

Introduction to Biblical Counseling

*A Seminar to Equip Christian Leaders to Help People
Using the All-Sufficient Scriptures*

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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.**

- 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**

- 4. The counselor is qualified through personal holiness and a knowledge of the Word of God.**

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 - next time the roles may be reversed. Jesus felt compassion. Mark 6:34 Matt. 9:35-36 Heb. 2:14-18 4:15**

- 3. Be careful not to fall into their sin!**
 - a. Why might this happen?**

 - b. What precautions should we take?**

4. **Don't become an emotional crutch - make them dependant upon God, not you!**

5. **Pray with and for your counselee.**

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**

B. Investigation. Prov. 18:15

1. **Don't jump to conclusions. Learn to ask good questions and to listen.
Prov. 18:13**

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

3. **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.**

4. **One of the most important issues to determine is whether the counselee is a
believer. *How should you counsel an unbeliever? ("pre-counseling")***

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

C. Interpretation. Rom. 12:2

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

2. **Often the counselee will not know what his problem is, or he will have
incorrectly identified it.**

3. **Don't rely upon hunches or human wisdom, but interpret the data based upon the Word of God. Prov. 14:12**

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

1. **Don't rely upon fallible human wisdom, but upon the inerrant and powerful Word of God.**

2. **You must deal firmly with sin. Eph. 4:17-22 I Thess. 5:14**

- a. **Don't minimize sin.**

- b. **Don't hesitate to rebuke sin. Acts 20:31 Gal. 2:11**

3. **Sin must be repented of - put off. I John 1:9 Ps. 32:3-5 Prov. 28:13**

4. **New life patterns must be established - put on. Eph. 4:22-28**

Real happiness and meaning in life can only be found in submission to God's will.

5. **Resources - The Christian Counselor's Manual, Helps for Counselors, (Adams)**

E. Intention. Luke 9:23-24

1. **Counseling is more than instruction.**

2. **The counselee is responsible to commit to obedience to God.**

3. **Deal with behavior, not feelings.**

The counselee must agree to obey God, whether he feels like it or not.

4. **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**

F. Implementation.

1. **The counselee cannot expect the counselor to change him.**
i.e. by telling him something new which, like a pill, makes him feel better.

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

3. **The greatest progress in counseling is made in between sessions.**

4. **Concrete homework assignments should be given.**
 - a. **Actions and behavior. *i.e. seek forgiveness, attend church, destroy contraband, plan how to deal with a particular temptation.***

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

 - c. **Christian books, pamphlets, and tapes. *Excellent tools are available.***

 - d. **Journals. *i.e. record of sin patterns, study assignments.***

5. **Resource: A Homework Manual for Biblical Counselling 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. **Sometimes church discipline may be required. Matt. 18:15-17**

 - c. **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
Both you and the counselee should have realistic expectations.**

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

III. Conclusion.

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?

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.

Counseling in a Postmodern World

I. Introduction: Why do you need to know about postmodernism? Acts 17 II Co. 10:4-5

- A. It is important to understand the worldview of those whom we are seeking to reach. Acts 17 Paul at Athens.
- B. What is post-modernism? *A general and wide-ranging term which is applied to literature, art, philosophy, architecture, fiction, and cultural and literary criticism, among others. Postmodernism is largely a reaction to the assumed certainty of scientific, or objective, efforts to explain reality. In essence, it stems from a recognition that reality is not simply mirrored in human understanding of it, but rather, is constructed as the mind tries to understand its own particular and personal reality. For this reason, postmodernism is highly skeptical of explanations which claim to be valid for all groups, cultures, traditions, or races, and instead focuses on the relative truths of each person. In the postmodern understanding, interpretation is everything; reality only comes into being through our interpretations of what the world means to us individually. Postmodernism relies on concrete experience over abstract principles, knowing always that the outcome of one's own experience will necessarily be fallible and relative, rather than certain and universal. Postmodernism is "post" because it denies the existence of any ultimate principles, and it lacks the optimism of there being a scientific, philosophical, or religious truth which will explain everything for everybody - a characteristic of the so-called "modern" mind. The paradox of the postmodern position is that, in placing all principles under the scrutiny of its skepticism, it must realize that even its own principles are not beyond questioning. As the philosopher Richard Tarnas states, postmodernism "cannot on its own principles ultimately justify itself any more than can the various metaphysical overviews against which the postmodern mind has defined itself."* (From the PBS website)

II. Understand the times in which we live: Truth Decay. I Chron. 12:32 Rom. 13:11

- A. Pre-modernity. (Up to the 17th century).
1. Pre-modern thought presupposed a God-centered view of reality (but not necessarily Christian).
 2. Divine revelation is the final arbiter of truth and gives reality and meaning to all things.
 3. Mankind is dependent on God Who makes and organizes history.
 4. Religion gives society uniformity.
 5. How would this worldview affect counseling?
- B. Modernism (Beginning in the 17th Century: the Enlightenment)
1. Modernism is a man-centered view of reality, which looks to man to understand the world and solve his problems through intellectual and scientific endeavors.
 2. Reason replaces revelation as the final arbiter of truth, thereby liberating humanity from religious *mythology*.
 3. Modernism is optimistic about human potential and progress.
 4. Modernism assumes a unified view of truth and reality, which mankind can discover through reason and science: laws of nature.
 5. Man can express ultimate realities using language.
 6. Modernism stresses individualism and autonomy.
 7. Mankind makes his own history.
 8. How would modernism affect one's view of counseling?
 9. Christian apologists have worked for the past 200 years to answer modernism.

- C. Postmodernism (Beginning in the mid-20th century).**
- 1. Postmodernism critiques modernity's claim that mankind can gain objective knowledge through rationalism and empiricism.**
 - 2. Postmodernism denies the existence of fixed absolute universal and objective truth. There is no *meta-narrative* (the big story which explains everything).**
 - 3. Truth is a construct and is relative. *Truth is made rather than found.***
 - 4. Language cannot render truths about the world in an objective way: word games.**
 - a. There is no truth to which language corresponds.**
 - b. All meaning is socially constructed.**
 - c. Written texts do not have a single knowable meaning or truth value.**
 - d. The meaning of words and texts is determined by the reader, not the author.**
 - 5. Truth claims have been used as instruments of oppression and power.**
 - 6. Postmodernism exalts the community.**
 - 7. Postmodernism is pluralistic. Truth has been replaced with truthS.**
 - 8. Postmodernism is revolutionary: Modern society with its rationalism and unitary view of truth needs to be replaced by a new world order.**
 - 9. The arguments Christian apologists make against modernism don't work against post-modernism.**

III. The influence of postmodernism.

- A. Postmodernism affects our culture in many ways.**
- 1. Postmodernism and the arts.**
 - 2. Postmodernism and history.**
 - 3. Postmodernism and the natural sciences.**
 - 4. Postmodernism and education.**
 - 5. Postmodernism and politics (including the judiciary).**
 - 6. Postmodernism and the media.**
 - 7. A battle is raging in our universities between modernism and postmodernism.**
- B. Postmodernism and religion.**
- 1. Religion has been used as a means of power and control.**
 - 2. Religion often fails to respect the perspectives of other communities.**
 - 3. Religious texts must be deconstructed.**
 - 4. Religious pluralism. The heretic is the one who dares to believe he has the truth.**
- C. Postmodernism and morality.**
- 1. There is no absolute right and wrong for all people.**
 - 2. Tolerance is the cardinal virtue.**
 - 3. Collective guilt minimizes personal responsibility.**
 - 4. Redefining family and gender roles.**
 - 5. Sexual morality. Isa. 5:20**
- D. The professing church has been influenced by postmodernism.**
- 1. Deconstructing the Bible.**
 - 2. Pluralism and doubt in the pulpits.**
 - 3. Some churches cater to the postmodern generation.**

- E. The impact of postmodernism on counseling.
 1. Pluralism: Psychology is moving from modernism to postmodernism.
 2. Irrationalism.
 3. Relativism.
 4. Pessimism and Nihilism.

IV. How can a Christian answer postmodernism? II Co. 10:5

- A. There are some useful aspects to postmodernism's critique on modernity.
 1. Mankind cannot autonomously arrive at ultimate truth or create utopia. Gen. 11
 2. Postmodernists have exposed the modernist myth of objectivity.

- B. Postmodernism is internally inconsistent: It collapses upon itself. *Postmodernism is self-referentially incoherent. That is to say, if it is true, then it is false... If postmodern claims are objectively true, then those claims are themselves the mere products of social forces and so are not objectively true... If postmodernist claims are not true then they are just the arbitrary opinions of people we are free to ignore (Craig).*
 1. Postmodernism itself is a meta-narrative which tries to explain reality.
 2. Postmodernists are intolerant of those who question their meta-narrative by believing in some other absolute truth. Isa. 5:20
 3. Postmodernists cannot consistently apply their system in the real world.
 4. Most people intuitively believe they have individual identities, live in an objective world, and truth is not merely a social construction.
 5. Postmodernism is unable to meet the deepest human needs.

- C. Postmodern thought is not really new. Genesis 3 Isa. 5:20 Ecc. 1:9-10
 1. Satan deconstructed God's Word. Genesis 3:1,4-5
 2. Eve chose to remake herself and to establish her own truth/reality. Genesis 3:6
 3. The heart of sin is seeking autonomy from God.

- D. How can you persuade postmodern people to seek the God of the Bible?
 1. Deep down everyone knows God exists and that they are accountable to Him. Romans 1:19-20,32 2:14-15 Acts 17:24-31
 2. False thought, including both modernism and postmodernism is an attempt to suppress the knowledge of God. Rom. 1:18b,21,25

- E. Unashamedly present a biblical view of truth: There is a personal God Who has created all things and has revealed Himself to us. Genesis 1:1f
 1. He has created us in His image for His own glory. Gen. 1:27 I Co. 8:6
 2. God speaks with clarity and authority. II Ti. 3:16-17 Isa. 40:8 Ps. 119:142
 - a. Language is not a human construction.
 - b. God's language existed before human beings. John 1:1 Gen. 1:1f
 - c. God gave the gift of language to men. Gen. 2:19-20
 - d. God's Word redeems. Ro. 10:17
 3. The Bible reveals objective truth that is knowable to humans in spite of our limitations as finite and fallible human beings.
 - a. We need the Holy Spirit to understand. I Co. 2:9-16
 - b. Meaning is not subjective. II Pe. 1:20
 - c. We are right to be wary of how mankind uses language. Rom. 1:28f
 - d. We are dependent upon God's Words. Mt. 7:24,26

4. **Truth is God's truth, revealed in Christ. John 14:6 1:14,17 Acts 4:12 I Co. 15:1f**
5. **Mankind seeks autonomy from God. Rom. 1:18f**
6. **God's truth (alone) will set you free. John 8:32**
7. **The gospel unites people of all cultures into one community. Eph. 2:11f
Rom. 7:9-10 5:9**

V. Concluding applications: What is truth? John 20:28

The Tenderness Trap (by Jim Newheiser)

(The following is a semi-fictional compilation of various experiences of Christian leaders.)

It happened again. Another Pastor has fallen. This time, though, it wasn't a liberal or a glitzy television preacher. It was a man of sound doctrine with over twenty years of faithful ministry, a man whose godliness, giftedness, and soundness of doctrine was widely recognized. Tragically, he has been disqualified for ministry.

The sheep he served are wounded and confused. Some feel betrayed by the man who was a father and a brother to them. Their faith has been shaken. Others are angry at the other leaders for their handling of the problem. Couldn't they have shown more compassion to a man who had served them faithfully for so long? Still others, - including jealous husbands think that he got off too easy. How could he have abused his trust in this way?

There is concern that the church may not be able to complete the building program begun under this pastor's leadership. There is even concern that the body to which he devoted his life will be divided. This was a man who contended for sound doctrine. He was a mentor who guided many young pastors. Now he has fallen. "Tell it not in Gath lest the enemies of truth rejoice!"

The pastor himself, whose whole life has been ministry, faces great challenges. How will he support his family with so few marketable skills? Where will he go to church? What role will he play? How can he face his wife and children after what he has done? They too must live with the consequences of his actions.

The questions abound, including some that are relevant to others in ministry: How did it happen? Where did he go wrong? And how can you and I avoid following in his tragic footsteps?

This pastor did not actually commit adultery. He was and is very happy in his marriage. He was not looking for sexual excitement or fulfillment. He simply fell into "The Tenderness Trap." He got too emotionally involved with women he was counselling. In so doing, he crossed some lines and is no longer above reproach. Ruinous sin is the culmination of a process (James 1:14-15). In this article, I would like to help you to avoid taking even the first step.

Falling into the Tenderness Trap

How it Started.

These situations do not come about because the counselee or the counselor begins with wicked motives (Prov. 7:6ff). Most people in these cases begin with good intentions and wind up with disaster. Specifically, most individuals who come for pastoral counseling are women, and most of these women have problems in their marriages. They seek help from their pastor to learn how to better please God.

The pastor/counselor wants to faithfully minister the Word to such a woman. He has probably taken precautions to avoid temptation or even the appearance of evil, by keeping his office door open and having his secretary nearby. Still, the counselor and the counselee are facing a situation filled with danger. The woman's husband doesn't have time for her and won't listen to her. The pastor, meanwhile, patiently and tenderly listens to her problems expressing concern and compassion. He is the spiritual leader her husband has never been. In their sessions together this unhappy woman is finding genuine help from the encouragement her pastor is giving her from the Scriptures. She seems to be drawing closer to the Lord. At the same time, the pastor is gaining a sense of fulfillment from this success. He has seen all too many "failures" in ministry.

Danger Signs.

As the counseling relationship progresses, both the counselor and counselee may begin to have thoughts that should have alerted them to danger before it was too late. The woman may be tempted to think, "If only my husband were a spiritual leader like him," or "I wish that I had married a man like this, who cares about my feelings." Of course, if the counselor/pastor were ever to become involved with her, these very qualities would be betrayed by their bond.

The pastor, for his part, may find that he enjoys having a woman so dependent on him for advice and support. He enjoys meeting her emotional needs successfully and feels protective of her. He finds himself looking forward to their meetings. He may even realize that he is having more intimate conversations with her than with his wife.

Neither the pastor nor the counselee has any intention of moving towards a romantic relationship, but bonding is taking place. By now, the thought of emotional involvement has probably occurred to one or both of them. They may both be intrigued by the male-female electricity of their friendship, though thus far it is "low voltage". To the degree that they recognize this temptation, the two put these thoughts quickly aside, perhaps with a prayer of confession asking for strength. The pastor may tell himself that this is a way that Satan is tempting him, and that he needs to be strong. After all, counseling women is part of his job as an undershepherd in God's flock. The woman, meanwhile, trusts her pastor as a man of God. She can't imagine that anything inappropriate could happen.

