:5 Jer. 31:34
 - b. I will not bring this incident up and use it against you.
 - c. I will not talk to others about this incident.
 - d. I will not allow this incident to stand between us or to hinder our relationship.

C. Keep short accounts.

1. Don't let the sun go down on your anger. Eph. 4:26-27
2. Beware of letting a root of bitterness spring up! Heb. 12:15

D. Learn to control anger. Pr. 29:11,20,22 25:28 15:1 Rom. 12:17-21 Eph. 4:31-32

1. Neither vent your anger, nor bottle it up. Attack the problem instead of people.
2. Learn self control. The legitimate use of "time-outs". Pr. 17:14 25:28
3. Understand the difference between righteous and unrighteous anger. Eph. 4:26
4. Deal with the heart of your anger. I Cor. 6:19-20 Rom. 12:17-21 14:19

E. Steps for confronting sin. Mt. 18:15-20

1. Overlook minor offenses. I Pet. 4:8 Pr. 19:11
2. Talk in private.
3. Take one or two others along.
4. Tell it to the church.
5. Treat him as an unbeliever.

III. Keys to Communication.

- #### **A. The goal of communication: love. Phil. 2:1-5 Rom. 15:2**

- B. Learn to listen in love. Js. 1:19
 - 1. God listens to you. Isa. 59:1
 - 2. Are you more concerned about being heard, or hearing? Phil. 2:1-5 I Pet. 3:7
 - 3. Develop good listening skills. I Cor. 13:4-7
 - 4. Learn to draw your spouse out. Pr. 20:5

- C. Learn to speak in love.
 - 1. God's ideal for marriage is intimacy and openness. Gen. 2:25
 - 2. Is total honesty always called for? Pr. 18:2 10:19 Eph. 4:29
 - 3. Learn to communicate on a deeper level.
 - 4. Use your speech to built up. Eph. 4:29 5:19 Pr. 16:21,24 10:11,21 31:26 Phil. 4:8
Do you know what style of communication best reaches your spouse?
 - 5. Timing can be important. Pr. 25:11 27:14 15:23

- D. Communication killers. "Circuit jammers" (Wayne Mack).
 - 1. Lies. Mt. 5:33-36 Eph. 4:25
 - 2. Busyness and distractions.
 - 3. Self-centered conversation: interrupting, monopolizing, hasty speech, unnecessary correction, boasting. Pr. 18:13, 18:2 10:18 20:20 27:2 Js. 1:19
Ecc. 5:2
 - 4. Destructive "unsafe" speech.
 - a. Angry, cruel, hurtful words. Mt. 5:21-22 Pr. 10:11 12:18 15:1,28 16:21,23-24
Js. 3:5-8 Eph. 4:29,31
 - b. Bullying, threatening and manipulating.
 - c. Nagging, negativity, grumbling, and public criticism. I Pet. 3:1-2 Pr. 25:24
harmful body language and other non-verbal communication. Pr. 6:12-15
10:10 16:30
 - 5. Refusal to communicate.
 - 6. Bitterness and dwelling on the past. I Co. 13:5

IV. Practical Ways to Build Up Your Communication.

- A. Set regular times in which you will give undivided attention to each other.
 - 1. Daily debriefing.
 - 2. Bi-weekly date.
 - 3. Semi-annual get away.

- B. Worship together.

- C. A communication exercise.
 - 1. First the husband explains the wife's point of view.
 - 2. Then the wife explains the husband's point of view. (Same rules)
 - 3. Then the wife responds to the husband.
 - 4. Then the husband responds to the wife.

- D. Set goals together.

- E. Have fun together.

- F. The same principles of communication and conflict resolution apply in other relationships: i.e. children.

- G. Test yourself. (Preparing for Marriage: page 71,74-76; Your Family God's Way: p. 130-132,161,175-176, 192-196, 225-226)

Solving Marriage Problems: When Husbands Won't Lead

I. Introduction. Pr. 18:17

II. Why don't husbands lead? I Th. 5:14

- A. Our feminist culture demeans patriarchy: emasculating men. Rom. 12:1-2
- B. Some husbands are non-Christians and are incapable of leading in a Christlike way. I Pet. 3:1f I Co. 7:12f
- C. Some Christian men are very immature or backslidden.
- D. Some men are very laid back by nature and abdicate leadership to their wives.
- E. Some men in mid-life become depressed, losing their idealism and drive. Ga. 6:9
- F. Some men are very selfish, living in their own world. II Tim. 3:2
- G. Some men are workaholics who neglect their families. I Tim. 6:9-10
- H. Some wives take over, refusing to be led. Gen. 3:16 4:7
- I. Some men are spiritually proud and sinfully domineering. I Pe. 3:1 2:18f

III. How can you help a husband who won't lead?

- A. He needs to be taught about his role as a Christlike servant-leader in the home. Eph. 5:25ff John 13:1ff
- B. He needs an example. Phil. 3:17 John 13:15 Heb. 13:7 I Co. 11:1
- C. He needs discipleship and accountability in specific areas.
- D. He needs the support of his wife. Gen. 2:18

IV. How can you help a wife whose husband won't lead?

- A. Offer hope. I Co. 10:13 Rom. 8:28 Gen. 50:20 I Pet. 3:5 Jer. 17:5-8 Phil. 4:4ff
- B. Build your personal relationship with God. Mt. 6:33 Psalm 1 42:1f Jer. 17:5-8
- C. Face up to your own sin and seek forgiveness. Mt. 7:1-5 Pr. 21:9 25:24 I Pe. 3:1-2
- D. Don't let your desire for a perfect marriage become idolatrous. Js. 4:1f
- E. Encourage any positive effort he makes in leading, and don't compare your husband to other men. I Co. 1:4f
- F. Resist bitterness by maintaining a constant attitude of grace and forgiveness. Eph. 4:32 Mt. 18:21f Heb. 12:15 Pr. 26:4 Ro. 12:17
- G. Strive to be his helper in every possible legitimate way. Gen. 2:18
- H. Treat him better than his sins deserve, overcoming evil with good. Ps. 103:10 Rom. 12:21 5:8-10 Mt. 5:38f Luke 6:35 Phil. 4:13 Isa. 40:28-31

I. Seek help from the church.

1. You can join a church, even if your husband won't. Heb. 13:17 10:25 Acts 5:29
2. Seek counsel from a godly older woman. Titus 2:3-5
3. You may appeal to the Elders, even if your husband doesn't want you to. Mt. 18:15f I Pe. 3:7

V. Counseling in specific situations.

A. How can you help a woman with a passive or neglectful husband?

1. You need to understand the challenges she faces.
2. Don't let her give in to bitterness. Heb. 12:15-17 I Co. 13:5 Eph. 4:31-32 I Pe 3:9 Js. 1:19-20
3. Teach her how to help a husband who is passive. I Pe. 3:1f
4. Teach her to appeal to him lovingly, specifically, and biblically.
5. If necessary, help her to go to church leaders. Mt. 18:16
6. Teach her to look to God to overcome loneliness. Ps. 42:1f Isa. 55:1-2 Mt. 26:37f II Tim. 4:14

B. How can you help a woman who has a non-Christian husband?

1. Understand how hard her life is.
2. Did she sinfully marry an unbeliever?
3. Teach her to deal wisely with conflicting standards.
4. Encourage her to strive to make the marriage work. I Co. 7:12-17
5. She must realize only God can change her husband. John 6:44 I Co. 7:16

C. How can you help a woman with a sinfully domineering husband?

1. Try to understand what her life is like. Rom. 12:15
2. Help her to overcome sinful fear. II Tim. 1:7 Pr. 29:25 3:5-6 Jer. 17:5-8
3. Help her to overcome his evil with God's good. Rom. 12:21 I Pe. 3:1f Pr. 15:1
4. Help her to confront the husband biblically. Mt. 18:15f Gal. 6:1
5. Be prepared to step in to protect the woman. Rom. 13:1 Pr. 27:12

VI. Some tough questions.

- A. When can/should a woman go to the church leaders?
- B. What if the husband and wife can't agree on where to go to church?
- C. What if the husband asks the wife to sign financial documents with which she disagrees?
- D. What should the wife do about the spiritual training of the children?
- E. When is divorce an option? I Cor. 7:15 Mt. 19:9

VII. Conclusion.

A. The amazing example of Abigail. I Sam. 25

B. Recommended resources

1. Women Helping Women, edited by Elyse Fitzpatrick and Carol Cornish
2. The Excellent Wife, by Martha Peace
3. Helper by Design, by Elyse Fitzpatrick
4. The Complete Husband, by Lou Priolo

Solving Marriage Problems: Using Financial Wisdom from Proverbs

I. Introduction and Review.

A. The theology of wealth.

1. God is the owner and source of all wealth. Pr. 8:21 10:22 Dt. 8:18 Ps. 50:10
2. God blesses the wise with wealth. Pr. 14:24 15:6 10:22 I Ti. 6:17
3. Are the wise (godly) always wealthy? Pr. 10:4

B. Money is important. Luke 16:11 I Ti. 5:8 Prov. 3:5-6

II. Maintain a balanced perspective on money. 30:8-9

A. Money can be good. I Ti. 6:10,17 4:4-5 Pr. 14:20 19:4,6 10:15 30:9 19:2 22:7 Ecc. 5:18

B. Money is dangerous. Pr. 16:16,8,19 19:1,22 10:2 22:1 28:6 15:16-17 23:4-5 22:2 28:6,11 11:4,28 30:8-9 Isa. 55:1-3 Rev. 3:17-18 Ecc. 4:8 6:2 Js. 1:9-11 Luke 16:19f 12:16f I Ti. 6:9-10 Mt. 13:22 Col. 3:5

C. Learn the secret of contentment. Pr. 10:3 13:25 25:16 Heb. 13:5-6 Phil. 4:11-12 I Ti. 6:6-8,17 Luke 3:14 Gen. 28:20 Mt. 6:11 Ps. 37:25 34:9-10 Mt. 6:11,33 Phil. 4:19 I Tim. 6:8 Your money problems are spiritual more than financial. Isa. 55:1-3

D. How can unbiblical beliefs about money affect a marriage?

III. Acquiring money.

A. Work hard and smart to make a living. Pr. 10:4-5 6:6-11 27:23-24

1. Wisdom's formula for success: Skill x effort = wealth. 10:4b 12:24 22:29 21:5
2. Sluggards suffer poverty and shame. 6:6-11 10:4a 24:30-32 26:14-15 22:13 20:4 15:19 13:4 16:26
3. Don't expect "easy money". 12:11 28:19 21:5
4. You may not be able to pursue your dream career. 28:19 14:23

B. Do not compromise your integrity to gain wealth. Pr. 10:2 13:11,23 15:6 16:8 20:21 28:20,22 20:10,23 21:6 11:1 16:11 22:16 20:14 11:24-26 James 5:1-6 Amos 8:4

1. God will destroy sinfully gained wealth. Pr. 13:11 20:17 22:16 15:27 28:8
2. Gambling is foolish. Pr. 12:11 28:19 21:5 30:9 13:11 20:21

C. Marriage problems.

1. What if the husband is a poor provider (or even a sluggard)? I Ti. 5:8 II Th. 3:10
2. Should the wife work outside the home? Titus 2:5 Eph. 5:29 Gen. 3:18-19
3. What if the wife is a sluggard at home?
4. What if one spouse has a gambling habit?

IV. Spending money.

A. Honor the Lord from your wealth. Pr. 3:9-10 19:17 28:27 14:21,31 21:13 22:9 11:25 Ex. 23:6,11 I Co. 16:2 Mt. 12:44 6:1-4 Heb. 13:16 Phil. 4:18 II Co. 9:7,10 8:8

B. Control your expenditures.

1. Plan your outgo (make a budget). 21:5 24:3-4 Luke 14:28-29
2. Don't make impulsive purchases. 14:15 22:3
3. Don't live beyond your means. 21:17 23:20-21 25:16
4. Test your motives for spending money. Ecc. 2:1f

C. Stay out of debt. Debt is folly!

1. Debt produces bondage to men. 22:7 Deut. 28:44,12 15:6
2. Debt presumes upon the future. 16:9 19:21
3. Pay your obligations promptly. 3:27-28
4. What you can spend is determined by what you have, not your credit limit.
5. If you can't control your use of credit cards, tear them up. Mt. 5:29
6. Is it legitimate to borrow to buy a home? 24:27
7. Never make yourself liable for someone else's debt (co-signing)! 6:1-5 22:26-27 17:18 11:15 20:16
8. Is bankruptcy biblical? 3:27-28 Ps. 37:21

D. Marriage problems.

1. What should be done if a couple is deeply in debt with out of control spending?
2. How would you advise a couple which is 'upside down' on their house?
3. What should be done when one spouse refuses to make or keep a budget?
4. What should be done when one spouse continues to run up debt?
5. What should be done when a spouse secretly obtains and uses credit cards?
6. How can couples resolve their differences over questions of major purchases?
7. How can couples come to agreement about how generous to be to others?
8. What should a wife do if her husband does not want to give to the Lord's work?

V. Saving money.

A. Anticipate future expenses or financial crises. Pr. 6:8 30:25 13:11 28:20

B. Invest wisely.

1. Beware of "get rich quick" schemes. Pr. 13:11 28:19-20,22 15:27 27:12
2. Investment risk tends to increase with anticipated return.
3. Is it wrong to take interest from others? Pr. 28:8 Dt. 23:19-20 15:1-11 Mt. 25:27
4. Apply wisdom and seek godly counsel. Pr. 15:22 18:15 Ecc. 11:6

C. Leave an inheritance to your children. Pr. 13:22 19:14 20:21 II Co. 12:14

D. Marriage problems.

1. What if one spouse doesn't believe in insurance?
2. Should a husband and wife have separate finances?
3. How can the spender and the saver learn to work together?