Lines Crossed.

At some point in the counseling sessions a line is crossed. One of them realizes that they have gone too far. Perhaps the pastor finds himself violating some of his own rules, meeting with this woman alone in the office, or failing to tell his wife everything he should about the length, content, and frequency of their meetings. Perhaps there is physical contact, a hug or holding hands, which outwardly appears to be brotherly, yet the pair experience mixed emotions. Both of them find that they are enjoying the attention, attraction, and emotional involvement.

Finally, the pastor is getting worried. He realizes that he has gone too far, but now the price of corrective action seems too high. If he goes to his fellow elders and confesses his fault, he would experience terrible embarrassment. They might make a mountain out of a molehill. What if this woman's husband gets upset, or others in the church learn about this? Gossips would have a field day and his ministry could be ruined. Those inside or outside of the church who have sought an opportunity to discredit him would have their chance. If he were to tell his wife, she would be deeply hurt. She might also misunderstand and think that there is something wrong with her.

So the pastor rationalizes, perhaps what he is doing isn't so bad after all. He is still preaching powerfully. Things seem to be going smoothly enough at home. God must not think that he is wrong, otherwise he and the church wouldn't be so blessed. New members are coming. New ministries are being established. Why rock the boat? After all, he hasn't actually committed adultery. He is a strong Christian leader. He can keep the situation under control without involving or upsetting others.

A Ministry Ruined.

If one keeps playing with fire, sooner or later he will get burned. "When lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished it brings forth death" (James 1:15). Soon, perhaps the "brotherly" hug or pat on the back is followed by a short kiss - then a longer one, or a touching

which is clearly more than "brotherly".

We might ask, "Why didn't one of them stop this when it happened?" While outwardly both of them were outwardly treating their relationship as purely pastoral, the emotional intimacy they had developed led very naturally to this point. Though both of them may be shocked on one level, it seems very natural on another.

What happens next can vary. Many couples will go on to commit adultery. Some will still not cross that line, but will continue taking fire into their bosom (Prov. 6:27). The great majority will not stop until they are caught. A few will finally turn themselves in. But all will suffer greatly, and will watch others suffer as a consequence of their sin.

Avoiding the Tenderness Trap

How can you avoid falling into the tenderness trap? I have found several principles to be essential.

1. Don't Trust Yourself. Some men will say, "This could never happen to me." Such a man will talk about how happy and fulfilled he is in his marriage. Furthermore, he knows that he is strong. He has never felt attracted to any members of his congregation or come close to crossing any lines in counseling relationships.

Some men are confident that they are safe because of their older age or mediocre looks. Paul says, "Let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor. 10:12). A friend reminded me that women are most prone to fall for the tender, caring men who know how to speak words of kindness. Many good (and even unattractive) men have fallen who would never have imagined that it could happen to them.

It is important to remember that you make your way down the road to ruin one step at a time. Satan knows that he probably cannot tempt you to immediately fall into adultery, so he is patient to bring you to that point little by little.

2. Make Strict Rules - and keep them. I suggest the following:

- Do not meet alone with a female counselee if you are not visible to others. Keep the door open.
- Do not talk about the physical relationship in marriage without the husband present.
- Do not touch a female counselee in a counseling session. I have had women weep in my office, even to the point of collapse. I keep my desk between myself and them no matter what. If a woman needs a hug, I ask another woman from the church to take care of her. If a counselee tries to touch you, I recommend pulling quickly away, and making it clear that this just isn't done.

As you explain these rules to your counselee, tell her that you hold to them not because you don't trust her or because she can't trust you, but because you want to ensure that both of you remain above reproach. Apply your rules uniformly - don't make exceptions for unattractive women!

If you find yourself wanting to bend or break the rules take it as a warning sign and immediately go to your fellow elders and your spouse.

3. Respect your counselee's marriage relationship. When you are counseling a married woman, remember that she is under her husband's authority. You do not want to undermine that relationship. Ordinarily, if a woman is having problems with her marriage, her husband should also be present for counseling. It is not right to talk about his sins without him present.

Ordinarily, you should not meet with a woman without her husband's knowledge and approval, an exception might be if the husband is an unbeliever. The exceptional cases should be treated with the greatest caution. One pastor whom I respect will not meet more than twice with a woman without her husband present.

4. Get other women involved in counseling women. Titus 2:3-5 states that older women are uniquely qualified to help younger women be godly wives and mothers. In many ways, they may be better able to address many problems than you are. My recent practice has been to meet with a woman a couple of times. I then place her in a more intense counseling/discipleship relationship with a more mature woman under my supervision. This eliminates many of the problems that could occur in a male-female counseling situation.

Many pastors lack such older women in their churches. In addition to asking God to raise up such women, pastors must select women with potential for such a ministry and train them.¹

5. Remain Accountable. Keep your wife and your fellow elders aware of your counseling appointments and the general subject matter of your meetings. Within that circle, absolute confidentiality must be maintained; however, your marriage is more important than a woman's privacy. If a woman counselee is unwilling to agree to this condition, decline to meet with her.

If you are experiencing any "warning signs" or if you fear that you may have crossed some lines yourself, tell your fellow elders immediately (2 Tim. 2:22). Seek and submit to their counsel. Entrust yourself to the Lord through them. It is much easier to snuff out a small flame than to fight a raging forest fire. I know more than one pastor, who when he started to feel tempted or attracted to a woman, immediately made himself strictly accountable to others and the situation was diffused before disaster struck. If there is any question in your mind, seek accountability! Remember how deceitful the heart is (Prov. 14:12). One of the great dangers many pastors face is that they are on such a pedestal, they don't have any peers in the church in whom they feel that they can safely confide. Such a lofty perch is a precarious one.

Advice to Those Who Have Fallen

The great majority of men continue in sin until they are caught (busted). Usually, when a pastor is initially confronted about a compromising situation, there is either denial or minimization: "I'm just a man." "We didn't actually commit adultery." "Everyone deserves a second chance." "I'll never do it again." Usually the pastor is concerned with keeping the matter as private as possible in order to protect himself, his family, and the church. I, however, hold very little hope for the restoration of a man who persistently violates his conscience and has to be caught and proven guilty before he "repents". It is hard to believe that the "repentance" shown at this point is any more than preservation of pride, livelihood, and reputation.

If you as a pastor or a counselor have acted inappropriately, the best thing you can do is to confess your sin to your fellow leaders, the church, and your spouse. Accept the consequences. Submit to whatever discipline your fellow leaders impose upon you. Warn others against the same sins. Willingly relinquish your office and find a way to honorably support your family. Don't expect to be restored to office or paid ministry in the future. Take comfort in God's forgiveness (Psalm 51). God has borne fruit through you in the past despite of your sin. God will use you in new ways in

¹ For example, the CCEF introductory course videos might be useful for this purpose. Also, see "Why Women Should Counsel Women" by Elyse Fitzpatrick, from the CCEF San Diego Summer Institute in Biblical Counseling, (1994).

the future.

Advice to Fellow Leaders

As you minister to a pastor or counselor in such a situation, deal with firmness and love. While many may be concerned for the parties involved in the sin, you too are going through a traumatic time of heartache. Realize that you are likely to be criticized for your actions by some members of the congregation. Some will think you are too strict, others will be upset because you are too lenient. You may be tempted to disclose less than the whole truth out of compassion for those who sinned, but the only way to avoid gossip and false accusations against you is to fully lay out the charges (1 Tim. 5:20). If the fallen brother is willing to submit to discipline, it may be appropriate for the elders to provide financially for his transition to "secular work". They should also offer ongoing counsel and accountability which will, it is hoped, lead to his restoration to usefulness (but not office).

You will also need to help the others who have been affected. Those who have sinned must seek forgiveness from those who have been wronged (spouses, children, and the church at large). The woman and the other family members involved will also need counsel. Finally, the church at large will have great needs. Those who have trusted and loved their pastor may be terribly disillusioned. They should be reminded that only Christ is sinless. The fact that their leader has fallen does not negate the benefits they received from his ministry in the past. They should be encouraged to look to the Lord as our perfect head and example, and to watch themselves.

When time comes to hire a new pastor, seek to practice genuine plural leadership and mutual accountability, rather than putting him on a dangerous pedestal.

A Final Word to Those Who Haven't Fallen

What is your goal in ministry? Do you want to have a big church? Do you want to have a reputation as a great preacher? My goal is that when my life and ministry are ending, I can say with Paul, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith" (2 Tim. 4:7). I want to arrive at the finish line without having been disqualified (1 Cor. 9:27). Regardless of the size and scope of my life's work, I want to be found faithful at the end - that I have not done anything to bring hurt and disgrace upon the Name of the Lord and His church.

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 offences. 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**

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
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.
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 cover-up 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

Conflict Resolution and Communication

I. Introduction:

A. Review:

1. God's design for marriage. Gen. 2:18-23
2. God's directive for marriage. Gen. 2:24
3. The role of the husband. Eph. 5:25-30 I Pet. 3:7
4. The role of the wife. Eph. 5:22-24 I Pet. 3:1-6 Prov. 31

B. Communication breakdown in the family. Eph. 4:25-32

II. Conflict resolution: clean the slate.

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! James 4:1-2
 - a. Make a list of what your spouse should be able to expect of you.
 - b. How much better would the situation be if you were fulfilling your responsibilities?
 - c. God expects you to do your duties, whether your spouse is performing or not.
3. Seek forgiveness where you have wronged your spouse. Mt. 5:23-24
 - a. Avoid "if", "but", and "maybe".
 - b. Admit specifically where you were wrong.
 - c. Ask for forgiveness.
 - d. Alter your behavior.

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.
 - a. Put off wrath. Refuse to fight. Pr. 17:14
 - b. The legitimate use of "time-outs".
3. Understand the difference between righteous and unrighteous anger. Eph. 4:26

4. Deal with the heart of your anger.
 - a. Forsake your rights. I Cor. 6:19-20 (Mack: Strengthening p. 74)
 - b. Don't seek revenge. Rom. 12:17-21
 - c. Seek peace. Rom. 14:19
 - d. Remember the cross!

- E. Steps for resolving conflict. Mt. 18:15-20
 1. Overlook minor offenses. I Pet. 4:8 Pr. 19:11
 2. Talk in private.
 - a. Pray first.
 - b. Is the wife violating I Pet. 3:1-2?
 3. Take one or two others along.
 - a. Assuming your spouse is a believer, you should seek godly counsel together.
 - b. In which cases should this step be taken?
 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
 1. Your duty in communication is to meet the needs of your spouse. Rom. 15:2
 2. Do you know your spouse's needs?

- B. Learn to listen in love. James 1:19
 1. God listens to you. Isa. 59:1
 2. Are you more concerned about being heard, or hearing? Phil. 2:1-5
 - a. In the flesh, we only want to be understood.
 - b. By imitating Christ, you will be more concerned about understanding. I Pet. 3:7
 - c. It is possible to hear without understanding. Mt. 13:13
 3. Develop good listening skills.
 - a. Give your full attention.
 - b. Take interest in what concerns your spouse.
 - c. Assume the best. 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?
 - a. Sinful or unkind thoughts and feelings need not necessarily be openly spoken to one's spouse, but rather to be confessed before God. Pr. 18:2 10:19 Eph. 4:29
 - b. Does he/she have a right/need to know?
 - c. What about sins of the past?
 3. Learn to communicate on a deeper level.
 - a. On what level are you communicating?
 - b. Casual conversation
 - c. Sharing facts and information.
 - d. Support, encouragement, and motivation.
 - e. Sharing ideas, opinions, feelings, emotions, and judgements.
 - f. Planning and decision making.
 - g. Conflict resolution, correction, instruction, and rebuke.

4. Use your speech to build up. Eph. 4:29 Pr. 16:21,24 10:11,21 31:26
 - a. Encouragement and thanksgiving.
 - b. Gentle correction.
 - c. Edify: speak about the best things. Phil. 4:8 Eph. 5:19
5. Do you know what style of communication best reaches to your spouse?
 - a. Don't assume that your message has been understood.
 - b. Which speaks best to your spouse? Words? Gifts? Acts?
6. Timing can be important. Pr. 25:11 27:14 15:23

D. Communication killers. Circuit jammers. (Preparing: pg. 62)

1. Lies. Mt. 5:33-36 Eph. 4:25
2. Busyness and distractions. Kids, work, hobbies, tv, friends, and even church.
3. Self-centered conversation: not listening, 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. Speaking in absolutes: "you always" "you never"
 - c. Bullying, threatening and manipulating.
 - d. Nagging. I Pet. 3:1-2 Pr. 25:24
 - e. Negativity and grumbling.
 - f. Public criticism.
5. Harmful body language and other non-verbal communication.
 - a. Pr. 6:12-15 10:10 16:30
6. Refusal to communicate.
 - a. Clamming up.
 - b. Side tracking and avoidance.
7. 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.
 1. Family devotions.
 2. Pray together as a couple.
- C. A communication exercise.
 1. First the husband explains the wife's point of view.
 - a. Without interjecting his own point of view or why hers is wrong.
 - b. The goal is that she will say: "Yes, you really understand me".
 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.**
 - 1. Family goals. Career, location, ministry.**
 - 2. Personal goals.**
 - 3. Goals for the children.**

- E. Have fun together.**
 - 1. Don't just work at solving problems.**
 - 2. You also need to relax and enjoy one another.**

- 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)**

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

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.

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.

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.

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 Bathsheeba.

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.

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

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) seem 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, do not need her any more, but also they aren't living as she 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 Bathsheeba 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?

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

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 Bathsheeba. Instead, the sin with Bathsheeba was an expression of the sorry state into which his inner 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 has 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*

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

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).

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).

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.

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 to 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

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

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.

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

5. 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 which to look forward 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.

6. 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).

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 to 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**

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?

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 had 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
 - a. Are You fully expressing the joy of your salvation?
 - b. Are you thrilled and exuberant when you worship God?
 - c. Loudly tell of God's holy character and his great works.

V. Conclusion: Isa. 55:6-7

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.

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.

Obedience to God. I John 2:3-6

I. Introduction and review:

- A. How much can a Christian sin?
- B. Why shouldn't you sin? 2:1

II. Your obedience to God's commandments proves you know Him. v. 3

- A. John is *not* saying that we come to know God *by* keeping His commandments.
 - 1. We come to know God when we repent of our sins and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, our Advocate Who is the propitiation for our sins. 1:8-2:2
 - 2. Salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. Eph. 2:8-9
 - 3. Works follow saving faith. Eph. 2:10
- B. He is telling us how we can know we have come to know Him. Jer. 9:23-24
Some make a counterfeit *claim* to know God. 1:6 2:4 Mt. 7:21-23
- C. What does it mean to know God? Jer. 31:33-34 John 17:3
- D. If you have truly come to know God, you will obey His commandments. Jer. 31:33-34
 - 1. While obedience is not a condition of coming to know God, it is a necessary result.
 - 2. Jesus emphasized the necessity that His disciples obey Him. Mt. 28:18-20
John 14:15,21,23,24 10:27
 - 3. Obedience is a characteristic of true believers. Rev. 12:17 14:12 I Co. 7:19
 - 4. Which commandments should we obey? Ex. 20 Mt. 22:37-40 Ro. 13:8-10 Jo. 13:34
- E. Why must true faith always produce obedience?
 - 1. When you confess your sin, you are not merely admitting the fact that you are a sinner, but coming to God to be delivered from your sin. 1:9 Acts 2:37
 - 2. Because salvation is God's work, saving faith will result in holiness of life. Phil. 1:6
II Co. 5:17 Gal. 5:22f Titus 2:14 Eph. 1:4f 2:10 5:26

III. If you don't keep God's commandments, you do not know God. v. 4

- A. Many false professors of John's day boasted that they knew God.
 - 1. Some thought God could be known through human intellectual endeavors.
 - 2. Others claimed to gain the knowledge of God through mystical experiences.
 - 3. Their continued disobedience proved their profession was a lie. 1:6 4:20 Jo. 8:44
- B. There are multitudes in our day whose claim of knowing God is false. Titus 1:16
 - 1. Many think they are saved because they know a few doctrinal facts. Js. 2:19
 - 2. Others claim to have had a great emotional experience.
 - 3. Their lives prove they have not received God's truth. 1:8
- C. False teachers have caused confusion and damage.
 - 1. The gospel is being misrepresented. Gal. 1:8-9
 - 2. Because they do not understand that conversion is a work of the Spirit, they emotionally manipulate people to make an outward decision. John 6:44 Eph. 2
 - 3. They fail to teach their converts the necessity of obedience as a fruit of faith.
 - 4. They carelessly offer false assurance to people who make an external response.
 - 5. Our calling is to faithfully preach the gospel. I Co. 1:21-25

- D. When you habitually sin, you prove you do not really know, love, or believe God.
Is John saying that some who once knew God have lost their salvation? 2:19 Mt. 7:23
Phil. 1:6 John 10:28 14:15,24

IV. If you keep God's Word, the love of God has been perfected in you. v. 5a

- A. Keeping His Word is synonymous with keeping His commandments (and walking as He walked). v. 5a John 14:15,23 8:51,55
- B. The love of God has truly been perfected (completed) in those who keep His Word.
1. Is John speaking of your love for God or God's love for you? 5:3 4:9 3:17 Jo. 15:9f
 2. His love for you has resulted in your actively loving Him and others.
 3. John is not suggesting that you are living perfectly. 1:8,10 2:1 Phil. 3:12
 4. The work of God which was begun in your profession of faith has been completed when your faith shows itself by your works of love. 4:12,17 James 2:22
- C. Those who love God are no longer in love with the world. 2:15-17 Mt. 6:24
1. Love for the world cannot coexist with love for God. Mt. 22:37 Lu, 14:26 Js. 4:4
 2. The world is opposed to God. 2:16
 3. The world is passing away. 2:17 Mt. 6:19 Isa. 55:2 John 4:13
- D. Is your profession of faith confirmed by the love of God in your life?

V. Prove your profession of faith in Christ by walking in His steps. v. 5b-6

- A. Do you claim to abide in Him? v. 5b-6a 3:24 4:12-13 John 15:1f
1. Abiding in Him is synonymous with knowing Him.
 2. This image powerfully expresses our union with Him.
 3. If you abide in Him, you will share His nature and bear fruit. John 15:5
- B. If you are going to claim to be in Christ, imitate His example. 2:29 3:3,5,16 Jo. 13:15
I Pe. 2:21
1. You owe it to God.
 2. Jesus perfectly obeyed the Father's will. John 4:34 8:29 14:31 13:34
 3. Do others see Christ in you?

VI. Concluding applications.

- A. How well must you obey God's commandments in order to have assurance?
1. John knows you will not keep God's law perfectly. 1:8-2:2
 2. Are you striving to keep God's commandments?
 3. Does obedience characterize your life?
 4. Do you long to be like Christ?
 5. Do you see progress over time?
 6. Do you take your sin seriously?
 7. Do you value God's grace to you in Christ?
 8. Remember God's past work in your life.
 9. Remember your salvation is God's work.
- B. Do you know God?

Integrity. Exodus 20:16

- I. Introduction and review. Mark 6:18 Pr. 17:7 Jer. 9:3 *They bend their tongues like a bow; lies and not truth prevail in the land.***
- II. The theology of lying: every falsehood is a sin against God.**
- A. Truth is a significant kingdom issue.**
1. God is by nature true and promotes the truth. Titus 1:2 John 14:6
 2. We are made in his image and we are to reflect his nature.
 3. Satan is by nature a liar and he promotes error. Jn. 8:44 II Co. 11:3 Gen. 3:1f
 4. Your integrity demonstrates whose nature you share. Rom. 1:25 Eph. 4:25
- B. Why do people lie?**
1. People lie to avoid the consequences of the wrong things they have done.
 2. People lie to get something from others.
 3. Ultimately people lie because they do not believe or fear God.
- C. Post-modernism, which declares that truth is relative, is the ultimate assertion of man's sinful independence from God.**
1. There is no objective truth or ultimate standard of morality.
 2. What matters is what is true for you, how it makes you feel.
- III. What is forbidden by the ninth commandment? Every kind of falsehood.**
- A. Don't bear false witness.**
1. Perjury. Dt. 19:16 I Kn. 21:13 Pr. 25:18 Ex. 23:1
 2. Breaking of oaths and promises. Mt. 5:33-37
 3. Other falsehoods: slander, cheating, etc. Lev. 19:16
- B. Don't deceive: manipulating words, exaggeration, flattery, "white lies." Mt. 23:16-22 Ps. 12:3**
- C. Don't bear false witness against God. False teaching is a most severe form of lying. Js. 3:1f**
1. Teachers who openly deny the truthfulness of God's Word.
 2. Post-modernism has infected the evangelical church.
- D. Carelessness with truth: claiming to know when you can't be sure: accusations, gossip, teaching, gullibility. Pr. 16:38 11:13**
- E. Lying has severe consequences. Pr. 19:5 12:13 *A false witness will not go unpunished and he who tells lies will not escape.... An evil man is trapped by his sinful talk.***
1. You destroy your reputation for integrity.
 2. You will harden your own heart. *Singe conscience.*
 3. You will hurt the people you deceived. Pr. 26:28 *A lying tongue hates those it crushes and a flattering mouth works ruin.*
 4. Your lies may contribute to others' lying. Pr. 29:12 *If a ruler pays attention to falsehood, all his ministers become wicked.*
 5. Your lies will bring judgement from God. Pr. 12:22 15:3 6:16-19 Nu. 32:23 Ga. 6:7 Acts 5:1f Jn. 8:44 Rev. 21:8 22:15 *The Lord detests lying lips.*

IV. What is positively required by the ninth commandment? Integrity. Pr. 20:15

A. Tell the truth. Eph. 4:25

B. Keep your commitments, even if it hurts. Ps. 15:4 Pr. 3:28 Jud. 11:30-31 Dt. 23:22

C. Proclaim the truth of God in Christ. Pr. 20:15

D. Sometimes it is wise to remain quiet.

1. You should not always say what is in your mind. Eph. 4:15 Pr. 10:19 Ps. 141:3

2. Not everyone has a right to the truth. Pr. 11:13

3. Sometimes it is possible to be released from a commitment.

4. Sometimes one is providentially hindered from keeping a commitment.

E. Integrity takes faith! Pr. 21:6 19:6 Ps. 51:6 15:2 24:4 Mt. 12:34

V. Concluding applications.

A. All of us are born liars. I Jn. 1:8-2:4

B. Jesus is the truth who makes a way for us to come to the Father. Jn. 8:31-32 14:6

1. He will change your nature. Col. 3:9-10

2. He will establish a kingdom of truth. Zech. 8:3,16

Worry. 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

Financial Freedom

I. Introduction: foundational principles.

A. God is the owner and source of all wealth. Deut. 8:18 Ps. 50:10 Pr. 8:21 10:22
I Sam. 2:7 I Chron. 29:11-16

B. Money is important.

1. A test of your priorities. Luke 16:11

a. Love for God.

b. Stewardship of God's resources.

2. A means by which you fulfill your responsibilities.

a. Providing for your family. I Tim. 5:8

b. Helping others. Eph. 4:28 I Cor. 16:1 II Cor. 8:4,14-15 9:12-15

3. An opportunity for you to learn to trust God. Matt. 6:11, 25-33

C. Money must not become a substitute for God as your source of security. I Tim. 6:17
Pr. 11:28 30:8-9 18:11-12 3:5-6

1. Your goal is not financial independence.

2. You may expect God to provide for your needs (not desires). Ps. 37:25 34:9-10

Pr. 10:3 13:25 Mt. 6:11,33 Phil. 4:19 I Tim. 6:8

3. Riches have limited value. Ecc. 5:10

a. Wealth is fleeting. Prov. 23:4-5

b. Money is not a measure of your worth. Prov. 22:2 28:6,11 James 1:9-11

c. Money will be worthless in the day of judgement. Pr. 11:4 Luke 16:19ff 12:16ff

d. Wrong attitudes towards money lead to all kinds of other sins. I Tim. 6:9-10
Matt. 13:22

D. Most people in our day are in financial bondage. Matt. 6:24

II. Acquiring money.

A. You must work hard to make a living. Pr. 10:4-5 6:6-11 27:23-24 19:24

B. Don't expect others to provide for you. II Th. 3:6-14 Acts 20:33 I Th. 2:9-10
I Tim. 5:8 Prov. 10:3 19:15

C. You may not be able to pursue your dream career. Prov. 28:19-20 14:23
Don't expect to make "easy money".

D. Whatever job you have, do your work as unto the Lord. Col. 3:17,22-24 Eph. 6:5-9

E. Beware of compromising your integrity for the sake of wealth. Pr. 10:2 13:11,23 15:6 16:8

1. Taxes. Pr 15:27 Mark 12:17 Rom. 13:6

2. Business ethics. Pr. 21:6 22:16

3. Buying and selling. Prov. 20:10,14

4. Rest, family time, worship, and ministry. Heb. 10:25 Ex. 20:8-11 Luke 12:15

III. Spending money.

A. Give to the Lord's work.

- 1. Giving is a priority in your budget. Prov. 3:9-10**
- 2. Give in proportion to God's blessing to you. I Cor. 16:1-2 II Cor. 8:3, 11-15**
 - a. Is there a fixed percentage God wants you to give?**
 - b. What are the benefits of weekly giving?**
- 3. Give generously. I Tim. 6:17-19 II Cor. 8:1-3 9:5-6 Rom. 12:8 Luke 6:38 Prov. 11:24-25 Mark 12:41-44**
- 4. Give cheerfully. II Cor. 9:7,15 8:4,8 Acts 5:4 Ex. 36:5-7**
- 5. Give gratefully. II Cor. 8:9 John 3:16 I Jn. 4:9-11,19**
- 6. Give wisely. II Thess. 3:10 Prov. 20:4 22:16 19:15 II John 10-11**
 - a. To the poor. Pr. 28:27 19:17 Acts 4:34f Eph. 4:28 I Jn. 3:17 Js. 1:27 2:14f**
 - b. To the Lord's work. Gal. 6:6 I Cor. 9:11-14 I Tim. 5:17-18 Luke 8:1-3**
- 7. God blesses those who give well. Prov. 11:25 II Cor. 9:8-11**

B. Stay out of debt. Rom. 13:8

- 1. Debt produces bondage to men. Prov. 22:7 Mt. 18:23-25**
- 2. Borrowing is an indication of the absence of God's blessing. Deut. 28:44,12 15:6**
- 3. Debt presumes upon the future. Prov. 16:9 19:21 James 4:13-17 Mt. 4:6-7**
- 4. Never co-sign a loan for someone else. Prov. 6:1-5 22:26-27 17:18**
 - a. If they can't qualify for a loan with their own credit, they ought not to spend the money.**
 - b. You may be helping them to violate God's principles of financial wisdom.**
- 5. Pay your debts promptly. Prov. 3:27-28**
- 6. Practical advice. Luke 14:28**
 - a. What you can spend is determined by what you have, not your credit.**
 - b. When you must borrow, make the maximum down payment.**
 - c. Never owe more on an item than the amount for which you could sell it in an emergency. Don't borrow on depreciating items.**
 - d. Never owe money on credit cards - wasteful high interest. Prov. 3:27-28**
 - e. Instead of buying items on credit, make do with the old one while you save up for the new one.**
 - f. Make a goal and a plan to be entirely debt free.**

C. Control your expenses.

- 1. Make a budget based upon your income. Prov. 21:5 22:3 24:3-4 Luke 14:28-29**
 - a. Plan to spend all of your money unto the glory of God. Col. 3:17**
He will give you what you *need*. I Cor. 10:13 Phil. 4:19
 - b. Write down every expense.**
 - c. See percentage guidelines on handout.**
- 2. Don't make impulsive purchases.**
 - a. Only spend what your budget allows.**
 - b. Develop sales resistance. Pr. 22:3 14:15**
 - c. Don't be deceived by the desirability of more *stuff*. Eccles. 2:1ff**
 - d. Avoid hasty decisions and impulse buying. Prov. 19:2 14:8**
 - e. Carefully research purchases. Prov. 21:5 24:3 14:8**

3. Distinguish between necessities and luxuries. Prov. 30:8-9 21:17
 - a. Learn to be content with the basics. I Tim. 6:6-8 Phil. 4:11-13
 - b. Learn to live with (and repair) old stuff.
 - c. Only eat out when you have budgeted to do so.
4. What are wrong motives for spending money?