VI. Concluding applications.

A. Make it your goal to be wise, not rich! 23:4-5 19:1 28:6,22 8:10-11 15:16-17 16:16 Ecc. 5:10, 15 Mt. 6:33 Heb. 13:5-6 Ps. 34:10

B. You can't take it with you. II Pet. 3:10-13 Ecc. 5:15 Mt. 6:19-21

C. Remember our Lord Jesus Christ who paid your debt. II Co. 8:9

Your Family Budget

Expenses:

Groceries	_____
Automobile (Payment, Insurance, Gas, Repairs)	_____
Housing (Rent, Mortgage, Repairs, Tax, Insurance)	_____
Utilities (Phone, Electricity, Water)	_____
Giving to the Lord's Work	_____
Education (Self or Children)	_____
Gifts (Birthday, Christmas, etc.)	_____
Entertainment (Eat Out, Movies, Vacation, etc.)	_____
Clothes	_____
Medical and Dental (Including Insurance)	_____
Debt Reduction	_____
Savings (Retirement, College, Major Purchases)	_____
Miscellaneous	_____
<u>Total Expenses</u>	_____

Income

Take Home Pay (After Taxes)	_____
Other Income (Investments, etc.)	_____
<u>Total Income</u>	_____

Assets

House	_____
Investments	_____
Others	_____
<u>Total Assets</u>	_____

Liabilities

Mortgage	_____
Credit Cards	_____
Personal and Family Loans	_____
Other	_____
<u>Total Liabilities</u>	_____

Solving Marriage Problems: Sex

I. Introduction: The Key to Sexual Purity. Pr. 4:23

II. God Created Sex. Gen. 2:24 1:27-28

A. Sex is part of God's perfect creation. Gen. 2:25

B. Why did God create sex?

1. An expression and enhancement of marital oneness. Gen. 2:24 4:1
2. God's chosen means to enable mankind to fill the earth. Gen 1:27-28 Ps. 127
3. For the enjoyment of husband and wife. Deut. 24:5 Pr. 5:18-19 Heb. 13:4
Song of Solomon 1:2,13-16 7:1-10 4:1-7 5:10-16

III. God's Design for Sex is Violated by any Expression Outside of the Marriage Covenant. Ecc. 7:29 Rom. 1:18-32

A. Adultery. Ex. 20:14 Mt. 19:9 I Cor. 6:16 Pr. 7:27 6:24-35 Gen. 39:9.

B. Fornication. I Cor. 6:9 Heb. 13:4

1. Taking the privileges of the marriage covenant without accepting the responsibilities.
2. Stealing from your future spouse and the future spouse of your partner in sin.
I Cor. 7:4
3. Sexual sin is not restricted to going "all of the way".
4. Those who are courting or engaged need to be especially careful! You are not married until the covenant has been formally established!
5. Premarital promiscuity can adversely affect your marriage. Num. 32:23

C. Homosexuality. Lev. 18:22 20:13 I Cor. 6:9 Ro. 1:26-27 Gen. 19:5 Ezek. 16:48-49 Jude 7
Dt. 22:5 I Tim. 1:10 II Pet. 2:6

D. Lust. Mt. 5:27-28 Job 31:1,9 Pr. 7:25 6:25 II Tim. 2:22

E. Other sexual sins: polygamy and bestiality. Mt. 19:5 Lev. 18:23 20:15-16 Ex. 22:19

F. Self-centered hedonism.

1. Even in marriage: sex can be misused: idolatry and perversion.
2. Wrong ideas about sex will damage your marriage.

G. God Brings Many Consequences to Sexual Sin. Num. 32:23 Pr. 6:25-25 5:10-14,21-23
7:22-27 Ps. 32:3-4 I Cor. 6:9-10

IV. How Can You Make Your Sexual Relationship in Marriage All that it Should Be?

A. Strive for God's ideals for your marriage.

1. Almost all "sexual problems" in marriage are merely symptoms of other problems.
2. You have entered into an unconditional lifelong covenant of commitment.
Ge. 2:18-25
3. The husband is the initiator in love, sacrificially giving himself to his wife.
Eph. 5:25-33 I Pet. 3:7
4. The wife joyfully accepts her role and submits to her husband's leadership.
Eph. 5:22-24 I Pet. 3:1-7
5. Both strive for open communication: listening and speaking in love. Ep. 4:29

- B. Think first of how to bring happiness and satisfaction to your spouse, rather than seeking self-gratification. Phil. 2:1-4 I Cor. 7:3-5**
1. You should be a servant to your spouse. God has given your sexuality primarily for his (or her) enjoyment.
 2. Understand the differences between male and female perspectives on sex.
 3. Make efforts to keep romance in your marriage.
 4. Keep learning! Intended for Pleasure, by Ed Wheat
- C. Avoid temptations which could threaten your fidelity to one another.**
1. God has given the marriage bed as a safeguard against temptation. I Cor. 7:5 Pr. 5:15-19 Song of Solomon 1:2
 2. Stay far away from any situation which could be tempting. Mt. 5:28-30 Pr. 5:1-23 6:23-35 7:1-27 Job 31:1 Don't trust yourself. Jer. 17:9 Pr. 14:12
 3. Maintain strict propriety in relationship with members of the opposite sex.
 4. Guard your heart. Pr. 4:23

V. Questions:

- A. Is it wrong to use birth control?**
1. God wants us to have children. Gen. 1:27-28 ps. 127
 2. I do not believe that we must have as many as possible.
 3. What about Onan? Gen. 38:6-10
 4. Certain methods of birth control are ruled out because they are abortive.
 5. Is it appropriate for one partner to be sterilized (after having children!)?
- B. What if one partner doesn't enjoy sex or feels guilty about having sex?**
- C. How often should a couple come together sexually? What is "normal"?**
- D. Are there restrictions on what a husband and wife may do together?**
1. There are some acts which are unnatural, harmful or immodest and therefore forbidden.
 2. Love demands that you never selfishly demand that your spouse do something she (or he) doesn't want to do. I Cor. 13:4-6
 3. Whatever you cannot do in faith, with a clear conscience, is sin. Rom. 14:23
- E. How should children be taught about sex?**
1. They are already getting a lot of information about sex from other sources.
 2. Part of your duty in training them is to teach them to see sex as god sees it. This includes the fact that they should have a sense that their parents enjoy each other!
 3. This involves practical warnings about the kinds of temptations which will come their way. Pr. 5 6 7
 4. Teach them how (and why) to resist temptation. (And keep them from temptation.) I Cor. 10:13
 5. The only "safe sex" is in marriage.

VI. Concluding Applications.

Parenting is More than a Formula: Part 1

I. Introduction: Parents are looking for a formula which will guarantee that their kids will turn out right.

- A. What formulas have people tried?
 1. Educational formulas: public schools, Christian schools, home schooling.
 2. Parenting formulas.
 3. Church-based formulas: Sunday School, AWANA, VBS, Summer Camps, Youth Groups, Family Integrated Church.
- B. Most of the formulas have some strengths.
- C. Each of the formulas has weaknesses and problems.
- D. Parents who have tried each of these formulas have experienced various results
 1. Proponents of each system can point to many examples of success.
 2. There are also examples of failure in each system – which often leads to the birth of the next system.
 3. Proponents of a given system will often blame all failure on user error – the parents didn't properly follow the directions.
- E. Many parents go from formula to formula looking for *the* answer.

II. Parents need to exercise discernment when examining child training formulas.

- A. We need to recognize the difference between plausibility and proof when considering various parenting formulas. Acts 17:11 Eph. 4:14 I Thess. 5:21
 1. Anecdotal stories do not prove that a formula works.
 2. Sometimes the Scripture quoted doesn't prove what the formula advocates claim.
 3. An advocate of a particular formula may sound very persuasive without actually proving that his formula is true and biblical.
 4. Contrary data may be ignored or explained away.
 5. Some of what is asserted is demonstrably false.
 6. I encourage you to be good Bereans when listening to me or anyone else who tries to tell you how to parent your kid.
- B. Many “Christian” approaches to parenting are legalistic.
 1. Legalism involves going beyond the Scriptures. II Tim. 3:16-17 Pr. 30:6
 2. It is very important to distinguish between what Scripture commands versus one of many possible ways to fulfill our responsibilities to God.
 3. The biblical commands concerning child training are quite basic. We as parents are then called to work out the specifics in our own situation.
 4. Some make their particular methodology “law”, while failing to acknowledge that other approaches are equally valid ways to fulfill biblical commands.
 5. Some believers impose their extra-biblical rules and preferences on others.
 6. Sometimes the extra-biblical rules (traditions) become more important than what Scripture actually teaches. Mark 7:8
 7. Some people actually claim divine revelation for their child training methods.
 8. What is not biblically mandated is a family choice.
 9. Extra-biblical formulas often fail to take into account legitimate differences between kids and between families.

III. Why do kids turn out the way they do? Three factors:

- A. Parents are responsible to raise their children properly. Eph. 6:4**
- 1. What the Bible says about parenting is pretty basic and simple. Eph. 6:4 Col. 3:21**
 - a. Discipline them. Pr. 13:24 22:15 23:13-14 29:15 Dt. 21:18-21**
 - b. Train them. Deut. 6:4ff Prov. 22:6 1:8 4:1 Gen. 18:19 Ex. 12:26ff 13:8,14**
 - c. Don't provoke them to anger. Col. 3:21**
 - 2. God blesses faithful parents. Prov. 23:13-14 29:17**
 - 3. If you neglect discipline you will contribute to your child's ruin and your own misery. Pr. 17:21,25 29:15b 19:13**
 - 4. Learn from Eli and David. I Sam. 2:12-17,22-25 3:13 4:11 2 Sam. 13 I Ki. 1:5-6**
 - 5. While parents have an influence on how their children turn out, they do not have control. The Bible does not teach parental determinism!**
- B. Children are responsible for the choices they make. Pr. 20:11 Ezek. 18:5-13**
- 1. Not all rebellion is the fault of the parents.**
 - 2. There are no "good kids". Ps. 51:1 Pr. 22:15**
 - 3. What was the difference between Cain and Abel? Gen. 4:1-9 Mark 7:18ff**
 - 4. God, like Cain, experienced rebellion in His child Israel. Jer. 2:30 5:3 7:28 Isa. 1:2**
 - 5. As our children enter adulthood, they are responsible to make their own life decisions. Prov. 1:21ff 20:11 Ezek. 18**
- C. God's sovereign grace is needed to save our kids.**
- 1. You can't save your kids! Eph. 2:1-3 Rom. 8:6-8**
 - 2. The LORD must give them life and draw them to Himself. John 3:1ff 6:37,44 Eph. 2:4ff**
 - 3. Sinful kids and sinful parents need grace.**
 - 4. The LORD works in mysterious ways.**

IV. Concluding summary: Part 1

- A. Does the Bible offer a surefire formula for success in parenting? Prov. 22:6**
- 1. Is Proverbs 22:6 an unconditional promise or a maxim?**
 - 2. Jesus warned that the gospel would divide families. Luke 12:51-53**
- B. There is no guarantee of success. We are dependent upon God's grace.**
- 1. None of us is a good enough parent to merit our child's salvation! Heb. 12:10**
 - 2. Our children are so sinful, they would reject perfect discipline. Ge. 8:21**

Parenting is More than a Formula: Part 2

I. The biggest problem with many parenting formulas is that they can become pharisaical.

- A. Those advocating certain formulas are often assuming (explicitly or implicitly) a form of “parental determinism” – the (unbiblical) belief that how well you follow their formula determines how your kids turn out.
1. Examples of parental determinism.
 2. Failure is blamed on failure to follow the formula (keep the law).
 3. They make strong hurtful statements, which cannot be substantiated from Scripture, about parents who “fail”.
 4. If outcomes are determined by being under the correct outward influences, then does God pass our parenting test? Ex. 4:22 Isa. 1:2 Gen. 4:6ff
 - a. Why did Cain rebel after God Himself admonished him?
 - b. Israel turns from Him.
 - c. Why did Judas betray Jesus after hearing His teaching and seeing His perfect life for three years?
- B. Parents who depend upon formulas can tend toward pharisaical pride, as if we can save our kids by our good works and faithfulness.
1. Parents are divided into successful winners and unsuccessful losers.
 2. Those who seem to be succeeding (winners) will be tempted to pharisaical pride.
 3. Those who are having problems with their kids (losers) will be tempted to anger or despair.
 4. When people have trouble with their kids, they are told it was because they didn’t follow the system carefully enough.
 5. We all are incapable of perfectly keeping the law. Even if there was a “formula”, we couldn’t follow it perfectly because we are all still struggling with our own sin.
 6. Parents afflicted with phariseeism go from one system (or guru) to another looking for the approach which will work. Ecc. 12:12
- C. Moralistic formulas can also create kids who are pharisees, with the outside of the cup looking clean, while the inside of the cup remains filthy. Mark 7:6,18-23
1. Children, like adults, are prone to self-righteousness, wanting to feel good about themselves by following an attainable man-made moral standard.
 2. There are many outwardly obedient, well-mannered, good-looking children who are still lost and may rebel once they become young adults.
 3. *Obedience which isn’t motivated by love for God and His grace is dangerous* (Fitzpatrick).
- D. Pharisaical parenting methodologies will sooner or later lead to a train wreck.

II. Parenting is not about following an extra-biblical man-made formula; it is about the gospel.

- A. Many parents are bearing an incredible burden of (false) guilt.
1. Fathers don’t measure up to what the books say about the perfect dad.
 2. Mothers are very susceptible to peer pressure and perfectionism.
 3. Many are in danger of giving up.

- B. The law alone will not lead to parenting success.**
1. Man-made rules may have the appearance of wisdom, but they will not produce holiness. Col. 2:23
 2. We cannot be saved or sanctified merely by the law.
 3. Nor can our kids be saved or sanctified merely through the law.
- C. Parents desperately need the gospel.**
1. Confess we can't do it.
 2. Repent of phariseeism.
 3. Seek grace for ourselves.
 4. Plead for your kids' souls.
- D. Our kids can only be saved by the work of God.**
1. They cannot be saved by our works or theirs.
 2. They need to understand that they are not good, which is why they need a Savior. II Co. 5:21,17 I Pe. 3:18 Phil. 3:9 John 15:5 Rom. 6:1ff
 3. While it is our duty to seek to be Christlike in our families, it is more important to confess that we fall very short of being Christlike so that we can point ourselves and our kids to our need for Christ.
 4. We need to teach our children the Bible in a way that goes beyond moralistic stories which focus on what we should be doing and instead focuses upon what God has done for us in redemption.
 5. God often saves and uses people from the most (humanly) unlikely backgrounds. Ezek. 18 II Tim. 1:5 Heb. 11:23-25
 6. God sometimes works through those who don't follow our formulas.
- E. God is at work in our lives through our parenting. II Co. 12:9-10 (from Dave Harvey audio)**
1. We often want to look upon parenting as a means to display our strength.
 2. God uses our parenting to display our weakness so that we might utterly depend upon His strength. *When I am weak, then I am strong.*
 3. Stop trying to manage others' perception of you and your kids. Instead be honest about your weaknesses.
 4. Parenting in weakness is used by God to drive us to seek healing and strength in Christ whose grace alone is sufficient. II Co. 12:9
- F. Parenting is about God more than you or your kids. (From Parenting Is Your Highest Calling and Eight Other Myths That Trap Us in Worry and Guilt, by Leslie Leyland Fields).**
1. Parenting is about fulfilling God's purposes, not our agenda. Mt. 22:37f 10:37-39
 2. Putting God first frees us to better love our children.
 3. God parents (us) for holiness, not happiness. Lev. 19:2 Heb. 12:14
 4. Parenting is more about people than a process.
 5. God calls us to be faithful, not "successful". Ezek. 2:3-4 3:7 Isa. 6:8ff
 6. We must rely upon God rather than formulas.
 7. Our ultimate hope must be in God, not our kids. Jer. 17:5-8

III. Conclusion

- A. Gospel parenting isn't just another formula.
- B. God is teaching us to graciously love our sinful children just as He loves us. Ro. 5:8

You Never Stop Being a Parent: Parenting Your Adult Children.