IV. Saving money.

- A. Anticipate future expenses or financial crises. Prov. 6:6-11 30:25
auto insurance, property tax bill, new car, children's education, retirement, layoffs
- B. Accumulate savings gradually.
 1. Is it wrong to accumulate wealth? I Tim. 6:17 Prov. 10:4-5
 2. Beware of "get rich quick schemes". Prov. 13:11 28:19-20,22 15:27 27:12
 - a. If it sounds too good to be true, it almost certainly is.
 - b. Is it wrong for a Christian to gamble or play the lottery?
 3. Investment risk tends to increase with anticipated return.
- C. Is it wrong to take interest from others? Deut. 23:19-20
 1. It is wrong to take advantage of the desperate need of another believer. Pr. 28:8
Ps. 15:5 Neh. 5:10 Lev. 25:25-27,14
 2. It is not wrong to accept interest from a business investment. Mt. 25:27
 3. Beware of lending to friends and relatives.
 - a. Your money and your relationships are at risk.
 - b. If there is a great need, it is better to give. Prov. 19:17

V. Other issues.

- A. Teach your children these principles.
 1. Hard work. Prov. 10:4-5
 2. Wise spending.
 3. Careful saving.
 4. Don't ruin your children by enabling their laziness. Luke 15:13
- B. What about insurance?
 1. Is it wrong for a Christian to have insurance?
 - a. No more than it is a lack of faith to lock doors of house at night.
 - b. A means of ensuring that you can meet your own obligations.
 2. Life insurance.
 - a. You can get the most insurance for the least money by buying term insurance.
 - b. How much is enough?
 3. Auto, health, and homeowners insurance.
 - a. The purpose of insurance is to provide for a calamity which you cannot afford.
 - b. The general rule is to maximize deductibles to minimize premiums.
- C. Is bankruptcy biblical? Ps. 37:21 Prov. 3:27-28
- D. Retirement.
 1. It is wise to prepare for retirement by saving money. I Tim. 5:8
 2. Family, not the government, is responsible to take care of the aged. I Tim. 5:4
 3. Take advantage of company subsidized retirement plans.
But don't put all of your eggs in one basket.

E. Making a will.

1. Distribution of assets.

Is it good to leave an inheritance to your children? Prov. 13:22 20:21

II Cor. 12:14

2. Guardianship of children.

F. Get wise financial counsel from godly Christians. Prov. 15:22 18:15

VI. Concluding application.

A. Make it your goal to be wise and holy, not rich and famous! Prov. 23:4-5 19:1

28:6,22 8:10-11 15:16-17 16:16 I Tim. 6:9-11 Ecc. 2:1-11 5:10 Mt. 13:22 19:22

James 1:10-11 II Tim. 2:4

B. Hope for those who have financial difficulties of their own making. Mt. 6:33

C. Remember the example of our Lord. II Cor. 8:9

D. One day what is valuable on earth will be worthless. II Pet. 3:10-13

E. Recommended Reading.

1. Your Finances in Changing Times, Burkett

2. How to Manage Your Money, Burkett

3. The Complete Financial Guide for Young Couples, Burkett

4. Master Your Money, Blue

5. Monthly Money: Allowance and Responsibility System for Kids and Teenagers

I. Introduction and review.

II. Do you have the disease of materialism? v. 9-10

- A. First you are infected by a love of money. v. 9a, 10a**
1. Is money the root of all evil? v. 17 4:4-5
 2. Idolatry is at the root of the problem. Col. 3:5 Isa. 55:1-3 Rev. 3:17-18
 3. Those without wealth desire to be rich. v. 9a
 4. Rich money lovers turn away from God. v. 17 Pr. 30:8-9 Mark 10:23-25
 - a. Pride. Rom. 12:16 Dt. 8:18
 - b. Trusting in the uncertainty of wealth. v. 7 Ps. 52:7 Prov. 11:28
 5. The disease of materialism comes in different forms.
 - a. Some want to be rich so that they can spend and enjoy.
 - b. Others seek security in savings.
- B. Next you will develop the symptoms of practicing all sorts of evil. v. 9b, 10a**
A desire to be rich will give birth to the practice of sin. James 1:14-15
1. Just as AIDS destroys the physical immune system, weakening resistance to other diseases; so the love of money leads to all kinds of other sins.
 2. Families have been divided over money: divorce, conflict, neglect.
 3. Churches have been harmed because of covetousness: neglect of worship; failure to love, serve, and give; misusing relationships; lawsuits. I Co. 6:1-8
 4. The love of money can spoil your personal life.
 - a. Compromising righteousness. Prov. 15:27 22:16 13:11 16:8
 - b. Get rich quick schemes. Prov. 28:19-20 Rom. 14:23b
 - c. Using debt to live a rich lifestyle. Prov. 22:7 3:27-28 21:17.
 - d. Being consumed with worry and anxiety over money.
 - e. Becoming rich and successful. Prov. 30:8-9 Luke 12:13-21
- C. Finally you will be plunged into ruin and destruction. v. 9c, 10b**
1. Like AIDS, materialism is fatal. Matt. 6:24 13:22 Col. 3:5 Zeph. 1:18
 2. Your riches will be worthless in the day of judgement. v. 7 James 5:1-6

III. You can be cured of materialism by the Great Physician.

- A. Flee from these things! v. 11a, 17**
1. The best way to avoid the disease of AIDS is to abstain from immorality (Safe sex).
 2. The best way to avoid the disease of materialism is to stay away from whatever promotes covetousness. Safe shopping, speaking, and thinking.
Pr. 14:15 Eph. 5:3 Phil. 4:8-9
- B. Pursue righteousness. v. 11b-16 Mt. 6:33 Prov. 15:16-17 16:8 8:10-11**
1. A Christian's goal is not to be rich, but holy.
 2. Maintain an eternal perspective. v. 7, 12b, 15, 19 Ecc. 5:15 Job 1:21 Pr. 27:24
II Cor. 12:9-10
- C. Learn the secret of contentment. v. 6-8,17 Phil. 4:11-12 Heb. 13:5-6 Luke 3:14**
1. Your fundamental problem is that you think an improvement in your circumstances will make you happy.
 2. Contentment does not come naturally. It must be learned. Phil. 4:11-13

3. What will it take to make you content? v. 8
4. Riches will always fail to satisfy. Prov. 23:4-5 30:15 Ecc. 5:10-11
A carnal heart has no contentment.
5. The secret to contentment is to fix your hope on God. v. 17 Phil. 4:4 Ps. 37:25
 - a. Not stoic self sufficiency, but sufficiency in Christ. II Cor. 3:5
 - b. Joy in the Lord is unshakable!
 - c. No one who hopes in Him is disappointed! Ps. 34:10 Heb. 13:5.
 - d. Do you find your greatest pleasure in God? Phil. 4:18

D. Practice generosity. v. 17-19

1. Who are the rich? Greater wealth brings greater responsibility.
2. The great antidote to the love of money is to give it away to those in need. Prov. 19:17
Eph. 4:28 Acts 2:44 4:32 II Cor. 8:1-5
 - a. As God enables you, do good. 2:10 5:10 II Tim. 3:17
 - b. Rather than hoping that others will give to you, make efforts to help others.
 - c. Give wisely! II Thess. 3:6-15
3. Invest in eternity. v. 19,7 Mt. 6:19-21 25:34-46 Pr. 23:4-5 11:24-25 Ecc. 5:15
4. Imitate our Lord Jesus Christ. II Cor. 8:9 Acts 10:35 Mark 10:45 I Pet. 2:24
 - a. God is rich & generous. Ps. 36:6 145:15-16 Acts 14:17 Js. 1:17
 - b. Our generosity should reflect His.

IV. Concluding applications.

A. Review: 3 stages and four antidotes.

B. Are you spiritually rich today? Ecc. 5:10 *Godliness is true gain.* II Cor. 9:8

1. Material wealth is vain. Rev. 3:17-18 Isa. 55:1ff
2. Both rich and poor will stand before God. Prov. 11:4.
3. You cannot be cured of the disease of materialism until you are healed from the guilt of your sin through the payment Christ made. II Cor. 8:9
4. The Lord Jesus Christ spiritually heals all who call upon Him.
5. The new nature which He gives makes you spiritually rich and frees you from slavery to empty materialism. Rev. 2:9 Js. 2:5 Phil. 4:19 Jer. 9:23-24

Dealing with 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 adults 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 be immediately 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 one who has abused to understand what has happened biblically.**
1. She needs to honestly face personal sinfulness. Mt. 7:3-5 I Jo. 1:9 Dt. 22:23-25
 2. She needs to honestly face the sinfulness of others. Dt. 23:25-27
 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 (See "Forgiveness and a Family Reunion" p. 23: *Introduction to Biblical Counseling*, by Jim Newheiser).
 - 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 Do You 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: Have 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.

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

Substance Abuse: 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, redemptions, 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.

Peer Pressure: Not Just for Teens

I. Introduction.

A. What is peer pressure?

B. Biblical language for peer pressure.

1. Conforming to the world. Rom. 12:2 I John 2:15-17
2. Pleasing men, rather than God. I Th. 2:4
3. Fearing man, rather than God. Pr. 29:25
4. Being influenced by the ungodly. Ps. 1:1f
5. Associating with ungodly companions. I Co. 15:33
6. Joining a wicked mob. Ex. 23:2

II. Who experiences peer pressure?

A. We all struggle with peer pressure.

B. Biblical examples of people who succumbed to peer pressure.

1. Reuben, who wouldn't stand up to his brothers' wicked treatment of Joseph. Gen. 37:18f
2. The naive young man joining a gang in Proverbs 1:10-19.
3. King Saul, who listened to the people rather than God. I Sam. 12:14 13:8 15:15
4. Rehoboam, who rejected the wise counsel of the elders and listened to his immature friends. I Kings 12 I Chron. 10:6-16
5. Herod, who was unwilling to back off of his rash vow before his guests. Mt. 14:9
6. Those who believed in Jesus, but were silent for fear of the Jews. John 12:42-43
7. Pilate who put Jesus to death because he feared the Jews. Luke 23:1f
8. The Jews who joined the mob in rejecting. Luke 23:23-24 Ex. 23:2
9. Peter, when he denied Jesus. Mt. 26:69-75
10. Peter, when he capitulated to the party of the circumcision and refused to eat with the Gentiles. Gal. 2:11-13

C. How can you identify a counselee who is enslaved to peer pressure?

1. Being overly influenced by peers is not ordinarily a presentation problem.
2. Does the counselee show indications of being controlled by the opinions and values of others?
3. Diagnostic questions.
 - a. Are you a people pleaser?
 - b. Are you over-committed because you can't say "no"?
 - c. Are you overly dependent on people for love, affection, and acceptance?
 - d. Do you sometimes boast, exaggerate, or even lie in order to make yourself look good?
 - e. Are you overly sensitive to criticism?
 - f. Are you afraid other people might consider you a failure?
 - g. Do you often second guess decisions because of what others might think?
 - h. Are you easily embarrassed?
 - i. Do you struggle with jealousy and envy?

III. What kinds of peer pressure do adults face?

- A. Moral peer pressure.
- B. Intellectual peer pressure. Col. 2:8f
- C. Social peer pressure: tolerance.
- D. Religious peer pressure. Mt. 15:6 Gal. 2:11f

IV. What are some sources of peer pressure? Ps. 1:1-2

- A. Friends and family. I Pe. 4:3-5
- B. Educators.
- C. Work or school environment.
- D. News media and entertainment.
- E. The church.

V. What are the root causes of our capitulation to peer pressure?

- A. The fear of man, which brings a snare. Prov. 29:25
- B. Idolatry: we think people can meet our ultimate needs and that God cannot. Isa. 55:1-2 Jer. 17:5-8 Rom. 1:23
- C. Succumbing to sinful peer pressure is self-destructive. Pr. 29:25 Jer. 17:5-6 Isa. 55:2

VI. How can a Christian overcome peer pressure?

- A. The answer of psychology is to build self-esteem. II Tim. 3:1-2 Judges 21:25
- B. Repent of your sinful fear of man. Pr. 29:25 23:17 Mt. 10:28 Luke 12:4-5 I Th. 2:4 I Pet. 3:13-14
- C. Cultivate the fear of God and love for God. Pr. 1:7,20f Mt. 22:37 Acts 5:29
 - 1. Seek to please Him. I Jo. 3:22
 - 2. Fear displeasing God more than displeasing men. Pr. 3:11 Heb. 12:5
 - 3. Those who fear God will be blessed. Pr. 29:25 19:23 10:27 14:26 15:16 22:4
 - 4. Set your mind on things above. Col. 3:1f
- D. Trust the LORD. Jer. 17:7-8 Prov. 3:5-6 Ps. 27:3 118:8-9 62:5-6
 - 1. Recognize that the highest pleasures are found in the LORD. Isa. 55:1-2
 - 2. Even when you are surrounded by your enemies, God is with you. Ps. 23:5
 - 3. Seek wisdom, which enables you to overcome peer pressure. Prov. 1:7-19 2:2 3:13 4:5 7:4
 - 4. Determine your beliefs and standards from Scripture. Ps. 119:111 Pr. 3:5-6 Prepare in advance for peer pressure.
 - 5. You need God's help to succeed. John 15:5

- E. **Honor God by choosing wise peers. Prov. 13:20 Ps. 119:163**
 - 1. **Wicked companions will drag you down. Pr. 1:17-19 4:14-16 20:19 22:24-25 23:20 24:1-2,21-22 I Co. 15:33 II Co. 6:14f**
 - 2. **Godly companions will lift you up. Pr. 4:14-19 17:17 Daniel 2:17f**
 - 3. **Peer pressure can be a good thing, if you have the right peers. Heb. 10:24-25 Pr. 27:6,17 Ecc. 4:9-12 Rom. 15:14 Mt. 18:15f Gal. 6:1-5 Eph. 5:3f**
 - 4. **Carefully select your teachers and mentors.**
 - 5. **Choose the entertainment which you will allow to influence you. Ps. 101:3-4**
- F. **Be prepared to stand alone. John 15:18f Acts 5:29f Mt. 7:13 I Jo. 2:15-17 II Co. 6:8**
- G. **Those who overcome peer pressure are blessed.**

VII. Biblical examples of those who have withstood peer pressure.

- A. **Daniel and his friends. Daniel 1:1f 2:17f 3:16-18 6:1f**
- B. **Moses. Heb. 11:24-25.**
- C. **Micaiah. I Kings 22:13**
- D. **Paul. Gal. 1:10-12 2:11f Eph. 6:19-20 I Th. 2:4**
- E. **Christ. John 8:29 Mt. 22:16**
- F. **How did they do it?**

VIII. Homework for those who are influenced by peer pressure.

- A. **Studies in the book of Proverbs.**
- B. **Make a list and evaluate the people who have influence over you.**
- C. **Peer pressure journal.**
 - 1. **The situation.**
 - 2. **What others were telling me to do.**
 - 3. **What the Bible says God wants me to do.**
 - 4. **What I did.**
- D. **Reading assignments:**
 - 1. **When People are Big and God is Small, Welch**
 - 2. **Overcoming Fear, Worry and Anxiety, Fitzpatrick**

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 application.

- 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

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 to 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 II Ti.
 - 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.

I. Introduction.

II. Your work is important.

A. Your work has spiritual significance.

1. God Himself works. Gen. 2:2-3 John 5:17 Mark 6:3
2. God created mankind to work in His image: dominion. Gen. 2:15
3. The fall makes work difficult and unpleasant. Gen. 3:17-19 Ecc. 2:20-21
4. Hard work is a mark of godliness. Ex. 20:9 I Tim. 5:8
5. Your vocation is a significant part of your identity and your service to God.
6. Those who don't work sin against God and destroy their own lives. Pr. 6: 6-11 12:24 15:19 18:9 20:4 24:30-32 26:14-15 I Tim. 5:8 II Th. 3:10
7. If you are unemployed, your full time job is to look for work. Ecc. 11:6
8. Some need to upgrade their skills, so they can pursue a more suitable vocation.
9. Not everyone can pursue his dream career. Pr. 28:19 14:23
10. Christ reverses the effects of the fall, making labor meaningful and significant.
11. We will work in heaven, serving God. Rev. 22:3

B. Work is not everything. Mark 2:27

1. God has blessed humanity with cycles of work and rest. Ex. 20:9 Gen. 2:2-3
2. Rest, like work, has spiritual significance. Heb. 4:1-11

III. Employees, work for your boss as if you were working for Christ. v. 5-8

A. How does a passage addressed to slaves apply to 21st century employees?

1. Your employer (or customer) purchases and owns your labor.
2. You are tempted to the same vices as slaves would have been.
3. You have the same opportunity to honor God in your vocation.
4. You have many freedoms and privileges others have not enjoyed.
5. Be thankful for how pleasant your work situation is.

B. Obey your boss. v. 5a

1. Do what he/she asks you to do. Titus 2:10
2. What if your boss is unreasonable? I Pe. 2:18-23 4:15
3. There are limitations to your boss's authority. Acts 5:29 Gal. 3:28 4:7

C. Honor your boss. v. 5b-7

1. Serve respectfully. v. 5b Titus 2:10
2. Serve wholeheartedly. v. 5c Ecc. 9:10a Col. 3:17
3. Serve conscientiously. v. 6a Titus 2:10
4. Serve cheerfully. v. 7a
5. Don't take unfair advantage of a Christian boss. I Tim. 6:2

D. You are able to serve your boss in this way because you work for Christ. v. 5b-8

1. Serve respectfully and wholeheartedly obey for Christ's sake. v. 5b
2. Work conscientiously because you are servants of Christ. v. 6 I Co. 6:20
3. Labor cheerfully because you are serving the Lord. v. 7
4. Your work is a big part of your witness. I Ti. 6:1 Titus 2:10 I Pe. 2:12,20 3:15 4:16
5. Christ will reward your faithful labor. v. 8 Mt. 25:14ff Luke 6:35 II Co. 5:10 Ecc. 12:14 Rev. 22:12 Pr. 10:4 21:5 12:24 Col. 3:25
6. The Lord will give you grace to endure. I Co. 10:13 Mt. 11:29-30

IV. Employers, treat your employees fairly. v. 9

- A. In what sense are employers to do the *same things* to their employees? v. 9a**
1. Paul is not saying employers must obey their employees.
 2. Treat them with respect. Job 31:13 Philemon 1:16 Mt. 7:12
 3. Treat them fairly: just wages and safe working conditions. Col. 4:1 Lev. 19:13 Deut. 24:14-15 James. 5:4
- B. Don't abuse your authority. v. 9b**
1. Roman masters had great power over their slaves.
 2. Employers sometimes have great power.
 3. Positively, offer them encouragement and reward for their faithfulness.
- C. Remember you too are a servant who will give account to a heavenly Master. v. 9c**
1. God is not impressed by your worldly status. I Pe. 1:17
 2. God takes special interest in the weak and oppressed. Js. 5:1ff

V. Concluding applications.

- A. How do these principles apply to modern labor relations?**
1. Can a Christian join a labor union?
 2. You are not a slave. I Co. 7:21
 3. Sometimes unions promote adversarial relationships with employers.
 4. What honor and obedience do union members owe to union leaders?
 5. Should Christians honor picket lines?
 6. Can a Christian be a replacement worker (scab)?
- B. Keep your work in proper perspective.**
1. Some make their career an idol
 2. Remember it is God who makes you successful. Deut. 8:18
 3. Your work is to be for His glory. Pr. 16:3
 4. Your success is not measured in dollars or worldly status.
 5. Don't neglect the Lord, your family, and the church. Eph. 5:22-6:4 Heb. 10:25
 6. Enjoy the rest God gives you. Ex. 20:8-11 Gen. 2:1-3
 7. Don't forget to give to the Lord's work. Eph. 4:28 I Co. 16:2 I Ti. 6:17-19 Pr. 3:9
- C. If you want to glorify God in your work, you must be filled with His Spirit. Eph. 5:21**
- D. Before you can serve God in your work, you must embrace Christ's work. I Pe. 2:21f**
He became a servant in order to purchase our freedom. Mk. 10:45 Phil. 2:5-11

A Change of Clothes and a Change of Mind. Ephesians 4:17-24

I. Introduction and review.

- A. Why is our society deteriorating? Crime, drugs, abortion, homosexuality, deficit.
- B. Paul gives a masterful diagnosis of our decaying world. The problem is in the mind.

II. You have abandoned the futile life of the pagans. v. 17-19 Romans 1:18-32

- A. The cause of the natural man's plight is in his mind. v. 18 Gen. 6:5
Every unbeliever has a mental problem.
 - 1. His understanding is darkened. v. 18a I Cor. 2:14
 - a. The biblical concept of the mind goes for beyond mere intellect.
 - b. The fall affects the whole man.
 - c. The world has information, but they lack true knowledge.
 - 2. He is culpably ignorant of ultimate truth. v. 18c Rom. 1:18-22 John 9:40-41
 - 3. He is alienated from the life of God. v. 18b 2:1,12 Isa. 53:6 Rom. 1:21
 - a. There is no life apart from God.
 - b. It is impossible to have morality without godliness.
 - 4. His heart has become petrified. v. 18d John 3:19
- B. The natural man consequently is enslaved to wicked behavior. v. 19
 - 1. He is morally beyond feeling. v. 19a I Tim. 4:2 Jer. 6:15 Rom. 2:14-15
If you want to enjoy a life of sin, you must deaden your God given conscience.
 - 2. He has given himself over to the reign of the flesh - psychopathic sinners. v. 19b
 - a. Who gives whom over? Who does the hardening?
 - b. The punishment for sin is more sin. Rom. 1:24-32
 - c. Those who act this way do so by their deliberate rejection of God. Rom. 1:32
 - d. They are enslaved to their lusts.
 - 3. He is involved in every kind of impurity. v. 19c
 - 4. He is controlled by an insatiable desire for more. v. 19d
- C. The life of the unbeliever is an exercise in futility! v. 17b,22 Ecc. 1:2 3:9 Rom. 1:21
 - 1. The lusts which enslaved you are deceitful. v. 22 Jer. 17:9 Prov. 5:1ff 7:6ff
II. Pet. 2:19
 - 2. The life of unbelief is empty.
 - 3. The unbeliever is unable to rescue himself from the vanity of sin. Rom. 8:6-8
 - 4. Many have fallen into despair.
 - 5. If you have not yet been converted, you are still a slave living in futility!

III. You have been converted through the knowledge of Christ. v. 20-24 Rom. 6:1-11

- A. You have joined the school of Christ. v. 20-21 John 17:3
 - 1. He is the subject. v. 20
 - a. Christianity is not merely a set of rules for self improvement.
Christianity is knowing Christ personally.
 - b. Christianity is not a mere feeling/experience.
Becoming a Christian involves embracing the truth about Christ.
 - 2. He is the teacher. v. 21a John 10:27
How do you hear Christ?
 - 3. He is the classroom. v. 21b
 - 4. He offers the only truth which overcomes the blindness, ignorance and hardness of the natural man. John 14:6 8:12 18:38 I Tim. 2:4

B. You have stripped off the old man and put on the new. 22-24

- 1. When did the putting off and putting on take place? Col.3:9-10**
 - a. The old man was put to death at conversion! v. 22a Rom. 6:6**
 - b. At the same time you put on the new man. v. 24 Rom. 6:4-5**
 - c. BC and AD.**
 - d. You can't successfully take off the old man without putting on the new.**

C. Since conversion has already taken place, what are you responsible to do? Remember who you are! v. 22-24

- 1. No longer live in the decaying way of the old man since you have already taken him off. v. 22 Rom. 13:14**
- 2. Walk in righteousness and holiness because God has restored His Image in you by a creative act. v. 24 II Pet. 1:4 II Cor. 5:17**
- 3. Your inner self is continually being renewed. v. 23 Rom. 12:2 I Cor. 2:12-14**
 - a. Conversion is a change from within.**
 - b. This is an ongoing process.**
 - c. There is both an active and a passive side to this renewal. Phil. 2:12-13**

IV. Conclusion. Ezek. 36:26 Gal. 2:20

I. Introduction.

A. The uniqueness of Christian ethics.

1. Put off bad behavior.
2. Put on good behavior.
3. God's Word gives you the reason and the ability to be ethical.

B. What place does God's Law have in the new covenant church?

1. We are free from the Law. Rom. 3:20 6:15
2. As God's chosen and redeemed people, we are called to obedience. John 14:15
Eph. 1:4 2:10 I Pet. 1:14-16
3. God's Law convicts unbelievers of sin & calls them to repentance. Gal. 3:10-13

II. Replace lying with truth. v. 25

A. Put off falsehood. v. 25a Ex. 20:16 Zech. 8:16-17

1. Why does this come first?
 - a. God is, by nature, truth. John 14:6 8:32 17:17 Titus 1:2
God takes lying very seriously. Acts 5:1-11 Rev. 21:8, 27 II Cor. 11:3
2. We live in an age of liars.
3. Examples of violations of this commandment. Lev. 6:1-6 Ps. 15:4
(Perjury, failure to keep a promise or commitment, cheating on school work, betrayal of a confidence, flattery, exaggeration, misstatement of facts, carelessness, rumors, deceit.)
4. How are we tempted to rationalize falsehood? (white lies?)

B. Put on integrity. v. 25b

1. We are people of truth. Acts 1:8 Prov. 20:15
2. It takes faith to tell the truth. What do you do when you get into a tight place?
3. Must we always tell the whole truth? 4:15a Prov. 11:13

C. As members of Christ's body, you owe the truth to one another. v. 25c,4 1:23

1. Ethical behavior is built upon the doctrinal foundation already laid.
2. Intimate fellowship is based upon trust, thus lying is destructive to the church.

III. Replace sinful anger with a controlled temper. v. 26-27

A. Put on controlled righteous indignation. v. 26a

Is there such a thing as righteous anger?

1. God Himself is angry at sin. 5:6 Mark. 3:5 John 2:14-17 Rom. 1:18
2. We ought to have a holy hatred for evil. Ps. 97:10 119:53 69:9 2:12
3. The best sin to be angry at is your own.

B. Put off sinful anger. v. 26b-c Ps. 4:4 Ecc. 7:9 James 1:19-20

1. The world deals with anger through suppression and ventilation.
2. Righteous anger is rare and short lived.
3. Don't remain angry for long. v. 26c Matt. 5:23-24 Rom. 12:17-21 Eph. 4:32
I Pet. 2:21-23 Prov. 15:1,18 29:11 Js. 1:19-20

C. If you don't handle your anger properly, you are inviting Satan's activity. v. 27

How you control your temper is part of the unseen spiritual battle.

IV. Replace theft with hard work and charity. v. 28

A. Put off stealing. v. 28a Ex. 20:15 Lev. 19:11 Titus. 2:9-10

1. Theft is rampant in our society. (Crime, scams, padding expense accounts, underpayment of taxes, expectation of something for nothing from the government.)
2. The sin of theft can be very subtle. Jer. 17:9
 - a. Robbing your employer by not giving a day's work for a day's wage.
 - b. Taking company resources for personal use.
 - c. Failure to pay a fair price or wage.
 - d. Overcharging.
 - e. Stealing the time of others by forcing them to wait for you to be late.
 - f. Borrowing and not returning. Ps. 37:21
 - g. Stealing ideas (plagiarism).
 - h. Copyright violations.
3. Each of these sins can be rationalized. Prov. 14:12
4. Ultimately stealing is rooted in unbelief. Phil. 4:11

B. Put on good hard work. v. 28b Acts 20:34-35

1. One of the great sins of our day is sloth. II Thess. 3:6-15 I Tim. 5:8
2. Are you working hard? I Thess. 2:9 4:11 Acts 20:34 Prov. 26:13-16 28:19-20

C. Work hard so you can help those in need. v. 28c Luke 3:11 Acts 20:34-35

1. Notice what is not given as the motive for hard work!
2. It is right to help the righteous who are in financial distress.
3. By doing so, you reflect the Lord's sacrificial kindness. II Cor. 8:9 Prov. 19:17
4. Remember that you are indebted to the Lord for every blessing.

V. Conclusion.

A. Become the new man Christ died to make you. Rom. 14:23 Ex. 22:1-4 Luke 19:8

B. Are there liars and thieves in our church? I Cor. 6:9-11

I. Introduction and review.

II. Replace destructive speech with conversation which builds others up. 4:29-30

A. Put off toxic words. v. 29a

1. Speech is important. James 3:1-12 Matt. 15:18
2. Do you engage in rotten speech? I Cor. 15:33
 - a. Foul language, profanity, dirty jokes.
 - b. Hurtful words: disrespectful, argumentative, cutting, backbiting, rudeness.
 - c. Wasted words. Prov. 10:19 29:20 17:28 Matt. 12:36 Ps. 141:3 James 1:19
 - d. How can you appear wise? Prov. 17:28 11:12

B. Put on appropriate edifying speech. v. 29b Luke 4

1. Build others up with your tongue. 5:19-20 Phil. 4:8 Col. 4:6
2. Meet needs by ministering grace through what you say. Prov. 25:11 Heb. 10:24

C. Thereby you will not grieve the Holy Spirit! v. 30 Isa. 63:10

1. How is the Holy Spirit affected by your sin? Rom. 8:9 I Cor. 6:19-20
2. Paul gives a you a powerful incentive to control your tongue.

III. Replace murderous hatred with Christlike love. 4:31-32

A. Put off hateful behavior. v. 31

1. Bitterness. (suppression) Lev. 19:17-18 Heb. 12:14-15
2. Wrath. (ventilation) Prov. 29:11 I Cor. 13:5
3. Anger. (More suppression) Prov. 14:29 James 1:19-20 Matt. 5:21-22
4. Clamor: Violent verbal outbursts (more ventilation)
5. Slander. Either:
 - a. Keep quiet by overlooking sin in love. I Pet. 4:8
 - b. Privately confront your brother in love. Matt. 18:15 Luke 17:3
6. Malice (including vindictiveness) Rom. 12:17-21

B. Put on love. v. 32a 5:2

1. Be kind to one another.
2. Be tender-hearted. I Pet. 3:8 Rom. 12:15
3. Forgiving each other. Luke 17:3 Matt. 18:21-22
 - a. Forgiveness is a lost art in our society.
 - b. People will sin against you.
 - c. No believer has the right to withhold forgiveness from a brother. Matt. 18:21-22
 - d. Forgiveness is granted, not felt (Adams).
 - e. Forgiveness is a promise not raise the issue again to the offender, to others, or oneself (Adams).
 - f. What if the other person will not seek your forgiveness?