I. Introduction.

II. What can you do to prepare your children for adulthood?

- A. The goal of parenting is to make your children ready to live wisely (on their own).
Pr. 4:3-4 I Cor. 13:11
1. Childhood is meant to be a temporary state. Gen. 2:24
 2. It is the job of parents, not schools or churches to train children. Pr. 1:8-9
 3. You want them to learn to make wise choices on their own.
 4. Parents, be ready to lose control!
 5. Learn to relate to your children as adults. Col. 3:21 Phil. 2:3-4 Prov. 20:5
- B. What can you do to make your children ready to live on their own?
1. Teach them to fear God and to live for His glory. Pr. 1:7 3:7-8 Dt. 6:5 Mt. 22:37
 2. Teach them to put others ahead of themselves. Mt. 22:39 Phil. 2:3-4
 3. Prepare them to pursue a vocation so they can work hard to care for a family.
Prov. 6:5-11 24:30-34 26:12-16 12:11 13:11 22:29 10:4-5 28:19 14:23
 4. Teach them financial wisdom.
 - a. The value of saving (postponed gratification). Pr. 6:8 13:11
 - b. The importance of budgeting (planning). Pr. 21:5
 - c. The avoidance of debt. Pr. 22:7 6:1-5 Deut. 28:44
 - d. The prompt payment of financial obligations. Pr. 3:27-28 Dt. 24:14f Ps. 37:21
 - e. The blessedness of being generous. Pr. 3:9-10 11:25 19:17 22:9
 5. Teach them God's design for marriage (and sex). Prov. 5:1-23 6:20-35 7:1-27
 - a. Teach them biblical perspectives on manhood and womanhood. Pr. 31:10ff
 - b. Warn them against immorality. Prov. 2:16-19
 - c. Encourage them to get ready for marriage. I Cor. 7:9
 - d. The desire for marriage motivates the pursuit of maturity and responsibility.
 6. Teach them to choose their companions carefully. Pr. 1:10-19 13:20 22:24-25 23:20
I Cor. 15:33 Ps. 1:1
 7. Teach them to resist temptation. Pr. 29:25 2:12-15 20:1 31:4-5
- C. When is a child ready to leave home? I Cor. 13:11 See Al Mohler: *From Boy to Man - The Marks of Manhood.*
1. Spiritual maturity sufficient to lead a wife and children. I Pe. 3:7
 2. Personal maturity sufficient to be a responsible husband and father. Eph. 5:22ff
 3. Economic maturity sufficient to hold an adult job and handle money. Pr. 28:19f
 4. Physical maturity sufficient to work and protect a family. Prov. 6:6ff
 5. Sexual maturity sufficient to marry and fulfill God's purposes. II Ti. 2:22
 6. Moral maturity sufficient to lead as an example of righteousness.
 7. Ethical maturity sufficient to make responsible decisions.
 8. Worldview maturity sufficient to understand what is really important.
I Chr. 12:32 II Co. 10:5
 9. Relational maturity sufficient to understand and respect others. Phil. 2:3-4
 10. Social maturity sufficient to make a contribution to society. Mt. 5:13 Ro. 13:1ff
 11. Verbal maturity sufficient to communicate and articulate as a man.
Pr. 15:28,7 10:20-21 16:24 12:18 20:5 Js. 1:19
 12. Character maturity sufficient to demonstrate courage under fire. Pr. 29:25
 13. Biblical maturity sufficient to lead at some level in the church. I Pe. 4:10-11

D. Some children leave too soon.

E. What authority does a parent have over an adult child?

- 1. Parents must recognize that their relationship with their adult child is very different from what it was when the child was small. Eph. 6:1ff I Cor. 13:11**
- 2. One of the biggest mistakes made by Christian parents is to treat their young adult offspring as if they were still small children. Col. 3:21**
- 3. When your child is married, he/she is in a new family unit and no longer under your authority. Gen. 2:24**
- 4. Are single adults also free from parental authority? I Co. 9:5 7:39 13:11 Jo. 2:3ff Num. 32:11**

III. What do you do when your adult children come back home (or never leave)?

A. The phenomenon of the “twixter” (or boomerang kids/adultolescents).

B. What are valid reasons for an adult child to stay home?

- 1. A son may stay at home while he is completing his education, establishing his business, or saving for marriage. Pro. 10:4b**
- 2. A daughter may choose to stay under the protection of her parents prior to marriage. Gen. 2:24**
- 3. Some young adults are not physically or mentally able to take care of themselves.**
- 4. Children may stay at home in order to take care of aged or disabled parents or other family members. Ex. 20:12 Mt. 15:5-6 I Tim. 5:4**
- 5. Sometimes children move home because of extraordinary circumstances.**
- 6. Young adults should only be living at home if there is a clear goal.**

C. Some young people sinfully postpone the responsibilities of adulthood: vocation, marriage, and children.

- 1. They fail to establish a career by which they can provide for themselves. Prov. 6:5-11 12:11 28:19**
- 2. They expect others to take care of their financial needs. II Th. 3:10-13 I Tim. 5:8**
- 3. They are financially irresponsible. Pr. 22:7**
 - a. They only work enough to pay for their desired level of discretionary spending.**
 - b. They expect instant gratification.**
 - c. They get deeply into debt.**
- 4. They place a high value on relationships and entertainment. Pr. 14:23**
- 5. Instead of marrying and having a family, they indulge in uncommitted relationships and fornication. I Cor. 6:9-10 7:9 II Ti. 2:22**

D. Parents contribute to this problem.

- 1. They fail to prepare their children to be on their own. Proverbs 1:8**
- 2. Some refuse to let go of their kids. Gen. 2:24**
- 3. They inadvertently enable sinful behavior. Pr. 15:19 6:11 10:4 20:13 16:26**
- 4. They are afraid to take strong steps to deal with their kids. I Sam.2:22-25**
- 5. Some birds would benefit from being pushed out of the nest.**

E. What are the challenges of having an adult child living with his parents?

- 1. The child wants to be treated as an adult, yet he is still dependent upon his parents.**
- 2. Parents often have a hard time looking upon their child as an adult.**
- 3. Being under your roof subjects them to your rules.**
- 4. The rules should be reasonable and you should recognize their adulthood.**

- F. What can parents do to help their twixters grow up?**
1. Encourage maturity. I Co. 4:20
 2. Be willing to make tough choices for the good of your children.
 3. If they continue to act like children, they must be treated like children.
 4. Make your expectations clear, along with the consequences.
 5. You may need to seek their forgiveness for having spoiled them.
 6. Their return to your home may be one last hope for you to train them. Pr. 19:18
 7. Do what you can to show you love them without compromising your standards.
- G. What should be expected of an adult child living at home?**
1. Expect them to take financial responsibility. II Thess. 3:6-12
 2. Don't allow them to be lazy while living under your roof. Eph. 4:28 Pr. 10:1,4-5
 3. Demand sexual purity. Heb. 13:4
 4. Do not tolerate substance abuse. I Th. 5:7 Pr. 23:20,30-31
 5. Make them pay a price for irresponsibility. Pr. 26:3
 6. Be willing to kick them out.

IV. What do you do when your adult children get into trouble (substance abuse, debt, crime)?

- A. Whose fault is it when adult kids go bad?**
1. Parents are responsible to raise their children in the discipline and admonition of the Lord. Pr. 22:6 23:13-14 29:15,17 I Sam. 2:12ff
 2. Children are responsible for the choices they make. Pr. 20:11,20 30:11,17 Ezek. 18:5-13 Isa. 1:2 Jer. 2:30 Eph. 6:2
 3. You are dependent upon God's sovereign grace for the souls of your children. Lu. 12:51-53 Gen. 4:1-9 Ps. 51:5 Eph. 2:1ff John 6:44
- B. Adult children often look to their parents to bail them out.**
1. They can be very charming, persuasive, and manipulative.
 2. Parents are often motivated by fear and guilt. Pr. 29:25
 3. Cry out to God for help and wisdom. Js. 1:5
 4. Seek godly counsel. Pr. 11:14
 5. Face the fact that your child may not be converted. Jo. 14:15 I Jo. 2:3ff Mt. 7:20
 6. Learn to distinguish between worldly sorrow and true repentance. II Co. 7:10
- C. Don't enable a sinful lifestyle. I Sam. 2:12-17,22-25 3:13 4:11**
1. If you feel guilty about how you raised your child, confess your sin to God, your child, and your spouse; but don't compound your guilt by financing more sin.
 2. You may be circumventing the very consequences God has designed to bring sinners to repentance. Luke 15:13ff Pr. 16:26 19:15
 3. Many wayward children have an entitlement mentality. II Thess. 3:10 Pr. 10:4
 4. Don't buy into the world's lies which excuse sinful behavior: the disease model.
- D. Help should be offered wisely and lovingly.**
1. Express love to your child and offer godly counsel. Pr. 1:8ff
 2. If your child wants your money and not your counsel, you probably should give him neither. Mt. 7:6 Pr. 1:7
 3. Offer help which addresses your child's root problems. Pr. 4:23 Mark 7:21ff
 4. Establish expectations as a condition for your assistance. Pr. 13:20 20:1,20 6:6ff 10:5 I Th. 5:7 I Co. 15:33

5. Does this somehow violate their adult status? Pr. 26:3 I Co. 13:11
 6. If conditions are not met, you must stand your ground, even if this means kicking the child out.
 7. What help can you offer a non-Christian child?
- E. What should you do about an incorrigible child? Deut. 21:18-21 Pr. 19:18 29:1
1. Recognize that there is such a thing as an incorrigible child.
 2. You should be concerned about the effect he/she will have upon others.
I Co. 15:33
 3. You must be prepared to take drastic measures.
 4. You must allow them to experience the full consequences of their sinful actions.
I Pe. 2:14 Rom. 13:1-7 Pr. 19:15,18
 5. God sometimes uses hardship to bring a child to repentance. Luke 15:18,21

V. When should you give financial help to your grown children? (Part 2)

- A. Should parents pay for their children's college education?
- B. Is it good to transfer wealth from one generation to another?
1. There is biblical basis for leaving an inheritance. Pr. 13:22 19:14 Nu. 26:53 32:18
I Ki. 21:3f II Co. 12:14
 2. A suddenly gained inheritance may be squandered. Pr. 20:21 Luke 12:15ff
 3. You may be able to offer crucial help to your grown children: an inheritance before you die.
 4. You may be able to help bring the family together for special events.
 5. You offer them a better spiritual inheritance. Eph. 1:11 Heb. 9:15
- C. Money matters are very dangerous to family relationships. Pr. 22:7
1. Just because you can afford to "help" them doesn't mean you really would be doing them any good.
 2. Sometimes it is appropriate to establish conditions for financial help.
 3. Generally it is better not to attach strings.
 4. Lending money among family members tends to generate stress and conflict.
 5. Must you treat each child equally?
 6. Your attempts at generosity may actually harm relationships.

VI. What is your role as your adult children approach courtship and marriage?

- A. Ideally you will have significant positive involvement in your child's courtship.
Gen. 2:24 I Co. 7:36-38(?) Ex. 22:16-17 Dt. 22:13-21
1. Ideally, both sets of parents will be actively involved in the courtship.
 2. Children are wise to seek and heed parental wisdom. Pr. 31:30 3:5-6 Jer. 17:9
 3. Ideally, all will agree as to the choice of a spouse, the timing of the wedding, etc.
 4. We don't always receive what is ideal in life.
 5. Give your dreams to God.
- B. What authority do parents have in their children's choice of a spouse?
1. If you don't have your child's trust (heart) you will have relatively little influence on their choice of a spouse.
 2. Parents do not have the right to impose marriage on their child. I Co. 7:39
 3. Parents must be careful not to provoke their children to anger. Col. 3:21
 4. Some young people marry just to escape tyrannical parental authority.
 5. Under what circumstances may a child go against parental wishes when marrying?

- C. What should you do if your children make romantic choices which you believe to be less than ideal?**
1. What if:
 - a. Your child marries a professing Christian against your will?
 - b. Your child marries an unbeliever? II Co. 6:14 I Cor. 9:5 7:39,16 I Ki. 11:4
 - c. Your child lives with someone out of wedlock? Heb. 13:4
 - d. Your child is a practicing homosexual?
 2. Some would say that you should shun a disobedient adult child.
 3. You are to pursue peace. Build the relationship, so far as possible. Rom. 12:18ff
 4. You are free to love people who have sinned against you. Gen. 45 Mt. 5:43ff
 5. The limitation is that you cannot participate in sin. Rom. 14:23
 6. Be sure that you are limiting because of conscience; not anger, bitterness, or a desire to control. Eph. 4:26-27
- D. How can you be an in-law without becoming an outlaw?**
1. How does your relationship with your child change?
 2. What kind of relationship should you expect with your child's spouse?
 3. Be careful to respect the integrity of this new family unit. Genesis 2:24
 4. Be ready to overlook offenses and slights which may occur. I Pe. 4:8 Ro. 12:18ff
 5. What should you do if your child's spouse tries to shut you out? Mt. 7:5
 6. Pursue peace.
 - a. Avoid unbiblical responses of attacking or fleeing.
 - b. Get the beam out of your own eye. Mt. 7:1ff
 - c. Gently restore. Gal. 6:1-2
 - d. The PAUSE principle.
 - (1) Prepare for peacemaking
 - (2) Affirm relationships. Phil. 4:1-2
 - (3) Understand interests. Phil. 2:3-4
 - (4) Search for creative solutions. Dan. 1
 - (5) Evaluate options objectively.
 7. What should you do when you see your child is in a terrible marriage? Mt. 19:6
- E. How should you respond if your adult child is going through a divorce?**
1. You need to evaluate the divorce based upon biblical grounds.
 2. You need to stand up for what God's Word says is right, even if this means standing against your own child.
- F. What if your adult child remains single?**
1. Be careful not to push him/her too hard towards marriage.
 2. Recognize he/she may have the gift of singleness. I Co. 7:1,8,32-33
 3. Help him/her to get ready for marriage.

VII. What is your role with your grandchildren?

- A. Grandchildren are a blessing to grandparents. Dt. 4:25 Ps. 103:17 128:6 Pr. 17:6 Job 42:16**
- B. Grandparents are to be a blessing to their grandchildren.**
1. A spiritual heritage. Deut. 4:9 6:2 Ex. 10:2 II Tim. 1:5
 2. An earthly heritage. Pr. 13:22

- C. How can grandparents help their children and grandchildren?
 1. Counsel to parents.
 2. Positive relationship with and role model for grandchildren.
 3. Prayer.
 4. Childcare.

- D. What are some danger spots for grandparents?
 1. Don't show favoritism.
 2. Don't undermine parental authority. You must respect the right of the parents to raise their children according to their own conscience.
 3. When in doubt check with the parents before giving your grandchildren a gift.
 4. Can a grandparent spank a grandchild?
 5. What should parents do when the grandparents don't respect their rules for the kids?
 6. What spiritual influence can you have if the parents aren't believers?
 7. Both parents and grandparents should beware of selfishness.

- E. What should grandparents do when access to their grandchildren is restricted?

- F. Sometimes grandparents have to take over the parental role.
 Parental responsibility should be accompanied by parental authority.

VIII. What are the responsibilities of grown children to their parents?

- A. Even after leaving home, you are still to honor your parents. Ex. 20:12
 1. Seek your parents' counsel.
 2. Build your relationship with them. Ro. 12:18

- B. You are responsible to ensure that your parents' financial needs are met.
 I Ti. 5:4 Mt. 15:3-9 John 19:26-27

- C. You may wind up becoming their care-giver.

- D. Older parents need to be ready to accept the limitations of old age.

IX. Conclusion.

**Dealing with Rebellious Teens:
When “Good Kids” Make Bad Choices**

I. Review: Why do kids turn out the way they do?

II. How can parents prevent their kids from getting out of control?

- A. Discipline them while there is hope. (See Shepherding a Child’s Heart, by Ted Tripp and Withhold not Correction, by Bruce Ray) Eph. 6:4**
1. Why is discipline necessary? Gen. 8:21 Ps. 51:5 Prov. 22:15
 2. How should discipline be carried out? The Process.
 - a. You must be self-disciplined.
 - b. Teach principles of behavior from the Bible.
 - c. Don’t merely target behavior. Deal with the heart of sin. Pr.4:23 Mk. 7:20-23
 - d. Demand immediate and respectful obedience.
 - e. When the rules are broken take disciplinary action. Pr.22:15 29:15 13:24
 - f. Lovingly forgive and restore the relationship. I John 1:9
 - g. Point them to their need of redemption in Christ.
 3. Questions about discipline.
 - a. Why not use *time outs* and other methods favored by modern psychologists? Pr. 22:15 19:18 Col. 2:8-9
 - b. But I love my child too much to spank him/her. Pr. 23:13-14 13:24 19:18
 - c. Are there times when other forms of discipline should be used? Ex. 22:1
 - d. Is there a legitimate place for rewards for obedience? Eph. 6:2-3
 - e. What about kids diagnosed with ADD or ADHD?
 - f. What about disciplining older children (teens)?
 4. Discipline is hard work (love)! Heb. 12:6-9 Don’t lose heart.
You are disciplining them on the Lord's behalf.
- B. Train them in the Word. Dt. 6:4-9,20-25 Pr. 6:20-23 (See Age of Opportunity, by Paul Tripp, Rediscovering the Lost Treasure of Family Worship, by J. Marcellino)**
1. Parents are responsible for the education of their children. Prov. 6:20-23
 - a. The primary place of training is the home.
 - b. Children need to understand all of reality from the perspective of Scripture.
 - c. You are to prepare your children to live as God's people in the world.
 - d. You cannot delegate the education of your children to anyone else.
 - e. Make your family the primary influence in your child’s life.
 2. You must instruct your children. Deut. 6:4-9,20-25
 - a. The Word must first be on your heart! Deut. 6:4-6
 - b. Train them through formal teaching: Family Worship Deut. 6:7 II Ti. 3:15
 - c. Train your children through informal instruction. Deut. 6:9, 20-25
 - d. Prepare them for adult life.
 - e. Strive to build an intimate relationship with your children. Pr. 20:5
 3. Evangelize your children. Dt. 6:20-25
Incorporate the gospel into the way you train your children.
- C. Don’t provoke them to anger. Col 3:21 (See The Heart of Anger, by Lou Priolo)**
1. Overdiscipline I John 5:3
 - a. Unrealistic demands and expectations. I Th. 2:11 I Co. 13:11
 - b. Overprotection: Not letting children grow up. Luke 12:48 I Co. 13:11
 - c. Anger/harshness: verbal or physical abuse. Js. 1:19-20 Mt. 5:21-23
 - d. Humiliation and ridicule. Mt. 18:15a Eph. 4:29
 - e. Refusal to listen. Pr. 18:3,17 Eph. 4:25 Js. 1:19 Pr. 20:5 Deut 6:20
 - f. False accusations, faultfinding and negativity. Pr.19:11

- g. Failure to encourage and reward good behavior. Col. 3:21 Rev. 2-3 I Co. 1:1f
 - h. Failure to express unconditional and deep love. Ps. 103:13-14
 - 2. Underdiscipline. Prov. 19:18 I Sam. 3:13
 - a. Lack of boundaries and failure to enforce standards. Pr. 29:15
 - b. Threats not carried out.
 - c. Overindulgence and enabling sinful behavior.
 - d. A child-centered home.
 - 3. Using worldly methodologies instead of the Bible!
 - a. Behaviorism: Seeking to control behavior without addressing the heart.
 - b. Pharisaical works-based discipline.
 - c. Stressing self esteem. II Ti. 3:1-2.
 - d. Misplaced parental values and priorities: Idolatry. "Calling card".
 - 4. Other ways to frustrate and embitter your children: inconsistency, favoritism, comparison, hypocrisy, broken promises, lack of marital harmony, neglect, selfishness. Ge. 25:28 Mt. 5:23-24,37 Ps. 15:4 Col. 3:9 Eph. 5:22-33 II Sa. 14:28
- D. Can a man be a church leader if he is having trouble with his children? I Tim. 3:4
- 1. Must an elder's children be believers? Titus 1:6 1:9 3:8 II Tim. 2:2 I Tim. 1:12
 - 2. While a man can be expected to discipline his children, he cannot be held responsible for their election and regeneration.
 - 3. Is a man responsible for the actions of his adult children who are out of the home?

III. What should parents do when their children rebel? 19:18

- A. First deal with yourself.
- 1. Confess your own sinful failures. Pr. 13:24 23:13-14 Col. 3:21 Mt. 7:1f 5:23-24
 - 2. Recognize the sin of your child for what it is. Pr. 22:15a
 - 3. Seek godly counsel. Pr. 11:14 15:22 20:18
 - 4. Be prepared to face the reality that your child may not be a believer.
 - 5. Pray and fast. Only God can change a rebellious heart of a child (or a parent).
Matt. 17:21 Mark 9:29
- B. Take care of the rest of your family.
- 1. Be sure you and your spouse are united.
 - 2. Watch out for your other children.
- C. Mount a discipline offensive.
- 1. Be prepared to do some investigation.
 - 2. Remove bad influences from his life. Prov. 1:10f 13:20 Mt. 5:29-30 I Co. 15:33
 - 3. Establish clear and reasonable expectations.
 - a. Curfew. Pr. 2:13 7:9 I Thess. 5:7
 - b. Entertainment standards: TV, movies, music, computer (internet/games). Pr. 5:8 Rom. 13:14 Eph. 5:3
 - c. Manner of listening and speaking to parents. Pr. 19:26 20:20 30:17 Ex. 20:12
 - d. Church involvement. Pr. 8:1f Heb. 10:24-25
 - e. Treatment of siblings. Pr. 18:6 12:16 Phil. 2:3-4
 - f. Substance abuse. Pr. 23:29-35 20:1 Eph. 5:18
 - g. Work/school performance. (Not to remain idle.) Pr. 6:6-11
 - h. Contribution to family: chores, finances, etc. Pr. 10:5 Eph. 4:28
 - i. Participation in family activities (including family worship). Pr. 1:8 Dt. 6:7
 - j. Companions/use of phone. Pr. 13:20 14:7 22:24 I Co. 15:33
 - k. Dress code. Deut. 22:5

4. Define and enforce consequences. Pr. 23:13-14 19:18
5. Appeal to your child on a heart level. Pr. 22:15 2:2,10 3:1,3 4:23 6:21 11:20 14:14 19:3 28:26 1:7 Mark 7:21f
6. It may be wise to have your child examined by a physician to see if there are physiological elements which are complicating the situation.
7. Don't undermine your own efforts.
 - a. Both parents must be of one mind.
 - b. Don't make empty threats and don't allow yourself to be manipulated!

D. Mount a love offensive.

1. Make it clear that your love is unconditional. Mt. 5:44-45 I John 4:19
2. Find ways you can show love to your kids without compromising your standards.
3. Be ready to forgive.
4. Never give up!

IV. How can you handle incorrigible kids? Pr. 19:18 29:1 Dt. 21:18f Ex. 21:15 Le. 20:9

A. Beware of two extremes.

1. Giving up too soon because of personal hurt feelings, anger and bitterness.
2. Tolerating and enabling sin.

B. Under the Old Covenant, out of control (incorrigible) kids were put to death

Pr. 19:18 Dt. 21:18-21

1. Drastic measures were required to ensure the purity of the covenant community.
2. Principles which remain.
 - a. It is possible for a child to be incorrigible (out of control).
 - b. Children (minors) are held responsible for their sinful choices.
 - c. We are to be concerned about the corrupting influence of an incorrigible child upon the church (and the home).
 - d. We must be prepared to take drastic measures.
3. God finally reaches a point at which He deals with Israel this way. Jer. 3:8 7:28

C. New Covenant applications.

1. Apostates and rebels are no longer executed by the covenant community.
2. Bring them before the church leaders: excommunication. I Cor. 5:1f Mt. 18:15f
3. Bring them before the civil leaders: criminal penalties. Mt. 18:17
 - a. The magistrate doesn't always do his job.
 - b. Parents sometimes wrongfully circumvent the criminal consequences of their children's behavior.
4. Put them out of the house.
 - a. After they are legal adults you can kick them out and, if necessary, get a restraining order.
 - b. If they are still minors, you are still legally required to provide food, shelter, and housing.
 - c. You may, however, send them to a disciplined and controlled environment where they will receive food and shelter.
 - d. Do this in love, not anger. Rom. 12:18f

D. The goals of drastic measures.

1. Protection for those who remain: Pr. 1:10f I Co. 5:6
2. The Lord may even use this hardship, like church discipline, to drive your child to his senses. Pr. 3:11-12 I Co. 5:5

E. When can they come home?

- 1. Beware of being manipulated and becoming *enablers* of their sinful lifestyle.**
- 2. The child must be repentant. Luke 15:18,21 II Co. 7:10-11
Learn the difference between worldly sorrow and godly sorrow over sin.**
- 3. He/she must be willing to follow the house rules. (Written contracts)**

V. Concluding Applications.

A. Both parents and children are responsible. Prov. 23:13-16

B. There is hope for failed parents and rebellious kids. Luke 15:17-20

When Good Kids Make Bad Choices: Discussion Questions

- 1. What factors determine how kids turn out?**
- 2. What should parents do to prevent their children from rebelling?**
- 3. What should you do when you sense your child is rebelling?**
- 4. What investigation may be necessary in order to understand the scope of your problem?**
- 5. How can you know if your child is a Christian?**
- 6. What can you do to protect the rest of your family from the effects of a rebellious child?**
- 7. Who are some allies you can enlist to help you with your wayward child?**
- 8. How do you discipline a wayward child?**
- 9. How can you show love to a rebellious child?**
- 10. When is a child considered incorrigible?**
- 11. What can you do with an incorrigible child?**
- 12. When can you let a wayward child back into the home?**

Blessed?

- Psalm 127:2-5

- Psalm 139:13-16

First, You Cry

- Death of a dream
- God's punishment?
 - Romans 8:28
- Which one of us is God?
 - Jeremiah 29:11

What Is God Doing?

- Fix "deficits" or strengthen weaknesses?
 - Delight in differences
- Image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:27)
 - Born for relationship with god
 - Capable of glorifying him

Not A Walking Elephant

God Uses Challenges To Glorify Himself!

- Differences may result in unusual abilities
 - Even those whose function remains low glorify God
 - Each child will reflect God's character in a unique way

Training a Different Child

- "In his way" (Proverbs 22:6)
- He has a physical weakness
 - Work with, instead of against, natural tendencies
- He has a sinful nature
 - Don't neglect the heart

Your Own Temptations

- To make life easier for him
 - Making excuses for him
 - Overprotecting
 - "Mad Elephant!"
- To make life easier for you
 - Inconsistency
 - Cutting corners in discipline
 - Seeking to glorify self instead of God
 - Overly harsh discipline

“It’s OK—He Can’t Help It”

- Much harder for him
 - But God commands you to teach him to obey
- Not impossible for him
 - Help and support
 - Patience and consistency
 - Lots of prayer for grace!

Love The Way Jesus Loves

- Great sympathy and compassion
- Never tempted to tell people who need to change that they’re fine the way they are
- Never placed comfort, convenience, or reputation ahead of the Father’s glory

I Wanted A Miracle

- For me
- For Eric

The Apostle Paul Wanted A Miracle, Too

- For him
- For God

“My Grace Is Sufficient”

- 2 Corinthians 12:9
- 2 Corinthians 3:5
- 2 Corinthians 12:10
- Philippians 4:11-13

God Chooses The Weak, Foolish, and Despised

- To make them wise, righteous, holy, and redeemed by uniting them to Christ by faith (1 Corinthians 1:27-31)
- God gets the glory!

Knowing God's Will: Part 1 Deut. 29:29

I. Introduction. *The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law.*

II. How many wills does God have?

A. God's moral (revealed) will. Deut. 29:29b I Th. 4:3 5:18 Eph. 5:17 6:6 I Pe. 2:15 Heb. 13:21 I Jo. 2:17 Rom. 12:2 2:18 Col. 1:9 4:12 Mt. 7:21 12:50 Mark 3:35 John 4:34 7:17 Acts 13:22 I Tim. 2:4 Psalm 40:8

1. This aspect of God's will refers to His commands and His desires.
 - a. I Thess. 4:3 *For this is the will of God, your sanctification....*
 - b. I Pe. 2:15 *For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men.*
 - c. Mt. 7:21 *Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter.*
 - d. I Ti. 2:4 *He desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*
2. Where do we learn of God's moral will? II Tim. 3:16-17 Ps. 119:105 *Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.*
3. God's revelation in Scripture is complete and infallible. Heb. 1:1-2 Eph. 2:20
4. Anyone claiming new revelation must meet an exceedingly high standard. Deut. 13:1-5 18:18-22 II Pet. 1:20-21
 - a. What he predicts must come to pass perfectly in every detail.
 - b. What he says must be in perfect harmony with previous revelation (Scripture).
5. People who claim supernatural guidance are claiming new revelation from God.

B. God's sovereign will (His plan). Deut. 29:29a Eph. 1:11 Rom. 9:18-19,22 1:10 15:32 I Co. 1:1 4:19 12:18 II Ti. 1:1 Heb. 10:9 I Pet. 3:17 4:19 Gal. 1:4 Isa. 53:10 46:8-11 Acts 18:21 2:23 21:14 Js. 4:15 Ps. 33:11 Mt. 26:42 John 5:30 6:38-40 Col. 1:27 Prov. 16:9 19:21 Dan. 4:35 Acts 17:26

1. This aspect of God's will refers to His providentially working all things according to His perfect eternal purpose (decrees). Eph. 1:11 Romans 8:28 *Who works all things after the counsel of his will.*
 - a. God has planned and decreed all things from eternity past. Isa. 46:8-11
 - b. He works all things according to His will in the present. Ps. 33:11 *The counsel of the LORD stands forever. The plans of His heart from generation to generation.*
 - c. He does whatsoever He pleases. Ps. 115:3 *Our God is in the heavens; He does whatever He pleases.*
2. He is sovereign over any plans we make. Prov. 16:9 *The mind of man plans his way, but the LORD directs his steps.* I Cor. 4:19 *I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills...*
3. God's sovereign will allows and uses events which violate His moral will. Gen. 50:20 Is. 53:10 Acts 2:23 4:28 Luke 22:42 *As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good... This man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men...*
4. How can you know God's sovereign will?

C. We are to submit to every aspect of God's will. Mt. 6:10 Luke 22:42 John 4:34

1. We should desire to do His revealed will.
2. We should willingly embrace His sovereign will.
3. It is futile to resist Him. Ps. 2:9-10 Dan. 4:34-35

- D. Does the Bible teach that God has a hypothetical “perfect” will beyond His revealed precepts and sovereign plan?**
1. People express this as aiming for the center of God’s will: the bull’s eye.
 2. They claim those who miss the bull’s eye have to settle for plan B.
 3. The Bible does not teach that any such hypothetical will of God exists.
 4. God only has one plan: plan A. Romans 8:28
 5. What is the harm of seeking a hypothetical “perfect” will of God? (bull’s eye).
 - a. People waste time and effort pursuing something which doesn’t exist.
 - b. People neglect pursuit of God’s revealed will which is to guide their choices.
 - c. People live with false regrets about legitimate choices they have made in accordance with God’s moral and sovereign will.

III. Should we expect supernatural guidance?

- A. The desire for supernatural guidance is not limited to believers.**
1. Pagans also seek direction for the future.
 2. Mystical pursuit of God’s secret things is explicitly forbidden in Scripture. Deut. 18:9-12 Lev. 19:26-31 Isa. 47:33 II Ki. 17:16 Ezek. 21:21
 3. *Some Christians try to pursue God’s will in a way which resembles paganism.*
- B. In the Bible, supernatural guidance is unmistakable, authoritative, significant, and exceptional.**
1. When God reveals Himself, He leaves no doubt.
 2. God’s revelation comes with His full authority. Dt. 13:1-5 18:18-19 II Pet. 1:20-21
 3. God reveals Himself to key people at crucial points in the history of redemption.
 4. The main characters in the Bible ordinarily operated upon the revelation they had already been given, rather than constantly seeking special guidance. Acts 15:36 20:16 Phil. 2:25-26 II Cor. 2:12-13 Rom. 15:20-24 I Th. 3:1-2
 5. Now we have a complete Bible which equips us to make godly choices. II Pe. 1:3f
 6. We are never told to seek or expect mystical supernatural guidance.
- C. In what ways do Christians wrongly seek supernatural guidance?**
1. Putting out a fleece. Judges 6:36-40
 - a. Gideon had already received supernatural guidance and knew God’s moral will for his life. Judges 6:12-16
 - b. Gideon’s desire for a sign was due to lack of faith.
 - c. The sign asked for was supernatural, not merely coincidental.
 - d. Gideon’s act is never used in Scripture as an example for us to follow.
 2. Casting lots (rolling dice, flipping a coin). Acts 1:15-26 Pr. 18:18 16:33 He. 1:1-2
 - a. Peter knowingly fulfilled Scriptural prophecy. Ps. 69:25 109:8
 - b. Other apostles had been personally appointed by Jesus. Acts 1:2 Lu. 16:13
 - c. The field of candidates was narrowed from 120 to 2 using God’s revealed will. Acts 1:21b-22 I Cor. 15:5-9
 - d. This is the last recorded instance of guidance being sought in this way.
 - e. How did the apostles select church elders? I Tim. 3:1f Titus 1 Acts 14:23
 3. Asking for signs from God. Mt. 12:39 16:4 24:24 II Cor. 11:14
 - a. A wicked generation seeks a sign.
 - b. Satan can produce counterfeit miracles and lying signs.
 - c. We are never told to seek signs for guidance.