IV. The love of Christ provides the motive and the model for your love. 4:32-5:2

A. The motive - we are to forgive because we are forgiven. 4:32b 5:2

1. The only way a holy God could forgive us is in Christ. 4:32b 5:2 I John 3:16
 - a. He voluntarily *gave Himself up*. 5:25-27 John 10:11,15 12:27 15:13
 - b. He died *for us* (substitution). II Cor. 5:21 I Pet. 3:18 2:24 Isa. 53:6,12
 - c. His death was *an offering and a sacrifice to God*. (Penal) Rom. 3:25-26 5:9-10
Isa. 53:10 Lev. 1:1-17
 - d. His work was *a fragrant aroma to God*. (Satisfaction) Gen. 8:1-2 Ex. 29:18
2. Having experienced His love, you are compelled to forgive. Matt. 18:23-35
 - a. You owed a crushing debt.
 - b. If you refuse to forgive, you have not yet experienced His forgiveness.
 - c. The measure of your understanding of God's love is the degree to which
You manifest it.

B. The model - imitate God's love in Christ. 5:1 4:24 Matt. 5:48 Phil. 2:5-8

1. You are able to imitate God, because you are His child. 5:1 1:5 2:19
2. Love and forgive as you have been loved and forgiven in Christ. v. 32b
Matt. 18:21-35 Phil. 2:5-8 I Pet. 2:21 4:8 Ps. 103:12
 - a. Free.
 - b. Full.
 - c. Forgetful. Ps. 103:12

V. Conclusion and application.

A. Theology and practice (doctrine and love) are inseparable.

B. The balance between law and grace.

C. The Gospel delivers you from the practice of sin.

When Good Kids Make Bad Choices

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

A. Does good parenting guarantee good kids? **Prov. 22:6** *Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it.*

1. Is Proverbs 22:6 an unconditional promise or a maxim?
2. There is no guarantee of success. We are dependent upon God's sovereign grace.
 - a. None of us is a good enough parent to merit our child's salvation! **Heb. 12:10**
 - b. Our children are so sinful they would reject discipline. **Ge. 8:21**

B. God blesses faithful parents.

1. Discipline may spare your children from death. **Prov. 23:13-14**
2. Your children will bring you joy. **Prov. 29:17**

C. If you neglect discipline you will contribute to your child's ruin and your own misery: a matter of life and death.

1. Learn from Eli and David. **I Sam. 2:12-17,22-25 3:13 4:11 I Kings 1:5-6**
2. Children die of parental neglect. **20:20 30:17 Ex. 21:15,17**
3. Other parents try hard, but fail because they use the wrong method.
4. Bad patterns established in childhood last a lifetime.
5. Parents suffer grief and shame. **Pr. 17:21,25 29:15b 19:13** *The father of a fool has no joy.. A foolish son is a grief to his father and bitterness to her who bore him*

D. Children are responsible for the choices they make. **Pr. 20:11 Ezek. 18:5-13** *It is by his deeds that a lad distinguishes himself. If his conduct is pure and right.*

1. Not all rebellion is the fault of the parents.
2. What was the difference between Cain and Abel? **Gen. 4:1-9**
 - a. Both were born with the same fallen nature.
 - b. Both grew up in the same environment.
 - c. Neither had the wicked influences our kids face.
 - d. Each was responsible for the choice he made.
3. Israel, like Cain, rejected God's discipline. **Jer. 2:30 5:3 7:28**
4. If you reject discipline, you will die young. **Pr. 20:20 30:11,17**
5. Foolishness in childhood can last a lifetime.
6. If you respect and obey your parents, you will live and prosper. **Ep.6:2 Ex. 20:12**

E. You can't save your kids!

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)! Don't lose heart. Heb. 12:6-9
You are Disciplining them on the Lord's behalf.
- B. Train them in the Word. Deut. 6:4-9,20-25 Prov. 6:20-23 (See Age of Opportunity, by Paul Tripp, Rediscovering the Lost Treasure of Family Worship, by Jerry 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 (drive them to rebellions). "How to Ruin You Kids" 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

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 you can 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 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

Helping Families with Twixters (Grown kids who don't leave home)

I. Introduction.

- A. The phenomenon of the Twixters. *Time Magazine: January 24, 2005*
- B. They want adult privileges without taking on adult responsibilities.

II. Why are there so many Twixters?

- A. There are legitimate reasons for grown children to remain with their parents.
 - 1. A son may stay at home while he is completing his education, establishing his business, or saving for marriage.
 - 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 able to take care of themselves: i.e. disabilities.
 - 4. Children may stay at home in order to take care of aged or disabled parents or other family members. Ex. 20:12
 - 5. Sometimes children move home because of other extraordinary circumstances.
- B. Some young people are sinfully postponing the responsibilities of adulthood.
 - 1. They fail to establish a career by which they can provide for themselves. Prov. 6:5-11 12:11 28:19 16:26
 - 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
 - 4. They place a high value on relationships and entertainment. Pr. 14:23
 - 5. Instead marrying and having a family, they indulge in uncommitted relationships and fornication. I Cor. 6:9-10 7:9 II Ti. 2:22
- C. 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 finance and enable sinful behavior.
 - 4. They are afraid to take strong steps to deal with their kids. I Sam.2:12f

III. What can parents do to make their children ready to live as responsible adults?

- A. It is the job of parents, not schools or churches to train children. Pr. 1:8-9
- B. The goal of parenting is to make your children ready to live wisely. Ge. 2:24 Proverbs 4:3-4 I Corinthians 13:11 The whole book of Proverbs is written to this end.
 - 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. Avoiding 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. 31:10f
 - b. Warn them against immorality. Prov. 2:16-19
 - c. Encourage them to get ready for marriage. I Cor. 7:9

6. Teach them to choose their companions carefully. Pr. 1:10-19 13:20 22:24-25 23:20 I Corinthians 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 Al Mohler: *From Boy to Man- The Marks of Manhood.*

1. Spiritual maturity sufficient to lead a wife and children.
2. Personal maturity sufficient to be a responsible husband and father. Eph. 5:22f
3. Economic maturity sufficient to hold an adult job and handle money.
4. Physical maturity sufficient to work and protect a family. Prov. 6:6f
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.
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. 13:1f
11. Verbal maturity sufficient to communicate and articulate as a man. Pr. 15:28,7 10:20-21 16:24 12:18
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

IV. What can parents do to help their Twixters grow up?

- A. Be willing to make tough choices for the good of your children.
 1. If they continue to act like children, they must be treated like children.
 2. Make your expectations clear, along with the consequences. A written contract?
 3. You may need to seek their forgiveness for spoiling them.
 4. Their return to your home may be one last hope for you to train them. Pr. 19:18
- B. Combat sinful irresponsibility.
 1. Force them to take financial responsibility.
 2. Don't allow them to be lazy while living under your roof. Eph. 4:28
 3. Demand sexual purity.
 4. Do not tolerate substance abuse.
 5. Make them pay a price for irresponsibility.
 6. Be willing to kick them out. Sometimes that is the only way they will learn.
- C. What kind of help should you give your young adults?
 1. Just because you can afford to "help" them doesn't mean you really would be doing them any good.
 2. Do not enable a lifestyle of laziness and sin.
 3. When you do offer help (i.e. educational expenses) demand a clear standard of responsibility and performance.
- D. Do what you can to show you love them without compromising your standards.

V. What can young people do to prepare themselves for adult life?

- A. Seek wisdom from your parents. Pr. 13:1 6:20-23 1:8
Strive to bring them joy. Pr. 23:24-25 17:25
- B. Find other godly mentors who will help you to mature.
- C. Learn to live for God and others, rather than being self-focused.

Abortion and the Philosophy Behind It

I. Introduction

A. A tragic anniversary: January 22, 1973 35 million abortions in 25 years.

B. What is abortion?

1. **Abortion is the act by which the life of a baby in the womb (embryo or fetus) is deliberately and artificially terminated.**
2. **The procedure takes place through a variety of techniques.**

C. The medical question: when does life begin? (conception? viability? birth?)

1. **It is widely recognized that human life begins at conception and continues until death. (see appendix A).**
2. **The development of the infant in the womb.**
3. **Abortion is the taking of a human life.**
4. **What should those who are unsure do? *When in doubt, choose life!***

II. According to the Bible, abortion is the unjust taking of a human life (murder).

A. The sanctity of human life.

1. **Man is uniquely created in God's image. Gen. 1:27 2:7 Ps. 8:4-5 *God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female he created them.***
2. **God has placed special protection over human life. Gen. 9:5-6 Ex. 20:13 *Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed, For in the image of God He made man.***
3. **God alone has the right to give and to take life. Dt. 32:39 Ps. 31:15 Heb. 9:27 *There is no god besides Me; It is I who put to death and give life...***

B. The unborn child is a human life, precious and important to God.

1. **God forms the child in his mother's womb. Ps. 139:13-16 Job 31:15 10:8-12 Ecc. 11:5 *You formed my inward parts; You did weave me in my mother's womb.***
2. **The infant in the womb is fully human (including sinful). Ps. 51:5 58:3 *Behold I was brought forth in iniquity and in sin my mother conceived me.***
3. **God loves and calls His servants, even from before their birth. Isa. 44:2,24 49:1-2 Jer. 1:4-5 20:17 Gal. 1:15 *The Lord called Me from the womb.***
4. **The same words are used for a child in and outside of the womb. Ex. 21:4,22 Luke 1:15,41-42,44, 31 2:16 18:15 Acts 7:19 (*John the Baptist and Jesus*)**
5. **God judges those who slay or harm the unborn or helpless. II Kn. 8:11-12 15:16 Amos 1:13 Ex. 1 Mt. 2:16-18 *Thus says the LORD, for three transgressions for the sons of Ammon and for four I will not revoke its punishment, Because they ripped open the women of Gilead In order to enlarge their borders...Menahem struck Tiphseh and he ripped up all its women who were with child.***
6. **Those who caused harm to an unborn child were to be punished. Ex. 21:22-24**
 - a. **An accidental miscarriage to be fined (manslaughter?)? (NAS)**
 - b. **Or premature birth (if harm is done an eye for an eye is required).(KJV, NIV)**

III. The philosophy behind abortion: why merely outlawing abortion will not entirely solve the problem. Our nation has a serious heart problem.

A. Naturalistic atheistic evolutionism which denies the sanctity of human life.

1. **Mankind is treated as a product of evolutionary chance.**
2. **Evolutionism leaves no basis for determining meaning, purpose, and truth.**

B. Human autonomy. Judges 21:25 *Self-deification*

1. **Rejection of moral absolutes from God. Judges 21:25** *Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.*
2. **Playing God with human life.**
3. **Selfishness. Matt. 2:16-18 Ps. 106:34-39 Lev. 20:1-5.** *Sacrificing our sons and daughters to the idols of materialism, pleasure, convenience, and pride.*
4. **Hedonism. Phil. 3:19 Js. 4:1-2** *You lust and do not have, so you commit murder.*

C. A rejection of God's design for the family.

1. **Immoral sexual activity outside of marriage.**
2. **Children seen as an unwanted burden. Ps. 127:3**
3. **The destruction of the family. Rom. 1:26-27**
4. **So called sexual and reproductive freedom leads to slavery. II Pet. 2:18-19** *They entice by fleshly desires... promising them freedom while they themselves are slaves of corruption, for by what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved.*

D. This humanistic philosophy has much broader implications (moral chaos).

1. **The deterioration of the medical profession.** *The Hippocratic oath: I will give no deadly medication to anyone, if asked, no suggest any such counsel: Furthermore, I will not give to a woman an instrument to produce an abortion.*
2. **Playing God: determining who has a life worthy of living.**
 - a. **Infanticide.**
 - b. **Euthanasia.**
3. **Exploiting human life.**
 - a. **Harvesting fetal material.**
 - b. **Genetic experimentation (and cloning).**
4. **Ethical and legal confusion (schizophrenia). Judges 21:25** *Child abuse, animal rights, parental rights, children's rights.*
5. **If the right to life is not secure, all other human rights are at risk.**

IV. Answers to objections.

A. What if the baby will not have a sufficient quality of life?

1. **Every child is a wanted child.**
2. **Poverty, child abuse and a bad home life.** *These problems haven't been solved.*
3. **Birth defects. Lev. 19:14**
4. **God makes us what we are and He alone has the right to give and take life! Ex. 4:11**
John 9:3 *Rom. 8:28 The LORD said to Moses, "Who has made a man's mouth? OR who makes him dumb or deaf, or seeing or blind? Is it not I, the LORD?"*

B. Doesn't a woman have a right to control her own body?

1. **She can control her body sexually so as not to become pregnant!**
2. **Rights of privacy and the freedom to use one's body are limited.**
3. **Another person's body is also involved.** *Abortion robs someone else of a lifetime of choices.*
4. **The fetus is completely dependent upon the mother.** *May we also exterminate other members of society who are weak, dependent, and inconvenient*

C. Arguments from the standpoint of the woman's welfare.

1. **Most abortions are done for personal convenience.**
2. **Economic or emotional hardship on the mother.** *There are other solutions.*
3. **Cases of rape or incest.** *One heinous act does not justify another.*

4. Risk to the physical health of the mother.
 - a. It is very rare to have to make a choice between mother and child.
 - b. If only one life can be saved, that life must be saved.
5. Hard choices must be made from the principle that the child is a human being.

D. Isn't this legislating morality?

1. The abortionists have legislated immorality. *Isa. 5:20-21 Woe to those who call evil good and good evil; Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness...*
2. All morality is legislation.
3. The government has a duty to protect life (prevent murder or punish murderers).
Rom. 13:1-7
4. This is a women's issue. *Are men interfering?*
5. Abortion actually causes harm to the mother. *Physical, Spiritual, and Emotional*
6. Wouldn't abortions occur anyway and in unhealthy conditions?
 - a. All abortions are unhealthy (fatal) for one person.
 - b. Murders, rapes & robberies still occur, but this does not justify making them legal.

E. Don't we need to control the population?

1. The world God has made is incredibly productive. *Gen. 1:27-29*
2. Children are a blessing from God. *Ps. 127*
3. There are methods of birth control which prevent conception.
4. This argument has led to the atrocity of forced abortions in some countries.