4. Open doors (circumstances). I Co. 16:8-9 II Cor. 2:12-13 Jonah 1:1-3 I Sa. 24:1f
 - a. Not all open doors should be entered.
 - b. Some open doors violate God's revealed will. Jonah 1:3 I Sam. 24:4-7
 - c. All circumstances/open doors must be evaluated in light of Scripture.
5. Dreams and visions. Ezek. 13:1-9 Daniel 2 Genesis 41
6. Relying upon feelings and impressions. Pr. 14:12 3:5-6 28:26 Jer. 17:9
Rom. 8:14-16 Gal. 5:18 Prov. 28:26 Eph. 4:22 Js. 1:14
 - a. Feelings and impressions are never identified as the leading of the Spirit.
 - b. Scripture tells us to mistrust our feelings. Pr. 14:12 28:26 Jer. 17:9
 - c. Even conscience may be defiled, seared, and evil. Titus 1:15 II Ti. 4:2
 - d. Should we ever pay attention to our feelings?
7. Using Scripture texts out of context, "lucky dipping". II Pe. 3:16-17 II Tim. 2:15

D. Some claim God speaks to them.

1. Amazingly, many cessationists (those who believe revelation has ceased) claim God gives them specific direction.
2. Does God speak to us in prayer?
3. If you claim God is speaking to you, you are claiming prophetic status and will be held to that standard. Deut. 13:1f 18:18f

E. Why is it wrong to seek mystical supernatural guidance? Deut. 29:29

1. We sinfully want a level of knowledge, certainty, and control over our decisions beyond what God offers us. Dt. 29:29 *Christian mysticism*.
2. We don't want to take responsibility for our decisions and their consequences.
3. We don't want to trust God for the unknown future.

F. What is the harm of seeking supernatural guidance?

1. Many claiming supernatural guidance have made unwise choices and have caused great harm to themselves and others.
2. People claiming supernatural guidance exercise great sway over others.
3. The guidance God offers in His infallible and all sufficient Word is neglected.
4. People put themselves under bondage, experiencing unnecessary anxiety and delay over simple decisions. Gen. 2:16-17
5. They fret over past decisions.

G. What about verses which speak of God guiding us? Js. 1:5 Prov. 3:5-6 Ps. 23 Eph. 5:17 Col. 1:9 Rom. 12:2

1. These verses are not speaking about mystical guidance.
2. He guides us through His revealed Word which tells us how to live.
3. He directs us through providence as we see His perfect plan unfold.

IV. Concluding applications.

- A. Don't be a Christian mystic.
- B. Look to the revelation God has given in His Word.
- C. Is there something you know to be God's will which you aren't obeying? Acts 17:30

Knowing God's Will: Part 2 Proverbs 3:5-6

I. Introduction and review.

- A. Review. Deut. 29:29 18:9-12
- B. Your attitude in decision-making is crucial. Ps. 37:4 Pr. 4:23 2:1-5 Mt. 22:37f 6:10 Luke 22:42 I Cor. 10:31 James 1:5

II. How does God guide you? Ps. 23 Prov. 3:5-6

- A. God guides you through His Word. Ps. 119:24 II Tim. 3:16-17 II Pe. 1:3 *Your testimonies are my delight. They are my counselors.*
 - 1. The Bible provides infallible and sufficient direction. II Tim. 3:16-17 II Pe. 1:3
 - 2. How can you use the Bible to help you make decisions? Psalm. 1:2
 - 3. Apply texts according to their meaning in context. II Tim. 2:15
- B. God guides you through wise counsel. Prov. 15:22 12:15 19:20 *Without consultation plans are frustrated, but with many counselors, they succeed...*
 - 1. Select your counselors carefully. Ps. 1:1 I Ki. 12:1f Col. 2:8 Heb. 13:17 Titus 2:3-5
 - 2. Why is counsel necessary? Pr. 28:26 27:6
 - 3. The job of a counselor is to help you to apply the Bible to your situation.
 - 4. Counsel should be weighted, not merely counted.
 - 5. Good Christian books can provide useful counsel. *Resources for Changing Lives.*
- C. God guides you through the Holy Spirit (The Counselor). Ro. 8:14 John 16:13 17:17 Eph. 1:13 *For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.*
 - 1. Nowhere is the leading of the Holy Spirit referred to as a feeling.
 - 2. The Spirit of Truth gives you understanding of God's Word: illumination. John 14:26 16:13 17:17 I Co. 2:12-14 Rom. 12:2 Col. 1:9
 - 3. The Spirit helps you to apply the Word to your life. Ezek. 36:27 Ro. 8:4,13 Js. 4:5 Gal. 5:16f Ps. 139:13-14 John 16:8
- D. How does God guide you through prayer? James 1:5
 - 1. Don't expect a mystical answer to prayer.
 - 2. Don't use prayer as an excuse for an irresponsible or selfish decision.
 - 3. Pray that God will give you wisdom to apply the Bible to your situation. Ps. 25:4-5 119:12,26,33,66,73,125 Prov. 2:1-11 Phil. 1:9-10 Col. 1:9-10 James 1:5 II Tim. 2:7 *Make me know your ways, O LORD; Teach me Your paths...*
 - 4. Pray that God will give you the desire and ability to do His moral will. Phil. 2:13
 - 5. Pray that God will give you the grace to embrace His sovereign will. Js. 4:13f
- E. Is there any sense in which God guides you through feelings? Rom. 5:1 II Cor. 2:13
 - 1. Feelings of peace or a lack of peace have causes which need to be understood.
 - 2. You may lack peace because deep down you know you are doing wrong.
 - 3. You may lack peace because you are very cautious or anxious by nature.
 - 4. Your desires may also influence your decisions. I Tim. 3:1 I Cor. 7:39 Ecc. 11:9
 - 5. All feelings must be tested against the Word of God.
- F. God guides you through providence (circumstances) which reveal His sovereign will. James 4:13-17 Acts 18:21 Prov. 16:9 27:1 Ro. 1:13 I Cor. 4:19 Mt. 6:10
 - 1. You make your plans and decisions, but the Lord controls the outcome. Pr. 16:9 *The mind of man plans his way, but the LORD directs his steps.*
 - 2. He opens and closes doors.
 - 3. Be careful not to mystically interpret all open and closed doors as signs from God.

III. Will you always receive clear guidance from God on every decision?

- A. Some decisions are based upon direct commands of Scripture. I Jo. 3:4 Js. 4:17
- B. Many decisions are not as clear-cut, and must be made according to wisdom.
1. The Bible does not give you a specific answer for every situation. For example:
 - a. Should I marry? Whom should I marry?
 - b. At what standard of living should I live?
 - c. How much should I give to the Lord's work? Through whom should I give?
 - d. Where should I live?
 - e. Which education should I pursue?
 - f. What vocation should I select?
 - g. Which church should I join?
 - h. Am I called to full-time ministry or missions work?
 - i. How should I divide my time among church, family, and work?
 2. Search the Scriptures to find principles of wisdom which apply.
 - a. Marriage. Genesis 2:18-25 Proverbs 31 Eph. 5:22f I Pet. 3:1-7 I Cor. 7:1f
 - b. Finances and giving. Ro. 13:8 Pr. 22:7 I Ti. 6:9f Lu. 14:28-29
 - c. Giving. II Cor. 8-9 I Cor. 16:1-2 I Tim. 6:17
 - d. Location. Heb. 13:17 I Tim. 5:8
 - e. Education and career. Pr. 22:29 12:11 I Cor. 15:33
 - f. Church. Heb. 13:17 I Tim. 3:1-7
 - g. Call to ministry. I Cor. 12:13 I Pet. 4:10-11 I Tim. 3:1f Titus 1:5f
 - h. Priorities. I Cor. 10:13
 3. Often there will be biblical principles which weigh on both sides of a decision.
 4. Questions to ask yourself.
 - a. What will bring the most glory to God? I Cor. 10:31
 - b. Are you motivated by a love of the world and the flesh, or by a love for God?
I John 2:15-17
 - c. Are you being sinfully expedient? Luke 14:27
 - d. What will show love to others? Phil. 2:3-4 I Cor. 10:33 Romans 15:1
 - e. Would this cause others to stumble? Rom. 14:15
 - f. What will contribute to your spiritual growth? I Cor. 6:12 *All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable...*
 - g. What will best fit your gifts and abilities? Acts 6:2-3
 - h. What would Jesus do? I Pet. 2:21 Rom. 15:7-8 John 13:15
 5. Sometimes it helps to make lists to weigh pros and cons.
- C. Once you have examined the biblical reasons, you are free to consider your desires.
I Cor. 7:39 I Tim. 3:1
1. Sometimes multiple choices will be within the realm of your freedom. Ge. 2:16-17
 2. You may choose according to your desire. I Cor. 7:39
- D. Once you make your decision, trust God for the outcome. James 4:13-17 I Cor. 4:19
1. It is good to plan and to be decisive. Pr. 21:5
 2. But God directs your steps and determines the result. Pr. 16:9 27:1 Js. 4:13-17
 3. Submit to His sovereign will as it is revealed to you. Acts 18:21 Ro. 1:13
- E. Rejoice as you look back upon His wonderful providence (leading) as He works out His plan for your life. Rom 8:28 Ge. 50:20

IV. Concluding summary.

Part III: Counseling Helps for the Biblical Counselor

Some of My Favorite Counseling Resources

I. Counseling Theory and Practice.

- A. Competent to Counsel, Jay Adams
- B. Christian Counselors Manual, Jay Adams
- C. Helps for Counselors: A mini-manual for Christian counseling, Jay Adams
- D. A Theology of Christian Counseling, Jay Adams
- E. Quick Scripture Reference Guide for Counseling, Kruis
- F. Counseling: How to Counsel Biblically, John MacArthur and Wayne Mack
- G. A Homework Manual for Biblical Living (Volumes 1-3), Wayne Mack

II. Family.

A. General Family.

1. Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage in the Bible, Jay Adams
2. Solving Marriage Problems, Jay Adams
3. Christian Living in the Home, Jay Adams
4. Strengthening Your Marriage, Wayne Mack (workbook)
5. Your Family God's Way, Wayne Mack (communication)
6. Rediscovering the Lost Treasure of Family Worship, Jerry Marcellino
7. Peacemaking for Families, Ken Sande
8. When Sinners Say "I Do", Dave Harvey

B. Singles and Pre-marriage.

1. Passion and Purity, Elizabeth Elliot
2. I Kissed Dating Goodbye, Joshua Harris
3. Preparing for Your Marriage God's Way, Wayne Mack (workbook)
4. Losing that Loving Feeling, Lou Priolo
5. Christian Courtship versus the Dating Game, Jim West
6. The Art of Choosing Your Love, Jim West
7. When Sinners Say "I Do", Dave Harvey

C. Husband.

1. The Complete Husband, Lou Priolo
2. The Exemplary Husband, Stuart Scott

D. Wife.

1. Helper by Design, Elyse Fitzpatrick
2. What Do You Do When You're Abused by Your Husband, Needham and Pryde
3. The Excellent Wife, Martha Peace
4. Because He Loves Me, Elyse Fitzpatrick

E. Child Raising.

1. Gospel-Centered Parenting, Elyse Fitzpatrick
2. When "Good Kids" Make Bad Choices, Elyse Fitzpatrick, Jim Newheiser, and Laura Hendrickson
3. You Never Stop Being a Parent, Jim Newheiser and Elyse Fitzpatrick
4. Come Back Barbara, Miller (wayward children)
5. The Heart of Anger, Lou Priolo
6. Withhold not Correction, Bruce Ray
7. Age of Opportunity, Paul Tripp (teens)
8. Shepherding a Child's Heart, Ted Tripp

III. Other issues.

A. Lust.

1. **Every Man's Battle**, Arterburn and Stoeker
2. **Pure Freedom: Breaking the Addiction to Pornography**, Mike Cleveland
3. **Not Even a Hint**, Joshua Harris
4. **At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry**, Steve Gallagher
5. **A Biblical Guide to Counseling the Sexual Addict**, Steve Gallagher
6. **An Affair of the Mind**, Laurie Hall (psychological in many respects, but valuable because it explains the woman's perspective when her husband is immoral)

B. Addictions.

1. **The Useful Lie**, Playfair (drunkenness)
2. **Addictions, a Banquet in the Grave**, Ed Welch
3. **Crossroads Study Guide**, Ed Welch

C. Fear.

1. **The Fear Factor**, Wayne Mack
2. **When People are Big and God is Small**, by Ed Welch (fear of man)
3. **Trusting God**, Jerry Bridges

D. The Church.

1. **Stop Dating the Church**, Joshua Harris
2. **Life in the Father's House**, Wayne Mack and Dave Suavely
3. **To Be or Not To Be a Church Member**, Wayne Mack

E. Other.

1. **From Forgiven to Forgiving**, Jay Adams
2. **Right with God**, John Blanchard
3. **Because He Loves Me**, Elyse Fitzpatrick
4. **Comforts from the Cross**, Elyse Fitzpatrick
5. **Counsel from the Cross**, Elyse Fitzpatrick
6. **Idols of the Heart**, Elyse Fitzpatrick
7. **Love to Eat Hate to Eat**, Elyse Fitzpatrick
8. **Overcoming Fear, Worry and Anxiety**, Elyse Fitzpatrick.
9. **Women Helping Women**, Elyse Fitzpatrick
10. **Spiritual Depression: Its Causes and Its Cure**, Martyn Lloyd-Jones
11. **Anger and Stress Management God's Way**, Wayne Mack
12. **Down, But Not Out: How to get Up When Life Knocks You Down**, Wayne Mack
13. **God's Solutions to Life's Problems**, Wayne and Joshua Mack
14. **Repentance**, John C. Miller
15. **The Peacemaker**, Ken Sande (biblical conflict resolution by a man who is to lawyers what Jay Adams is to psychologists. He also has materials for children)
16. **The Christian Counselor's Medical Desk Reference**, Robert Smith
17. **Lost in the Middle: Midlife and the Grace of God**, Paul Tripp
18. **War of Words**, Paul Tripp
19. **Blame it on the Brain**, by Ed Welch (mind-body questions: ADD, Alzheimer's, depression, etc.)

IV. Shorter booklets and Tracts.

A. Peacemaker tracts and bookmarks.

B. Jay Adams:

1. Tracts: Worry, Substance Abuse, Fear, Marriage, Anger, Depression

2. Booklets: Christ and Your Problems, Godliness Through Discipline

C. CCEF Booklets: Resources for Changing Lives: Marriage, Pornography, Teens and Sex, Forgiveness, Domestic Abuse, Anger, Priorities, Desires, Depression, etc.

D. DayOne Booklets: “Living in A Fallen World” series

V. CDs/mp3s (especially valuable for those who won’t read a book).

(Approximately) 100 “Go to” Texts for Biblical Counseling

I. General principles:

- A. The Bible is infallible and sufficient for counseling. II Tim. 3:16-17
- B. Apply the gospel specifically to every problem. Phil. 4:12
- C. You and your counselee are totally dependent upon God for success. Jn. 15:5

II. Addressing various counseling problems.

A. Conflict resolution.

- 1. Pursue peace. Mt. 5:9
- 2. Listen carefully and listen to both sides. Prov. 18:13,17
- 3. First address your own sin. Mt. 7:3-5
- 4. Confront your erring brother in love. Gal. 6:1-2
- 5. Be prepared to follow the steps of church discipline. Mt. 18:15-20
- 6. Christians should not sue other Christians in secular courts. I Cor. 6:1f
- 7. Even if you do all you can to seek resolution, you may not succeed. Rom. 12:18

B. Anger.

- 1. Anger is murder. Mt. 5:21-22
- 2. The cause of conflict is sinful desire. Js. 4:1-6
- 3. An angry person is dangerous. Prov. 25:28

C. Revenge.

- 1. Don't take your own revenge. Trust God to do what is right. Rom. 12:19-21
- 2. Show love to your enemy. Mt. 5:43-48

D. Helping people who have been hurt by others (abused).

- 1. Bitterness is destructive. Heb. 12:15
- 2. Joseph trusted God and thereby forgave his abusers. Gen. 50:19-20

E. Communication.

- 1. The tongue is a fire. Js. 3:6f
- 2. Use your words to build up, not tear down. Don't always say whatever is on your mind. Eph. 4:29
- 3. Be slow to speak and quick to listen. Js. 1:19-20
- 4. Focus on understanding the other person rather than upon being understood. Phil. 2:3-4
- 5. A gentle answer turns away wrath. Prov. 15:1

F. Resisting temptation.

- 1. God's promise: you won't be tempted beyond what you are able. I Cor. 10:13
- 2. Joseph's example. Gen. 39:7-10

G. Lust.

- 1. Lust in the heart is adultery. Mt. 5:27-30
- 2. Flee lust. II Tim. 2:22
- 3. You are responsible for what you think about. Phil. 4:8-9 (also applies to fear, worry, depression, etc.)

H. Fear.

- 1. The fear of man brings a snare. Prov. 29:25
- 2. Trusting in people is idolatry and will ruin you. Jer. 17:5-8

- I. Worry.**
1. Trust God to meet your needs. Mt. 6:25-34
 2. Pray with thanksgiving. Phil. 4:6-7
- J. Depression.**
1. Are you depressed because of your sin? Ps. 32
 2. The key to overcoming depression is not a change in your circumstances, but an increase in your faith. Phil. 4:11-13
- K. Addictions.**
1. Addiction is seeking from some idol what God alone gives. Isa. 55:1-2
 2. The root problem is that some love pleasure more than they love God. II Ti. 3:4
 3. Substance abuse is sinful and destructive. Prov. 23:29-35
 4. "Co-dependents" make the addict their idol. Jer. 17:5-8
- L. Facing trials and calamity.**
1. God sovereignly works all things together for good. Rom. 8:28
 2. God uses trials in your sanctification. Js. 1:2f
 3. Nothing can separate you from God's love in Christ. Rom. 8:31-39
- M. Seeking forgiveness.**
1. From God. I Jn. 1:8-10
 2. From those you have wronged. Mt. 5:23-24
- N. Granting forgiveness.**
1. Forgive as you have been forgiven. Eph. 4:32
 2. The story of the unmerciful servant. Mt. 18:21-35
- O. Repentance.**
1. How can you tell if repentance is genuine? II Cor. 7:9-11
 2. An example of true repentance. Ps. 51
- P. Presenting the gospel.**
1. We are saved not by keeping the law, but by Christ's atoning death. Ro. 3:20-26
 2. Confess your sins. I Jn. 1:8-2:2
 3. The substitution of the Lamb of God for sinners. Isa. 53:4-6
 4. The thief on the cross as an example of salvation by grace. Lk. 23:39-43
 5. We are saved by grace alone through faith alone. Eph. 2:8-9
- Q. Assurance of salvation.**
1. If you truly believe in the Lord Jesus, you have been born of God. I Jn. 5:1
 2. If you are one of Christ's sheep, He keeps you safe. Jn. 10:28-29
 3. If you have no regard for God's commandments you are still lost. I Jn. 2:3-4
 4. If you have no love for the brethren, you have not been born of God. I Jn. 4:8-9
- R. Sanctification.**
1. The converted sinner is no longer to be labeled by his old deeds. I Cor. 6:9-11
 2. Consider your old nature dead and your new nature alive in Christ. Rom. 6:11
 3. The believer is a new person with a new nature. II Cor. 5:17
 4. God will work to sanctify you. Phil. 1:6
 5. You are responsible to put forth effort in your sanctification. Phil. 2:12-13
 6. Learn and apply the put off and put on dynamic. Eph. 4:22-24
 7. Christ saved us that we might do good works. Tit. 2:14

- S. **Church involvement.**
 - 1. **Regular attendance is mandatory. Heb. 10:25**
 - 2. **God wants you to commit (join), making yourself accountable to particular church leaders. Heb. 13:17**
 - 3. **Each of us is to serve. I Pet. 4:10-11**
 - 4. **Each of us is to give as God has prospered us. I Cor. 16:2**

- T. **Work and employment.**
 - 1. **God's design is that you work six days a week. Ex. 20:9**
 - 2. **Don't be a sluggard. Prov. 6:6-11**
 - 3. **If someone refuses to work, he should not eat. II Thess. 3:10**
 - 4. **Serve God through your vocation. Eph. 6:5-9**

- U. **Finances.**
 - 1. **Planning (budgeting) is wise. Prov. 21:5**
 - 2. **Acknowledge God's sovereignty over your finances. Js. 4:13-17**
 - 3. **God gives you the ability to earn. Deut. 8:18**
 - 4. **Avoid debt. Prov. 22:7**
 - 5. **Don't make an idol of money, but store up treasure in heaven. Mt. 6:19-21**
 - 6. **The love of money leads to every other evil behavior. I Tim. 6:10**
 - 7. **Be generous with those in need. I Tim. 6:17-19**
 - 8. **Giving to the Lord's work should be the first item in your budget. Prov. 3:9**
 - 9. **Pay your taxes. Mt. 22:17-21**

- V. **Decision Making/Knowing God's will.**
 - 1. **Wholeheartedly seek wisdom from God. Js. 1:5 (also see Prov. 1-9).**
 - 2. **Search for God's moral will in the Bible. II Tim. 3:16-17**
 - 3. **Seek godly counsel. Prov. 15:22**
 - 4. **You can't know God's secret will. Deut. 29:29**
 - 5. **Submit your plans to God's sovereign will. Prov. 16:9**
 - 6. **Trust God, that His way is best. Prov. 3:5-6**

- W. **Integrity.**
 - 1. **Simply tell the truth. Mt. 5:37**
 - 2. **Lying destroys relationships. Eph. 4:25**

III. Family issues.

- A. **Marriage is divinely instituted.**
 - 1. **God's design for marriage. Gen. 2:18-23**
 - 2. **God's directive for marriage. Gen. 2:24**

- B. **The role of the husband.**
 - 1. **Loving. Eph. 5:25-30**
 - 2. **Understanding. I Pet. 3:7**
 - 3. **Serving. Jn. 13:1f**

- C. **The role of the wife.**
 - 1. **Submission. Eph. 5:22-24**
 - 2. **Dealing with an unsaved husband. I Pet. 3:1-6 (see context 2:21-25)**

D. Sex.

1. All sex outside of marriage is wrong. Heb. 13:4 (also see Gen. 2:24)
2. God wants us to be fruitful (have kids). Gen. 1:28
3. Your sexuality belongs to your spouse. Don't deprive him/her. I Cor. 7:3-5
4. God wants married people to enjoy sex. Prov. 5:18-19 (also Song of Solomon)

E. Child training.

1. The duties of children. Eph. 6:1-3
2. The duties of parents. Eph. 6:4
3. The necessity of discipline. Prov. 19:18

F. Divorce.

1. God hates divorce. Mal. 2:16
2. What God has joined, let no man separate. Mt. 19:5-6
3. Adultery is a ground for divorce (the other person broke the covenant). Mt. 19:9
4. Abandonment by an unbeliever is a ground for divorce. I Cor. 7:15
5. Don't leave your unbelieving spouse or drive him/her away. I Cor. 7:12

Homework Assignments

Name: _____

Date: _____

Initials: _____

1. Review Gospel facts.
2. Personal devotions (ACTS, prayer, study)
3. Family devotions (reading, discussion, prayer)
4. Conference table (follow attached instructions)
 - a. Joint prayer.
 - b. Read Bible together (Ephesians 4:17-32).
 - c. Work on *Strengthening Your Marriage* (Mack).
 - d. Review day together.
 - e. Add to "log list".
5. Church life
 - a. Accountability
 - b. Worship
 - c. Teaching
 - d. Service
 - e. Fellowship
6. Ask forgiveness from: _____ for: _____
7. Review pamphlet on:
8. Read, memorize, and apply passage:
9. Complete Discovering Problem Patterns log.
10. Complete scheduling lists.
11. Do Put Off/Put On exercise.
12. Do Code of Conduct for children.
13. Write personal essay (childhood, courtship, testimony).
14. Bring spouse next time.
15. Bring elder/pastor next time.
16. Other:

The Use of Audio Resources in Counseling

by Jim Newheiser

How often has a counselee begun a session by saying, “I’m really sorry that I didn’t read my homework assignment, Pastor. I really meant to, but didn’t have time this week. You see, I’m not much of a reader.” As our TV/video/internet generation becomes less and less literate, counselors will be hearing more of this excuse. Most pastors and counselors are avid readers and may tend to overestimate what others can handle. While there are certainly benefits to teaching a counselee to be self-disciplined and to appreciate great books, these may not be the fundamental issues to be addressed. In my counseling ministry, I have found audios such as CDs and mp3s to be very effective homework assignments.

The Benefits of Using Audio Resources:

- 1. Audios Get Used.** I have found a much higher percentage of listening assignments get done, as opposed to reading assignments. Many counsees who do not have the discipline to sit down and read a book (or even a pamphlet) are quite happy to listen to a CD. Here in Southern California most people spend a large percentage of their time on the road. Few drive without some sort of audio playing. Once a CD gets into their car, I have found that some counsees will listen to the same message again and again. Others, such as homemakers and those who do manual labor, are able to listen while they work. Better to hear the Word proclaimed, than listening to three more hours of Rush Limbaugh!
- 2. Audios Benefit People with Particular Learning Styles.** When homeschooling our children, we noticed that each of our sons had a different way of understanding material. One was able to retain what he read while another best remembered what he had heard. Many of your counsees will be auditory learners.
- 3. Audios Save Time in Counseling Sessions.** Biblical counseling involves the same kind of instruction from the Word as preaching. Your limited time with the counselee can be used more effectively if on his own time he can listen to an mp3 containing your best instruction in a particular area. Then the session can be spent applying what he has heard to his particular situation and answering questions he may have.

How to Get Started Using Audios:

- 1. Build a Library of Audios Which Deal with the Most Common Counseling Problems.** In my “counseling box” I carry approximately 100 CDs on various topics and texts. Most of the audios are from my preaching ministry in our local church. A benefit of using your own CDs is that you are thoroughly familiar with their content. Also, you address the issue in the sermon in much the same way that you would in a private counseling session. If you haven’t preached on some common counseling subjects, this may help motivate you to address issues that would benefit many members in your congregation. I found that preaching through the Sermon on the Mount was tremendously beneficial for building up my library of counseling audios. Of course, it is also of great benefit to collect sermons from eminently gifted preachers and counselors to deal with particular subjects. The internet has made this very possible, and many times popular speakers will do conferences on the material found in their books and then post the audio on the web for free. The IBCD website has many counseling messages that you can download for free.
- 2. Prepare Homework Assignments to Go Along with the Audio.** It is not enough merely to get a counselee to listen to an mp3. Homework must be given so that the counselor can ensure that the purpose for the achievement has been achieved. I usually pass out study outlines along with the CD. In addition I am working at preparing a printed list of questions to go with each audio. At a minimum, the “Tape Listening Assignment Questionnaire” could be given from Wayne Mack’s [A Homework Manual for Biblical Counseling](#) (volume 1, page 173).

Conclusion: While audios are not a substitute for face-to-face counseling or being under the ministry of the Word, they can be a tremendous supplement. Before you give up on counsees who don’t do their reading assignments, try giving them some CDs to see if the Lord might use this means to apply His powerful and sufficient Word to their needs.



Institute for Biblical Counseling & Discipleship

Confidentiality Policy for IBCD (please read and sign)

The Board, Director and staff of the Institute for Biblical Counseling and Discipleship, hereinafter IBCD, understand that confidentiality is an important and vital aspect of the counseling relationship. To that end, IBCD and its representatives agree to carefully guard the information entrusted to them by counsees to the fullest extent possible.

Staff members and students participating in the IBCD program are expected to protect the information they receive in order to ensure the integrity of the counseling process and the privacy of the counsee. Should a counselor or student fail to protect said information, it may become necessary for them to be dismissed from service in the IBCD program.

Under certain circumstances, however, it may be necessary to reveal information obtained in the counseling process in order to uphold the principles of Scripture, the standards of Grace Bible Church of North County, and/or the laws of the state of California. **IBCD does not hold to the legal concepts of the priest/penitent, doctor/ patient, psychotherapist/patient or counselor/ counsee privileges.**

Situations wherein it may become necessary to reveal otherwise confidential information include, but are not limited to:

1. Where a counsee, although encouraged to renounce a particular sin refuses to do so, it may become necessary to seek the assistance of others in the church to encourage repentance and reconciliation in accordance with the Scriptures (cf. Proverbs 15:22, 24:11; Matthew 18:15-20). In said cases, only such information as is necessary to deal with that particular sin will be revealed. Further, said information will only be revealed to those Biblically required to be involved. To that end, it may become necessary to contact the pastor and/or other elders of a counsee's home church.
2. Counselors, uncertain as to how a particular issue should be addressed, may reveal necessary information to and seek assistance from another counselor or pastor.
3. Where a counsee threatens to harm himself/herself or another person, it may become necessary to notify the proper legal authorities, family members, pastor, intended victim or all of the above. If the counsee makes such threats in the context of a counseling session, the Counselor will, immediately upon receiving the information, consult with another IBCD Counselor and/or the Director, if such is available, who will work with them to assess the situation and assist in making the appropriate notifications, if necessary.
4. If a counselor is privy to evidence that abuse or some other crime has been or is about to be committed, it may be necessary to reveal such to the legal authorities.

5. IBCD recognizes that in the course of the loving discipline of their children, Christian parents may employ corporal punishment, in accordance with the teachings of Scripture and, in conformity with those Scriptures, IBCD supports a parent's right to do so. However, if in the course of counseling, the Counselor suspects that a minor child has been physically or sexually abused, the Counselor will immediately consult with another IBCD Counselor and/ or the Director who will assist in the assessment of the situation. If it is then suspected that abuse has occurred, **the legal authorities will be contacted immediately. If no other counselor is available and a child is in imminent danger of being abused, the Counselor will immediately contact the appropriate legal authorities without employing the above consultation process.**
6. Observers, including but not limited to, counseling students, may sit in on counseling sessions, either to assist in the counseling process or for training purposes.
7. **All observers and counselors agree to be bound by this confidentiality agreement and should they be found to be in violation of this agreement understand they face expulsion from the IBCD counseling program by the IBCD Director.**

I have read and understand the above Confidentiality Policy for IBCD and agree to be bound by its terms.