V. What should we do? Pr. 31:8

A. Personal choices.

1. Choices in your family.
2. Which doctors will you patronize? *AMA 1871: "These men should be marked as Cain was marked; they should be made the outcasts of society".*
3. Which church will you join?
4. For whom will you vote?
5. To which charities will you give?

B. Activism.

1. Different believers have different gifts and callings.
2. Do we have a responsibility to forcibly stop abortion? *Pr. 31:8-9 24:11-12*
3. When is civil disobedience authorized? *Acts 5:27-32 Exodus 1:16-17*

C. Persuasion: we wage war, not according to the flesh. II Cor. 10:3-5

1. Political involvement?
2. Informational picketing. *Warn expectant mothers, stigma upon abortionists.*
3. Adoption.
4. Crisis pregnancy centers.

VI. Concluding applications.

- A. God will bring justice to the guilty in due time.
- B. The only hope for our nation is spiritual revival!
- C. God offers forgiveness, even to murderers. *I Cor. 6:9-11 I Jn. 1:7-2:2 Isa. 1:18 Ps. 51:12-13*

A Matter of Life and Death

I. Introduction: Do those who are suffering have the right to die?

II. Which is more important: The sanctity of life or the quality of life?

A. God is sovereign over human life, which is sacred because we are created in His image.

Ps. 8:4-5 Gen. 1:27 2:7

1. Suffering and death are the result of the Fall. Ro. 5:12 I Cor. 15:26
2. God alone has the right to give and take life. Deut. 32:39 Ps. 31:15 Heb. 9:27
3. God places special protection over human life. Gen. 9:5-6 Ezek. 22:1f Hab. 1
4. God especially cares for those who are weak and helpless. Ps. 72:12-14 146:9 139:13-16 Pr. 31:8-9 Js. 1:27 Dt. 14:29 Is. 1:17 Lev. 19:14
5. We don't have the right to unjustly take the lives of others. Ex. 20:13
6. Nor do we have a right to take our own lives, even to avoid suffering. Mt. 27:5 Jud. 9:54-57 I Sa. 31:3-6 II Sa. 1:9-17 17:23 I Ki. 16:15-19 Acts 1:18 I Co. 6:19-20
7. God sometimes allows suffering for His good purpose. Rom. 8:18 II Cor. 4:16-18

B. People in our day are playing God and killing those who, in their view, don't have sufficient quality of life. Judges 21:25 Col. 2:8

1. Rather than valuing all human life, the secular elite have redefined the issue as quality of life, claiming some life is not worth living.
2. The acceptance of the practice of abortion has led to euthanasia.
3. Some demand the right to choose to die.
4. Many seek the right to make life and death decisions for others.
5. There are "choices" and "rights" which belong to God alone.

C. There are also many practical problems with giving people the right to die (and kill).

1. Those who, when healthy, say, *I wouldn't want to live like that*, may change their minds when faced with the choice between a hard life or no life at all.
2. Those who are depressed may make rash, unwise decisions. Prov. 29:20
3. Those who say they would rather die than to continue living in a state of pain or disability may have no idea of what their state will be after death. Ecc. 5:2
4. Doctors are sometimes wrong. "Hopeless" cases sometimes experience recovery.

D. The rejection of the sanctity of human life puts us all at risk.

1. A time may come when you won't be allowed to choose to receive certain care.
2. The helpless among us are in grave danger when we use quality of life as the criteria for which people we will value and protect: elderly, disabled, unwanted.

III. Will you stand up for the sanctity of human life?

A. You may have to make some tough healthcare decisions for yourself and others.

1. Base your decisions upon the Word of God. Pr. 3:5-6 II Co. 12:7f Mt. 7:12
2. Differentiate between medical (scientific) issues and ethical (spiritual) issues.
3. When is someone dead? Gen. 6:17 25:8,17 35:29 49:33 Mk. 15:17
4. What is the difference between sustaining life and prolonging death? Isa. 32:6
5. Must all possible care be given under every circumstance?
6. Those who are dying should be kept as comfortable as possible. Prov. 31:6-7
7. Seek godly counsel when facing difficult decisions. Pr. 15:22
8. We will have to make difficult decisions based upon incomplete information. Only God is all knowing. He will help you. I Cor. 10:13
9. If you are unsure, err on the side of life.

- B. Prepare in advance for difficult healthcare decisions. Prov. 21:5**
1. Be very wary about signing documents which could empower a doctor or a court to wrongfully terminate your life by withholding care.
 2. Carefully evaluate any advice you may receive from the medical profession.
 3. Formulate your wishes biblically and communicate them to your loved ones.
Advance Directive for Health Care by the Christian Medical & Dental Association
 4. Give written authority to someone whom you trust to make medical decisions for you, if you are incapacitated.
- C. Will you honor all human life? Lev. 19:14**
1. Will you care for your parents in their old age, even if their needs are great?
Exodus 20:12 Pr. 16:31 Ps. 71:9
 2. Will you remain faithful to your marriage vows, *for better or for worse, in sickness and in health... until death parts us* even if it involves sacrifice? Ro. 7:2-3 Ge. 2:24
 3. How will you respond if God gives you a baby (or grandchild) with birth defects?
 4. Are you willing to share the burden with your brothers and sisters who care for disabled family members? Luke 10:25-37
- D. Pray for our nation which is embracing a culture of death, and inviting Divine judgment. Ezek. 22 Hab. 1:2**
- E. Do what you can to promote the sanctity of human life. Prov. 31:8-9**

IV. Concluding applications.

- A. Are you prepared to face the inescapable realities of dying and death? Rom. 5:12
Heb. 9:27 Ecc. 3:1-2**
1. Are you prepared to face the dying and death of those whom you love?
 2. Have you prepared those you will leave behind for your dying and death? Mt. 7:12
Pr. 21:5
 3. Are you prepared to die?
 - a. Your last breath in this world is not the end of your existence. After death comes judgment. Heb. 9:27 Ps. 90:12 Rom. 5:12 3:23 6:23
 - b. Jesus takes away the sting of death for all who believe in Him. I Co. 15:22,55f
- B. What happens to a Christian when he (she) dies? Phil. 1:21 II Cor. 5:8 Luke 23:43**
1. Your soul is immediately in the presence of Christ.
 2. Your body awaits the resurrection at Christ's return. I Cor. 15:51f I Th. 4:13f
 3. In that day there will be no more suffering, pain and death. Rev. 21:4 *He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.*

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. Introduction to Biblical Counseling, 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. Reforming Marriage, Doug Wilson.**

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. Her Hand in Marriage, Doug Wilson.**

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.**

E. Child raising.

- 1. Child Training Tips, Reb Bradley.**
- 2. When Good Kids Make Bad Choices, Elyse Fitzpatrick, Jim Newheiser, and Laura Hendrickson.**
- 3. Come Back Barbara, Miller (wayward children).**
- 4. The Heart of Anger, Lou Priolo.**
- 5. Withhold not Correction, Bruce Ray.**
- 6. Age of Opportunity, Paul Tripp (teens).**
- 7. Shepherding a Child's Heart, Ted Tripp.**
- 8. Future Men, Doug Wilson.**

III. Other issues.

A. Lust.

1. **Every Man's Battle**, Arterburn and Stoeker.
2. **Not Even a Hint**, Joshua Harris.
3. **At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry**, Steve Gallagher.
4. **Counseling the Sexual Addict**, Steve Gallagher.
5. **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).
6. **Fidelity**, Doug Wilson (sexual problems, including pornography).

B. Addictions.

1. **The Useful Lie**, Playfair (drunkenness).
2. **Addictions, a Banquet in the Grave**, by 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).

D. The church.

1. **Stop Dating the Church**, Joshua Harris.
2. **Life in the Father's House**, Wayne Mack and Dave Suavely.

E. Other.

1. **From Forgiven to Forgiving**, Jay Adams.
2. **Love to Eat Hate to Eat**, Elyse Fitzpatrick.
3. **Overcoming Fear, Worry and Anxiety**, Elyse Fitzpatrick.
4. **Women Helping Women**, Elyse Fitzpatrick.
5. **Spiritual Depression: Its Causes and Its Cure**, Martyn Lloyd-Jones.
6. **Down, but not Out: How to get Up When Life Knocks You Down**, Wayne Mack.
7. **God's Solutions to Life's Problems**, Wayne and Joshua Mack.
8. **Repentance and the Twentieth Century Man**, Miller.
9. **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).
10. **The Christian Counselor's Medical Desk Reference**, Robert Smith.
11. **Lost in the Middle: Mid Life and the Grace of God**, Paul Tripp.
12. **War of Words**, Paul Tripp.
13. **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.

V. Tapes/CDs/MP3s (especially valuable for those who won't read a book).

VI. Handouts/Assignments: Faith Baptist Counseling Ministries, Newheiser, Priolo.

(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. John 15:5

II. Addressing various counseling problems.

A. Conflict resolution.

- 1. Pursue peace. Mt. 5:9
- 2. Listen carefully and listen to both sides. Pr. 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. 12:19

B. Anger.

- 1. Anger is murder. Mt. 5:21-22
- 2. The cause of conflict is sinful desire. James 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. 50:18

E. Communication.

- 1. The tongue is a fire. James 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. Genesis 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” makes 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. James 1:2f**
- 3. Nothing can separate you from God’s love in Christ. Rom. 8:31-39**

M. Seeking forgiveness.

- 1. From God. I John 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. Psalm 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 John 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. Luke 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 Jo. 5:1**
- 2. If you are one of Christ’s sheep, He keeps you safe. John 10:28-29**
- 3. If you have no regard for God’s commandments you are still lost. I Jo. 2:3-4**
- 4. If you have no love for the brethren, you have not been born of God. I Jo. 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. Titus 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. James 1:5 (Also see Proverbs 1-9).**
- 2. Search for God's moral will in the Bible. II Tim. 3:16-17**
- 3. Seek godly counsel. Pr. 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. John 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 Cassette Tapes 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 cassette tapes to be very effective homework assignments.

The Benefits of Using Cassette Tapes:

- 1. Tapes 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 tape. Here in Southern California most people spend a large percentage of their time on the road. Few drive without a radio or a cassette playing. Once a tape 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. Tapes Benefit People with Particular Learning Styles.** Our family has home schooled for the past nine years. We have noticed that each of our sons has a different way of understanding material. One is able to retain what he reads while another best remembers what he has heard. Many of your counsees will be auditory learners.
- 3. Tapes 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 a tape 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 Cassette Tapes:

- 1. Build a Library of Tapes Which Deal with the Most Common Counseling Problems.** In my “counseling box” I carry approximately 100 tapes on various topics and texts. Most of the tapes are from my preaching ministry in our local church. A benefit of using your own tapes 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. Finally, using your own tapes is less expensive than using tapes from other ministries (no copyright or royalty issues to worry about). When I run out of certain tapes, I simply ask our tape ministry to replenish my supply. 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 tapes. Of course, it is also of great benefit to collect tapes from eminently gifted preachers and counselors to deal with particular subjects. For example, I have lent out Wayne Mack’s tapes on “Rebuilding a Marriage After an Affair”¹ several times. Some of the tapes I most often use include:
 - a. I Peter 3:1-7 How to Change Your Husband.
 - b. I Peter 2:18-25 Serving God in the Work Place.
 - c. Matthew 5:21-26 Who is a Murderer? Dealing with the sin of Anger.
 - d. Matthew 5:27-30 Who is an Adulterer (I)? Dealing with the sin of Lust.
 - e. Matthew 5:31-32 Who is an Adulterer (II)? Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage.

¹ From Summer Institute of Biblical Counseling - 1993 (CCEF WEST). Available from Five Star Conference Recording 1-800-350-TAPE.

- f. Matthew 5:33-37 Who is a Liar?
- g. Matthew 5:38-42 Are You an Avenger? Dealing with “rights” and revenge.
- h. Matthew 6:19-24 You Can’t Have it Both Ways.
- i. Matthew 6:25-34 Don’t Worry, Be Holy!
- j. Matthew 7:21-27 Is Your Faith Real?
- k. Ephesians 5:22-24 The Glorious Submission of the Godly Wife.
- l. Ephesians 5:25-33 The Submission of the Christian Husband.
- m. Ephesians 6:1-3 The Duties of Children
- n. Ephesians 6:4 The Duties of Parents
- o. Psalm 51 Confess Your Sins
- p. Proverbs 31 A Portrait of the Virtuous Woman
- q. Christian Courtship.
- r. Decision Making and the Will of God.
- s. Financial Freedom.
- t. Family Worship.
- u. Various Evangelistic Messages.

2. Prepare Homework Assignments to Go Along with the Tapes. It is not enough merely to get a counselee to listen to a tape. 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 tapes. In addition I am working at preparing a printed list of questions to go with each tape. At a minimum, the “Tape Listening Assignment Questionnaire” could be given from Wayne Mack’s A Homework Manual for Biblical Counseling (Page 173).

Conclusion: While cassette tapes 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 counselees who don’t do their reading assignments, try giving them some tapes to see if the Lord might use this means to apply His powerful and sufficient Word to their needs.

Consent to Counseling: Grace Bible Church

Our Goal - Our goal in providing Christian counseling is to help you meet the challenges of life in a way that will please and honor the Lord Jesus Christ and that you will find joy in following His will for your life. All counseling is done free of charge as a ministry of Grace Bible Church. Counselees may make a donation, but this is not expected or required.

Biblical Basis - We believe that the Bible provides thorough guidance and instruction for faith and life (II Timothy 3:16-17 II Pet. 1:3). Therefore, our counseling is based upon scriptural principles rather than those of secular psychology or psychiatry. Our counselors are not trained or licensed as psychotherapists or mental health professionals. Nor should they be expected to follow the methods of such specialists.

Not Professional Advice - If you have significant legal, financial, medical or other technical questions you should seek advice from an independent professional. Our counselors will cooperate with such advisors and help you to consider their counsel in light of scriptural principles.

Confidentiality - Confidentiality is an important aspect of the counseling process and we will carefully guard the information you entrust to us. There are situations, however, in which it may be necessary for us to share certain information with others such as:

1. When a counselor is uncertain how to address a particular problem and needs to seek advice from another pastor or counselor.
2. When there is concern that someone may be harmed unless others intervene.
3. When abuse or another crime must be reported to the authorities.
4. When a person refuses to renounce a particular sin and it becomes necessary to seek the assistance of others in the church to encourage repentance and reconciliation (Proverbs 15:22 24:11 Matthew 18:15-20).
5. When observers sit in on counseling sessions to assist the counselor or for training purposes.