Dated: _____

Signed: _____



Institute for Biblical Counseling & Discipleship

Consent to Counseling (please read, initial, and sign)

Our Goal: The purpose of Biblical Counseling is to help you meet the challenges of life in a manner which is pleasing and honoring to the Lord Jesus Christ. Our counseling is offered free of charge as a ministry of Grace Bible Church of North County, a California non-profit corporation. Counselees are welcome to make a donation to the ministry; however, this is not a required condition for counseling. You have no obligation, express or implied, to pay fees for the counseling you receive through IBCD; however, donations are appreciated and will help ensure that the ministry continues. It costs us about \$65 for each hour of counseling.

Biblical Basis: Counseling received through IBCD is strictly religious in nature and is conducted under the authority and leadership of Grace Bible Church of North County. We believe that the Bible, consisting of the Old and New Testaments, provides thorough guidance and instruction for faith and life (cf. II Timothy 3:16-17, II Peter 1:3-4). Our counseling is based solely on the principles of Scripture and does not employ the teachings or methods of modern psychology or psychiatry.

Counselee Initials: _____

Other Professional Advice: If you have significant medical, legal, financial, or other technical questions, you should seek the advice of a competent, independent professional. Our counselors will cooperate with such advisors and will help you consider their counsel in the light of Biblical principles.

We urge our counselees to properly care for their physical bodies and to seek medical treatment for all physiological problems. Our counselors will assist you in responding to such problems in a godly manner, but our counsel is not intended to replace the services of a qualified physician in the treatment of organic problems.

Confidentiality: Confidentiality is an important part of the counseling process. As IBCD differs in some respects with traditional guidelines regarding confidentiality, we have developed a policy which specifically addresses this issue. Said policy is attached to, incorporated in and subject to the other provisions of this Consent to Counseling Agreement.

Conflict Resolution – Arbitration: On rare occasions, a conflict may develop between a counselor and a counselee. The Bible commands that Christians make every effort to live in peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian Church (cf. Matthew 18:15-20; I Corinthians 6:1-8), without involvement of the secular courts. Therefore, in order to ensure faithfulness to this Biblical principle, we require all counselees to agree that any claim or dispute arising under, out of, in connection with, or relating to, the counseling received

at IBCD or any dispute with a counselor thereof, or with the Grace Bible Church of North County, shall be settled by Biblically-based mediation and, if necessary, legally binding arbitration in accordance with the *Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation* of the Institute for Christian Conciliation (a copy of which is available on request).

The arbiters will be the elders of Grace Bible Church of North County. If one or more elders of Grace Bible Church of North County is a party to the dispute, then the three arbiters will be selected from the elders of churches in the Fellowship of Independent Reformed Evangelicals (nationwide), with each party to the dispute choosing one arbiter, and the two arbiters then selecting the third. It is expressly understood that, by consenting in advance to arbitration, the counselee is waiving his right to trial in the civil courts.

Counselee Initials:_____

Cancellation Policy: We do not charge for counseling, but we do charge if you do not show up for an appointment. We would appreciate a 24 hour notice to let us know you will not be able to make your appointment. **If that happens, we will not schedule you for another appointment until we receive a check for \$30.** The reason we must do this is that some of our counselors travel a long distance to get here. Their time is valuable and we want to be sure not to waste it. The simple way to avoid this problem is to call and change your appointment as soon as you know you will not be able to keep it. Thank you for your cooperation.

Counselee Initials:_____

Having clarified the principles and policies of our counseling ministry, we welcome the opportunity to minister to you in the name of Christ and to be used by Him as He helps you grow in spiritual maturity and prepares you for usefulness in His body. If you have any questions about these guidelines, please speak with your counselor. Your signature below indicates your informed consent to these guidelines.

Print Name:_____

Signature:_____

Date:_____

IBCD PERSONAL DATA INVENTORY

All information provided on this form will be kept confidential in the same manner as that disclosed during counseling sessions. Please see our Confidentiality Policy.

Today's Date: _____

Name: _____ Home Phone: (____) ____ - _____

Cell Phone: (____) ____ - _____ Email address: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: ____ Zip: _____

Sex: ____ Birth Date: _____ Age: _____

Marital Status: Single Married In a relationship

Separated Widowed Divorced

Referred here by: _____

Place of employment: _____

Work Phone: (____) ____ - _____

Highest Education Completed: _____ Year: _____

Degrees or certificates: _____

Other training: _____

HEALTH INFORMATION:

Rate your health (check): Very good Good Average Declining Poor

Weight changes recently: Lost Gained ____ (number of pounds)

List all important present or past illnesses or injuries or handicaps:

Date of last medical examination: _____

Report: _____

Physician's name and address: _____

Are you presently taking medication? Yes No

If yes, please list: _____

Have you ever been arrested? Yes No (We want to make sure that any serious incidents in your past have been dealt with in a biblical manner.) When? _____

State circumstances: _____

If the counselor believes that it would be helpful to see your social, psychiatric or medical reports, would you be willing to sign a release of information form?

Yes No

RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND:

Denominational preference: _____

Membership: _____

Church attendance per month (circle): 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10+

Church attended in childhood: _____ Baptized? Yes No

Religious background of spouse (if married): _____

Do you believe in God? Yes No Uncertain

Do you pray to God? Never Occasionally Often

Are you saved? Yes No I'm not sure what you mean

How frequently do you read the Bible? Never Occasionally Often

Do you have regular family devotions? Yes No

Explain any recent changes in your religious life: _____

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY INFORMATION:

Name of spouse: _____ Phone: (____) ____ - ____

Address (if different): _____

Occupation: _____ Business phone: (____) ____ - ____

Spouse's age: ____ Education (in years): ____ Religion: _____

Is your spouse willing to come for counseling? Yes No Uncertain

Have you ever been separated? Yes No When? _____

Has either of you ever filed for divorce? Yes No When? _____

Date of marriage: _____ Ages when married: Husband: ____ Wife: ____

How long did you know your spouse before marriage? _____

Length of dating with spouse: _____ Length of engagement: _____

Give brief information about any previous marriages: _____

Information about children:

PM*	Name	Age	Sex	Currently Living?	Education	Marital Status

*Check this column if child is by a previous marriage.

If you were reared by anyone other than your parents, briefly explain:

How many older siblings do you have? ____ brothers ____ sisters

How many younger siblings do you have? ____ brothers ____ sisters

Have there been any deaths in the family during the last year? Yes No

Who and when: _____

PERSONALITY INFORMATION:

Have you ever used drugs for other than medical purposes? Yes No

What: _____

When: _____

Have you ever had a severe emotional upset? Yes No

Explain: _____

Have you ever had any psychotherapy or counseling before? Yes No

If yes, list dates: _____

What was the outcome? _____

Circle any of the following words that best describe you now:

active ambitious self-confident persistent nervous hardworking impatient

impulsive moody often blue excitable imaginative calm serious easy-going

shy good-natured introvert extrovert likable leader quiet hard-boiled

submissive self-conscious lonely sensitive other _____

Have you ever had hallucinations? Yes No

Do you have problems sleeping? Yes No

How many hours of sleep do you average each night? _____

PASTORAL INFORMATION:

Pastor's Name: _____ Phone: (____) ____ - _____

Church Name: _____ Phone: (____) ____ - _____

Church Address: _____ Zip: _____

Do you give permission to consult with your pastor as deemed helpful by counselor?

Yes No

BRIEFLY ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

1. What is your problem? (What brings you here?)
2. What have you done about it?
3. What do you want us to do? (What are your expectations in coming here?)
4. What brings you here **at this time**?
5. Is there any other information we should know?



Institute for Biblical Counseling & Discipleship

Counseling Observation Information

Purpose:

IBCD Counseling Observation exists to better equip believers in the area of biblical counseling. For those pursuing NANC certification, it can be used to fulfill the required 10 hour observation of a NANC certified counselor. If it is not feasible for you to personally observe a counselor, another alternative is to use the observation videos which are available for purchase from NANC.

Costs:

Standard Cost:	\$200
Supporting Church Member or Individual Supporter:	\$100
Seminary Student:	\$50

Payment is required before you begin. Please make checks payable to IBCD.

Weekly Commitments:

1. Counseling case(s) that you are observing

New Cases: Once you have satisfactorily completed this application, you will be notified when a new case becomes available for you to observe from beginning to end. Cases typically last 8-12 weeks; however, some counselees only come for one or two sessions. If your case ends early, you will be given another case. You will be expected to sit quietly, unless called upon by the counselor to make a contribution (ie, open or close in prayer). You should take notes (using the observation form) recording the flow of the session, homework assigned and any questions or suggestions you may have for the counselor. Also, you will be expected to pray for the counselee(s) throughout the week. If you are seeking NANC Certification, it is important to be recording your hours on the Observation Log which can be obtained from www.NANC.org.

Weekly Calls: The IBCD office is very busy on Mondays with the scheduling and facilitating of appointments. Observation is primarily your responsibility. Once you are assigned a case, you make contact with the IBCD office every Monday (via phone or email) to see if your case is meeting and/or if there are new cases available. If, for some reason, you will not be able to observe that day you must let the IBCD office know so that the counselor can be notified.

Attire & Punctuality: We seek to maintain a professional atmosphere at IBCD, so please dress appropriately when you come on Mondays. Proper dress is business casual; no jeans, flip-flops, T-shirts or tank tops. Be sure to arrive five or ten minutes before the case is scheduled to start. The counselors do not usually allow students to walk into a session after it has started.

Continuation: If your case finishes and you would like to be assigned to another, you must let the IBCD office staff know. Students who have not completed their 10 hours will be given priority.

2. Weekly Observation Seminar

Time & Location: The class meets on Mondays at Grace Bible Church, 655 W. 11th Ave., Escondido from 6-7pm.

Attendance: You are expected to be at this meeting every week that your case is meeting. If your case is not meeting during a particular week, it is still highly recommended that you come to gain insight from hearing about the other cases.

By completing the following application, you are indicating that you have read the above commitments and agree to abide by them.

Recommended Resources:

During your preparation for counseling it is strongly recommended that you become familiar with the following resources that are often referred to counselees:

Adams, J. *From Forgiven to Forgiving*
Adams, J. *What Do You Do?* (pamphlet series)
Blanchard, J. *Right With God*
Kinneer, J. *How to Grow in Christ*
Mack, W. *A Homework Manual for Biblical Living #1 & #2*
Miller, J. *Repentance*



Institute for Biblical Counseling & Discipleship

Counseling Observation Application

Name _____ Date: _____

Home Phone # _____ Cell Phone # _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____

Home Church _____

Church Phone # _____ Pastor _____

Denomination _____

Are you a member? Yes No Years of membership _____

List ministries you are involved with in your church _____

How do you plan to use this training? _____

How did you hear about IBCD? _____

Are you seeking to be NANC certified? Yes No I don't know

Have you taken the Intro course from either IBCD or from another source? Yes No

If yes where and when ? _____

If you are not a member of Grace Bible Church, you must submit a letter of recommendation from your pastor along with this application.

Observer's Organizer



Observer _____ Counselor: _____

Case Name: _____ Session # ____ Date: _____

Flow of the case:

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Principles Observed:</u></p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Questions for the Counselor:</u></p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Homework Assigned:</u></p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Projections and their Basis:</u></p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p>



Institute for Biblical Counseling & Discipleship

Counseling Role Play Class

Prerequisite:

To participate in the Role Play Class, you must have completed the Basics of Biblical Counseling course or its equivalent. All are welcome to attend and observe the Role Play Class.

General Description:

Each student will counsel in a fictional situation for three sessions using the principles learned in the Basics course. The counselor will be given a PDI form before the session. The first session will emphasize data gathering, hope building, and a preliminary approach to the problem. Homework should be given. The second session should emphasize more in-depth instruction and application. The third session should seek to develop a plan for ongoing progress in the life of the counselee in the context of his local church. Each session should last approximately 45 minutes. After the “session” is over the class will discuss and critique the counselor’s approach. The sessions will be videotaped. “Counselees” should fill in a PDI before the 1st session.

How to Prepare:

Review your syllabus from the Basics course. Remember the 7 “I”s. Review The Christian Counselor’s Manual. Feel free to bring aids you would like to have in a real counseling situation: ie, Homework Manuals, mini-guides/references (Helps for Counselors, by Jay Adams or Quick Scripture Reference for Counseling, by Krus), tracts, etc. Review the evaluation sheet in advance to know what the director will be looking for. Between sessions do research so that you will come prepared.

Schedule:

Date and times will be arranged between director, “counselor”, and “counselee.” All observers are welcome.

Costs:

Standard Cost: \$ 100.00

Supporting Church Member,
Individual Supporter,
or Seminary Students: \$ 50.00

Counselor's Notes



Name _____ Date _____

Session Number _____

Evaluation of Homework

Agenda

Drift of Session

Homework

Evaluation of Session:

Plans:

Becoming a NANC Certified Counselor

I. Why pursue certification?

A. Valid reasons to be certified.

1. You will learn a lot through the process.
2. You will be made more effective as a counselor. Titus 2:3-5
3. You will learn to live a more holy life (by counseling yourself).
4. You will become part of a global network of biblical counselors.

B. Invalid reasons to be certified.

1. One does not need to be certified in order to be an excellent biblical counselor.
2. NANC certification is not recognized by the state and will not make you a licensed therapist.
3. It is not likely that you will be able to make a living doing biblical counseling.

C. Can you do it?

1. You do not need to be college educated or a great student.
2. Most can complete NANC certification in one year with determination and discipline.

II. What is NANC and how does IBCD relate to NANC?

A. What is NANC (The National Association of Nouthetic Counselors)? Ro. 15:14

1. NANC is a national training and certification organization for biblical counselors.
2. NANC has several recognized training centers throughout the country, including IBCD in Southern California.
3. IBCD assists people in the NANC training process.

B. NANC has different levels of certification.

1. Level 1 Member (lay counselor).
2. Level 2 Member (pastoral counselor).
3. Fellow: an experienced trainer and mentor.
4. Member of the Academy (Biblical Counseling Hall of Fame).

C. Before you start, be sure you are eligible for certification - doctrine, counseling philosophy, church oversight, character qualifications, etc.

III. How can you become NANC certified

A. Phase 1 - Training and observation.

1. Basics Course:

- a. Take a 30 hour Basic Training Course which covers the topics required by NANC.
- b. This course is offered live at least once a year through IBCD.
- c. Or you may watch Jim Newheiser's NANC Basic Training course, "The Basics of Biblical Counseling" on DVD.
- d. Or you may listen to Jim Newheiser's NANC introduction course audios.
 - (1) You can purchase a CD set
 - (2) You can download the mp3s for free from ibcd.org
- e. You do not need to register with IBCD, but when you fill out your NANC application indicate that you took the Basics of Biblical Counseling Course through IBCD with Dr. Jim Newheiser.

- 2. Required Reading:**
 - a. NANC requires 1000 pages of reading to be completed before one can take the exams (Phase 2). The list of books can be found on the NANC website, as well as a log for your reading.**
 - b. 300 of the 1000 pages are to be from a recommended theology text.**
- 3. Observation:**
 - a. You must observe at least ten hours of counseling (by a NANC certified counselor).**
 - b. If you live near a NANC Certified Counselor, this can be done live.**
 - c. The other option is to buy observation DVDs from NANC.**
 - d. Observers must complete an Observation Log which will be submitted with the NANC application packet.**

B. Phase 2 - Exams and Application.

- 1. Obtain an application packet from NANC's website (www.NANC.org).**
- 2. Take the NANC exams - theology and counseling (open book).**
 - a. Use a good systematic theology (i.e. Berkhof, Erickson, Grudem, Raymond, Hodge) to help with the theology exam.**
 - b. Use the key reading resources and your Basics Course notes to answer the questions on the counseling exams.**
 - c. Answers should be about a page in length.**
 - d. If any of your answers is inadequate, you will be given the opportunity to rewrite that part of the exam.**
 - e. Make a schedule for yourself and stick to it. Don't procrastinate!**
- 3. Make formal application to NANC, which includes obtaining recommendations from your pastor and those who will oversee your counseling ministry.**

C. Phase 3 - Supervised Counseling.

- 1. You are required to do 50 hours of counseling under the supervision of a NANC fellow within 1 year of the approval of your exams.**
 - a. NANC can provide you with a list of NANC fellows. You are responsible to contact them to see about their availability for your supervision.**
 - b. The fifty hours can be completed through a combination of supervised live counseling, through written reports, and through audio recordings.**
 - c. NANC requires that the supervisor either attend or listen to audio recordings of at least five sessions.**
 - d. The supervisor will meet with the trainee (in person or over the phone) periodically to discuss his/her cases.**
- 2. The tutorial is complete when fifty hours are complete and the mentor is satisfied that the trainee is ready.**
 - a. The mentor will then inform NANC which will complete paperwork and issue a certificate.**
 - b. New NANC members are publicly recognized at the annual conference in October.**

IV. If you live in Southern California, IBCD offers the following options:

A. Basics course:

1. You can come to our live training offered as a Pre-Conference at our Summer Institute (typically at the end of June).
 - a. Check the IBCD website for live training opportunities.
2. You still have the options to watch the DVDs or listen to the audios.

B. Observation:

1. You can come to IBCD to observe our counselors and attend our Observation Meeting to discuss the current cases.
2. See the “IBCD Counseling Observation Information” for more information.

C. Supervised Counseling:

1. If you have gone through our training (Basics Course and Observation) we may be able to assist you with the Supervised Counseling by having Jim Newheiser serve as your supervisor.
2. This would not mean that you would do your counseling at IBCD, just that Jim Newheiser could be the fellow who supervises you.

D. Role Play:

1. A supervised counseling Role Play is also available, should you wish to avail yourself of this training.
2. Successful completion of this training can enable you to counsel 1 or 2 cases at IBCD as part of your Supervised Counseling.
3. See “IBCD Counseling Role Play Class” for more information.



PURSUING EXCELLENCE IN BIBLICAL COUNSELING

Why should YOU consider NANC certification?

The rigors of NANC Certification help you to:

- “Present yourselves approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15).
- Increase your effectiveness in ministering God’s Word to hurting people.
- Grow spiritually by doing some reading, studying, and thinking that probably would not get done without some structure.
- Identify with others who are committed to the sufficiency of Christ and His Word in solving life's non-organic problems.
- Be part of a national referral network of biblical counselors.

Before You Begin

Before beginning the certification process read the following to confirm that your personal theological views and those of your church align with NANC’s views:

NANC’s Statement of Faith http://nanc.org/About_Us/Statement_Of_Faith.aspx

Theological Considerations (located in the menu on the right <http://nanc.org>)

Policies and Procedures http://nanc.org/About_Us/Policies_and_Procedures.aspx

Standards of Conduct http://nanc.org/About_Us/Standards_of_Conduct.aspx

If you have any questions please email Certification@NANC.org or call 317-337-9100

The Three Phases of NANC Certification

The NANC certification process can be confusing if you do not have a good understanding of what is required. This document is designed to help you gain that understanding. All of the documents mentioned below can be found on our website in the Application Packet. Keep this on hand as you work through the process to help ensure you meet the requirements. Applicants from certified M.A.B.C. programs should have received NANC procedures from your school. You can also contact the NANC office for guideline on how to proceed.

Phase 1 – Training

1. Complete the Basic Training Course which covers the topics required by NANC. This training is to take place through a NANC Certified Training Center (<http://nanc.org/Trainingcenters.aspx>) or by taking Fundamentals of Biblical Counseling at one of the Counseling and Discipleship Trainings. For a calendar of upcoming CDT's go to http://nanc.org/Conferences/Conference_Listing.aspx. Those that are open for registration are listed on the home page under NANC Events <http://nanc.org>.
2. Complete a minimum of 10 hours of counseling observation of a NANC certified counselor. This can be done in person or by purchasing the DVD sets available. You can find a list of certified counselors on the web page (<http://nanc.org/Directory.aspx>), or contact the NANC office to learn more about the video. Complete the Observation Log and submit it with your Application Packet.
3. A reading requirement of 1,000 pages from recommended reading list, 300 of which should be from theology text(s).

Phase 2 – Exams and Application

1. Obtain an Application Packet from the website at www.NANC.org.
2. Complete the NANC Theological and Counselor's exams. These are open-book, essay form exams. You can work on them at your own pace. Be sure to cite your references after each answer. Please write your answers as though you are explaining them to a counselee, defining all terms clearly and precisely.
3. Complete the remaining documents in the Application Packet. Each of these must be received in the NANC office before your exams can be sent to a grader.
4. Email your completed exams (in Microsoft Word format) to Certification@NANC.org, and mail your Application Packet to the NANC office with your \$75 application fee.
5. Once you have passed your exams and have been cleared by the NANC office, you will be free to contact a NANC Fellow and begin your supervision.

Phase 3 – Supervision Counseling

1. You are required to satisfactorily complete 50 hours of supervised counseling with a NANC Fellow during this phase. The 50 hours must be completed within one year of the date you passed your exams. At least 10 of these hours must be with the same counselee.
2. You will be given a list of NANC Fellows once you pass your exams. No hours will count toward supervision until you have received the letter stating you are cleared for supervision, by the NANC office.
3. Supervision is usually done via email and telephone. You will fill out the Case Report Form (in the Application Packet) for each counseling session and email it to your Fellow. You will then call at an appointed time to review your counseling case(s).
4. Case Report Forms will need to be submitted to your supervisor before your appointed phone call in order to allow sufficient time for your supervisor to review your cases.
 - *Your supervisor will also expect to listen to a minimum of 5 audio recordings of your counseling sessions (preferably, early in your counseling).*
 - *After you have completed 50 hours of counseling with which your supervisor is satisfied, he will notify the NANC office and submit a recommendation for membership.*

Membership

1. Once you have completed your Supervised Counseling, your supervisor will notify the NANC office and make a recommendation for membership.
2. You will pay your membership dues and sign a Membership Covenant.
3. Once we receive these, we will send you your official certificate (suitable for framing), and you will be added to the list of members on the NANC website.
4. You will be publicly recognized as a new NANC Member at the next Annual Conference.
5. As a NANC member you will receive discounts to NANC events and will be invited to a 'Members Only' reception at the Annual Conference.

For more information, including access to all the documents mentioned above, download our Application Packet.

1. You will be publicly recognized as a new NANC Member at the next Annual Conference.
2. As a NANC member you will receive discounts to NANC events and will be invited to a 'Members Only' reception at the Annual Conference.



Pastor/Elder Evaluation

The person requesting you to complete this form is seeking certification as a biblical counselor. Your input regarding his/her character is very important to us. We request your candid comments on the following matters:

1. The applicant's spiritual maturity.

2. How the applicant responds to criticism/admonition/instruction.

3. The applicant's willingness to follow church leadership.

4. The applicant's availability and willingness to serve others.

5. The applicant's reputation regarding family relationships.

6. Do you approve of the applicant pursuing NANC Certification?

Additional Comments (please use other side if necessary):

Applicant's Name _____ Date _____

Your Name _____

Are you his/her current pastor or current elder? _____ How long? _____

This is not to be returned to the applicant. Please send this directly to the NANC office by email Certification@NANC.org or regular mail 3600 W. 96th Street, Indianapolis, IN 46268.



NANC

For Office Use only

Ck # _____

Ck Date _____

Ck Amount _____

Application for Membership

(To be completed electronically and mailed to Certification@NANC.org)

Personal:

Title: First Name: Last Name:

Address: Spouse:

City: St: Zip: Home Phone:

Daytime Phone: Email Address:

Employer: Position:

Birthday: Sex: Marital Status:

Church You Attend: Are you a member?

Are you ordained? If yes, by whom and when?

Pastoral experience (dates and places):

Education:

College:

Degree Year Major

Seminary Degree Year Major

Graduate School

Degree Year Major

Other professional education or training:

Professional agencies or organizations to which you belong:

NANC approved agency where Basic Training Course was completed along with date, city, state, instructors, and name of the course taken:

What other training events, for biblical counseling, have you attended?

Summarize your approach to counseling:

State your view of lay counseling:

Briefly explain your conversion to Christ:

State your reasons for desiring membership in NANC:

Have you ever applied to be a NANC-certified counselor? If yes, when and why was it not completed?

Name of church or agency under whose authority you currently counsel:

Are you involved in sinful conduct or do you have unresolved conflicts, which if known, would cause others to question the appropriateness of your being a NANC Counselor? If yes, please explain.

*Have you ever been placed under church discipline? Y/N
If yes, what was the outcome?*

*Have you ever been convicted of a felony? Yes/No
If yes, complete the following questions:*

- 1. Please describe the nature of the conviction.*
- 2. Date of conviction*
- 3. Is the church or ministry under whose authority you counsel aware of it?*

- 4. Are there protections in place to prevent scandal if and when a question is raised about this?*

5. *What state or federal guidelines apply to you?*

6. *Are you complying with all state or federal applicable guidelines?*

NANC Theology Exam

Using essay style writing, please respond thoroughly to each of these statements. Write your answers as though you are explaining them to a counselee, defining all terms clearly and precisely. Use 1.5 spacing. Your answers should be 1 page to 1 ½ pages in length. Support all your answers with Scripture. This is an open book exam. You may use any written or oral sources, but you must cite your sources at the end of each answer.

Bibliology

1. The Bible is spoken of as “inspired.” What does this mean?
2. What is the relationship between infallibility and authority?
3. What is the Bible’s authority on theological controversies?
4. Compare and contrast the Bible and its authority to general revelation and its authority.
5. Many Christians today speak of continuing revelation. Relate this concept to inspiration and sufficiency of the Scripture. Relate this concept to the issue of miracles, prophecy and tongues.

Theology Proper

1. State briefly the biblical basis for, and formulate the doctrine of, the Trinity.
2. List and develop five attributes of God and how they relate to the believer’s life and counseling.
3. State briefly the biblical basis for, and formulate the doctrine of, God’s omniscience. Relate this doctrine to the teaching of “open theism.”

Anthropology

1. Who and what is man?
2. What role does anthropology play in counseling theory and practice?

Christology

1. Why did Christ die?
2. He was “tempted in all things as we are” (Heb. 4:15). Discuss and relate to counseling theory and practice.

Soteriology

1. “Justification by faith alone.” Discuss the meaning of this phrase.
2. Sanctification is said to be past, present, and future. Discuss, including the idea of “union with Christ.”
3. Do Christians persevere? What relationship does this have to counseling?

Pneumatology

1. Who or what is the Holy Spirit?
2. What role does this Spirit play in the believer’s life and the counseling process?
3. Does the Holy Spirit guide Christians? If so, what means and methods does He use?

Ecclesiology

1. What is the church?
2. What role does the church play in the believer’s life and the counseling process?
3. What is the biblical teaching on women being ordained as officers of the church?
4. What authority, if any, does the church have over individuals and the counseling process?

General Questions

1. Are you involved in a larger group, organization, or denomination, which disagrees with NANC’s Statement of Faith? If so, how do you differ from your larger group? Explain what you are doing to influence your group towards NANC’s position.
2. If received as a NANC member, can you unequivocally sign the membership covenant?

NANC Counselor's Exam

Using essay style writing, please respond thoroughly to each of these statements. Write your answers as though you are explaining them to a counselee, defining all terms clearly and precisely. Use 1.5 spacing. Your answers should be 1 page to 1 ½ pages in length. Support all your answers with Scripture. This is an open book exam. You may use any written or oral sources, but you must cite your sources at the end of each answer.

1. What are the goals of biblical counseling?
2. Are the Scriptures sufficient for biblical counseling? Explain your position.
3. What are some of the important needs in the first session?
4. Describe how to develop involvement with a counselee. What is the difference between empathy and involvement? Is this difference significant?
5. What is data gathering? Why is it important?
6. Explain the need for homework. Also explain the need for specific, concrete homework in contrast to general, vague homework.
7. Define guilt biblically. Is “false guilt” a biblical concept? How do you deal with guilt in the context of counseling?
8. Write a paragraph or two on the problem of eclecticism in counseling and your position in reference to it.
9. Define the concepts of “presentation level” and “performance level”. Use a case history, in which you were the counselor, to show the necessity for moving from the presentation level to the performance level.
10. Define the concept of “preconditioning level”. Use a case history, in which you were the counselor, to show the necessity for moving from the performance level to the preconditioning level.
11. Define a “complicating problem”. Give a concrete example.
12. Define "halo data" and give some examples of halo data for depression.
13. Define and describe the importance of language in counseling. Give examples.
14. Explain the significance of Eph. 4:17-25, and similar passages for Biblical counseling.
15. Describe and diagram how depression develops and is to be alleviated.
16. Define anger biblically. Describe at least five ways people deal with anger. Describe both sinful and godly ways of dealing with anger.
17. Give some typical assignments for a person who is depressed. Next, do the same for a person who worries. Finally, do the same for a person who is afraid. Don't discuss what you would do in giving assignments; rather give actual assignments as you would write them down for the counselee.
18. Describe how you deal with sin in counseling. Use a case history, in which you were the counselor, to show how you dealt with sin.
19. Outline a comprehensive counseling program to help a couple develop good communication patterns.
20. Would you work cooperatively with a physician? A psychologist? Justify your answers biblically.
21. Define “total restructuring”. Describe how it works, using a case regarding homosexuality as the model.
22. Develop a biblical view of emotions. Use both the Old and New Testaments in your answer. How can emotions be changed biblically?
23. List several reasons for terminating a counseling case. Answer this for cases terminated because of spiritual change (growth) and spiritual hardening (failure to comply).
24. Is there any place in biblical counseling for casting out demons? In your answer, include your position on demonic activity in the post-apostolic era and the biblical methodology of dealing with it.
25. What does it mean to minister the Scriptures in counseling? Contrast a “ministry of the word” model and a “professional medical” model.
26. Write a short paragraph on each of the following: healing of the memories, visualization techniques, 12-step and other recovery programs, self-image. In your answer, define and give a biblical analysis of each concept. (Do not guess. Research these concepts.)
27. With which Christian counselors – if any – do you agree? On which points do you agree with them and why? Be specific and concrete with names and concepts. Use two or three counselors as examples.
28. Does your church presently practice church discipline? If not, would you be willing to graciously encourage them toward this position?



NANC

PURSuing EXCELLENCE IN BIBLICAL COUNSELING

Case Report Form

Type your answers to these questions, then email to your supervisor. Be sure to allow sufficient time for your supervisor to review each case before your appointed time to call.

Counselee _____ Date _____ Session # _____

Counselor _____ Session Length _____

1. Significant background information.
2. Summary of reasons they came for counseling (presentation problem).
3. What changes were made by the counselee since last session (as a result of applying last session's counsel and performing last session's homework)?
4. What main problems were discussed in this session?
5. What unbiblical habits of thinking and /or behaving are you seeing in the counselee (pre-conditioning)?
6. What idols and/or heart issues are emerging? ("I must _____.")
7. What Biblical solutions were presented in this session (tie in with #4)?
8. What homework was given and how did it specifically apply to the problems (tie in with #4)?
9. If someone asked the counselee right after the session, "What did you learn that you needed to change," what would you want him to say?
10. How was hope or encouragement given in this session?
11. How is the overall counseling process progressing? What issues have been sufficiently addressed by you and changed by the counselee?
12. What are your goals for future sessions?

If the session is not moving, review Jay's 50 Failure factors in the Christian Counselor's Manual.

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