Resolution of conflicts with the counselor: Arbitration - On rare occasions a conflict may develop between a counselor and a counselee. I Corinthians 6:1-8 forbids Christians from bringing lawsuits against each other in secular courts of law. In order to ensure that any such conflicts will be resolved in a biblically faithful manner, we require all our counselees to agree that any dispute which arises with a counselor or with this church will be settled by mediation, and if necessary legally binding arbitration in accordance with the *Rules of Procedure* of the Institute for Christian Conciliation. The arbiters will be the Elders of Grace Bible Church. If the Elders of Grace Bible Church are a party in the dispute then three arbiters will be selected from among Elders from churches in the Fellowship of Independent Reformed Evangelicals with each party in the dispute choosing one arbiter and the two arbiters selecting the third. It is expressly understood that by agreeing in advance to arbitrate that the counselee is giving up his right to a trial in the civil courts.

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 to grow in spiritual maturity and prepares you for usefulness in His body. If you have any questions about these guidelines, please speak with a pastor or elder. If these guidelines are acceptable to you, please sign below.

Signed _____

Date _____

Personal Data Inventory¹

IDENTIFICATION DATA:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Occupation: _____ Business Phone _____ Sex: _____

Birth Date: _____ Age _____ Separated _____ Divorced _____ Widowed _____

Education: (last year completed) _____ Other training: _____

Referred here by: _____ Address: _____

HEALTH INFORMATION:

Rate your health: Very Good _____ Good _____ Average _____ Declining _____ Other _____

Your approximate weight: _____ lbs. Recent weight changes: Lost _____ lbs., Gained _____ lbs.

List all important, present, or past, injuries or handicaps: _____

Date of last Medical Examination: _____ Report: _____

Your Physician: _____ Address: _____

Are you currently taking medication? Yes _____ No _____ If so, What? _____

Have you used drugs for other than medical purposes? Yes _____ No _____

Which drugs? _____

Have you ever had a severe emotional upset? Yes _____ No _____ Explain: _____

Have you ever been arrested? Yes _____ No _____ Explain: _____

Are you willing to sign a release of information form so that your counselor may write for social, psychiatric, or medical reports? Yes _____ No _____

RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND:

Denominational preference: _____ Church _____ Member: Yes _____ No _____

Church Attendance per month (circle): 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10+

Church Attended in childhood _____ Were you baptized? Yes _____ No _____

Religious background of spouse (if married) _____

Do you consider yourself a religious person? Yes _____ No _____ Uncertain _____

Do you believe in God? Yes _____ No _____ Uncertain _____

Do you pray to God? Never _____ Occasionally _____ Often _____

Are you saved? Yes _____ No _____ Not sure what you mean _____

How frequently do you read the Bible? Never _____ Occasionally _____ Often _____

Do you have regular family devotions? Yes _____ No _____

Explain recent changes in your religious life, if any: _____

PERSONALITY INFORMATION:

Have you ever had psychotherapy or counseling before? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, list counselor and dates: _____

What was the outcome? _____

¹ Adapted from *Personal Data Inventory 2*. Available from www.mackministries.org.

CIRCLE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING WORDS WHICH 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 likeable leader quiet hard-boiled submissive self-conscious lonely sensitive
 other: _____

Have you ever felt people watching you? Yes ___ No ___

Do people's faces ever seem distorted? Yes ___ No ___

Do you ever have difficulty distinguishing faces? Yes ___ No ___

Do colors ever seem too bright? Yes ___ No ___

Are you sometimes unable to judge distance? Yes ___ No ___

Have you ever had hallucinations? Yes ___ No ___

Are you afraid of being in a car? Yes ___ No ___

Is your hearing exceptionally good? Yes ___ No ___

Do you have problems sleeping? Yes ___ No ___

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY INFORMATION:

Name of spouse: _____ Address: _____

Phone: _____ Occupation: _____ Business Phone _____

Spouse's Age: _____ Education (yrs.) _____ Religion: _____

Is spouse willing to come for counseling? Yes ___ No ___ Uncertain ___

Have you ever been separated? Yes ___ No ___ When? from _____ to _____

Have 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 steady dating with spouse _____ Length of engagement _____

Give brief information about any previous marriages: _____

Information about children:

PM* (check)	Name	Age	Sex (M/F)	Living (Y/N)	Education (in yrs)	Marital Status

*Check PM column if child is by previous marriage

If you were reared by anyone other than your own parents,
 explain: _____

How many older brothers _____ sisters _____ do you have?

How many younger brothers _____ sisters _____ do you have?

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

1. What is the main problem as you see it? (what brings you here)

2. What have you done about it?

3. What do you want us to do about it?

4. As you see yourself, what kind of person are you? (describe yourself)

5. Is there any other information we should know?

Counseling Observation Class

Schedule: Supper Seminar 4:30-6:00 PM; Counseling Sessions per individual schedule.

Mondays:

Location: New Life Presbyterian Church, Escondido

Counseling Sessions: Bonnie (the secretary) will assign a case for you to observe from beginning to end. You should call her on Mondays to confirm the time of your case. 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. Up to two students (or one student plus spouse) may observe each case. You will be expected to sit quietly, unless called upon by the counselor to make a contribution (i.e. 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.

Supper Seminar: We will meet to discuss the counseling cases you observed (usually the previous week's sessions). It usually takes 10-15 minutes to discuss each case. Care should be exercised to preserve the confidentiality of the counselees (using first names only). After the cases have been discussed there will be opportunities to ask the counselors any questions you may have about counseling or pastoral ministry.

Requirements:

1. Attendance at every session is mandatory.
2. Submit a brief statement of purpose at the first supper seminar.
3. Maintain a weekly journal of experiences, conclusions and reactions.
4. Submit Observer's Organizer upon reporting your case (weekly).
5. Submit brief reaction paper regarding learning about God, self, and counseling through the course (at the end of the course).

Observer's Organizer

Observer _____ Case # _____

Counselor _____ Case Name _____

Session # _____ Date _____

Brief description of the flow of the case:

<p><u>Principles Observed:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1.2.3.4.5.	<p><u>Questions for the Counselor:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1.2.3.4.5.
<p><u>Homework Assigned:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1.2.3.4.5.	<p><u>Projections and their Basis</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1.2.3.4.5.

Counseling Role Play Class (Example)

Prerequisite:

You should have completed the “Introduction to Biblical Counseling” course or its equivalent. All are welcome to attend and observe.

General Description

Each student or couple will counsel in a fictional situation for three sessions using the principles learned in the “Introduction to Biblical Counseling” 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 35 minutes. After the “session” is over the class will discuss and critique the counselor’s approach. **Those who are not counseling in a given week are still encouraged to attend and participate in the discussion.** Some will also be asked to serve as “counselees.” **Counselors should videotape their sessions and review the tape during the week.** Counselees should fill in a PDI before the first session.

How to Prepare

Review your syllabus from the Intro 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: i.e. Homework Manuals, mini-guides/references (Helps for Counselors, by Adams or Quick Scripture Reference for Counseling, by Kruis), tracts, etc. Review the evaluation sheet in advance to know what I will be looking for. Between sessions do research so that you will come prepared.

Schedule

September 12	Class introduction
September 19 2-4 PM	Case 1 Case 2
September 26 and October 3	Off for NANC conference
October 10 2-4 PM	Case 1 Case 2
October 17 2-4 PM	Case 1 Case 3
October 24 2-4 PM	Case 2 Case 3
October 31 3-4 PM	Case 3

Counselor's Notes



Name _____ Date _____

Session Number _____

Evaluation of Homework

Agenda

Drift of Session:

Homework

Evaluation of Session:

Plans:

NANC Counselor's Exam

*Using essay style writing, please respond thoroughly to each of these statements.
Support all your answers with Scripture.*

1. **What are the goals of Biblical counseling?**
2. **Are the Scriptures sufficient for Biblical counseling?**
3. **What are some of the important needs in the first session?**
4. **Describe how to develop involvement with a counselee. What, if any, is the difference between being empathetic and showing empathy?**
5. **What is data gathering? Why is it important?**
6. **Explain the need for homework in general, and for concrete, not abstract homework, in particular.**
7. **Delineate the difference between true and false guilt. Is there such a thing as false guilt? How is guilt to be handled in counseling?**
8. **Write a paragraph or two on the problem of eclecticism in counseling and your position in reference to it.**
9. **Using a personal case history, show the need for moving from the presentation level to the performance level.**
10. **Using a personal case history, show the need for moving from the performance level of problems to the preconditioning level.**
11. **What is a "complicating problem"? Give an example.**
12. **Define "halo data" and give some examples of halo data for depression.**
13. **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. **Describe 5 ways of handling anger (both correct and incorrect).**
17. **Give some typical assignments for a person who is depressed. Do the same for a person who worries and also for a person who fears. 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?**
19. **Outline a program to help a couple develop good communication.**
20. **Would you work with a physician? A psychologist?**
21. **Using the example of homosexuality, describe how total restructuring works.**
22. **Develop a Biblical view of emotions. How can emotions be changed?**
23. **List several ways how you know when to terminate a counseling case.**
24. **Is there any place in Biblical counseling for casting out demons?**
25. **What does it mean to minister the Scriptures in counseling?**
26. **Write a short paragraph on each of the following: healing of the memories; visualization techniques; 12-step and other recovery programs; self-image.**
27. **With which Christian counselors - if any - do you agree? On which points do you agree with them and why?**
28. **How does church discipline relate to Biblical counseling?**

NANC Theological Exam

Using essay style writing, please respond thoroughly to each of these statements. Support all your answers with Scripture.

Bibliology

1. The Bible is spoken of as “inspired.” What does this mean?
2. What is the relationship between infallibility and authority?
3. Many Christians today speak of continuing revelation. Relate this concept to inspiration and sufficiency of the Scripture.

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.

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?

Ecclesiology

1. What is the church?
2. What role does the church play in the believer’s life 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, state how you differ from your larger group, and 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 member commitment statement?

NANC PERSONAL EVALUATION FORM

Applicant _____

On a scale from one 1 to 10, please rate the applicant on the following qualifications. Circle the appropriate number. If you wish to comment on any item, you may use the reverse side of this form.

(10=OUTSTANDING, 1=DISQUALIFYING)

- A. FAMILY MANAGEMENT**
An exemplary relationship with his/her spouse or parents (1 Tim. 3:2, Tit. 1:6) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Open & unrestrained communication with family 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Guides the family with dignity (1 Tim. 3:4-5) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Children are controllable & believing (1 Tim. 3:4, Tit. 1:6) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- B. REPUTATION**
A good reputation outside the church (1 Tim. 3:2,7; Tit. 1:6) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Respectable within the church (1 Tim. 1:8) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Pursues holiness zealously (1 Tim. 1:8) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- C. PROBLEM SOLVING**
Makes wise decisions (1 Tim. 3:2) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Very practical (1 Tim. 1:8) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Just & fair in decisions 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- D. GENEROSITY**
Hospital to strangers (1 Tim. 3:2) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Home open to visitors 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Willing to help others 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- E. MINISTRY EFFECTIVENESS**
Effective communicator of the Scriptures (1 Tim. 3:2, Tit. 1:8) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- A gentle spirit in exhorting/refuting others (1 Tim. 1:8) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Effective in counseling (1 Tim. 2:24-26) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- F. MATURITY**
Progressively developing in Christian life (1 Tim. 3:6) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- G. BEHAVIOR (10=FREQUENTLY, 1=SELDOM)**
Argumentative (1 Tim. 3:3) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Self-centered (1 Tim. 1:7) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Physically violent (1 Tim. 3:3) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Quick tempered (Tit. 1:7) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Gentle & patient (1 Tim. 3:3) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

LIMITATIONS
Every person has strengths and weaknesses. Here is a list of weaknesses which, if present, may reduce the effectiveness of this individual's counseling. Check any of the following characteristics, which you have personally observed if you think it to be of significant intensity to reduce effectiveness of ministry.

- Impatient ___ Cocky ___ Intolerant ___ Sullen ___ Domineering ___
- Critical ___ Easily embarrassed ___ Easily irritated ___ Frequently anxious ___
- Prejudiced ___ Frequently tense ___ Easily offended ___ Easily depressed ___
- Easily discouraged ___ Given to exclusive or absorbing friendships ___

Applicant seems relatively free from all of the above ___

NANC Case Report Form

Type your answers to these questions, then mail, FAX or email to your supervisor. He should receive them in advance of your next appointment to discuss cases.

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
4. Counsel and performing last session's homework?
5. What main problems were discussed in this session?
6. What unbiblical habits of thinking and /or behaving are you seeing in the counselee (preconditioning)?

7. **What idols and/or heart issues are emerging? (“I must _____.”)**

8. **What Biblical solutions were presented in this session (tie in with #4)?**

9. **What homework was given and how did it specifically apply to the problems (tie in with #4)?**

10. **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?**

11. **How was hope or encouragement given in this session?**

12. **How is the overall counseling process progressing? What issues have been sufficiently addressed by you and changed by the counselee?**

13. **What are your goals for future sessions?**

If the session is not moving, review Jay’s 50 Failure factors at back of the Christian Counselor’s Manual.

Part IV: Counseling Homework

Family Conflict Assignment

1. Please write out answers to the following questions. The Scripture texts provide some basis for each question.
 - a. What things about my spouse am I thankful to God for? I Thess. 5:18
 - b. Where have I sinned against my spouse? Mt. 7:5 5:23-24
 - c. In what ways do I need to change? Mt. 7:5
 - d. In what ways would my spouse say that I need to change? Phil. 2:3-4
 - e. How has my spouse sinned against me? Mt. 18:15f
 - f. In what ways does my spouse need to change? Mt. 7:5b
 - g. How can I gently help my spouse to change? Gal. 6:1-2

2. Read each of these passages and state how they apply to your current marriage situation.
 - a. James 4:1-2
 - b. James 1:19-20
 - c. Matthew 7:5
 - d. Galatians 6:1-2
 - e. Ephesians 5:22-33
 - f. Ephesians 4:32
 - g. Ephesians 4:29

3. Buy and read at least one of these books
 - a. "Peacemaking for Families" by Ken Sande
 - b. "War of Words" by Paul Tripp.

Teach us to number our days. Psalm 90:12

	<u>Sun.</u>	<u>Mon.</u>	<u>Tues.</u>	<u>Wed.</u>	<u>Thurs.</u>	<u>Fri.</u>	<u>Sat.</u>
7 - 8							
8 - 9							
9 - 10							
11 - 12							
12 - 1							
1 - 2							
2 - 3							
3 - 4							
4 - 5							
5 - 6							
6 - 7							
7 - 8							
8 - 9							
9 - 10							
10 - 11							
To Do							

Priorities/tasks for the week

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	_____

Total Expenses _____

Income

Take Home Pay (After Taxes)	_____
Other Income (Investments, etc.)	_____

Total Income _____

Assets

House	_____
Investments	_____
Others	_____

Total Assets _____

Liabilities

Mortgage	_____
Credit Cards	_____
Personal and Family Loans	_____
Other	_____

Total Liabilities _____

Unfaithfulness Assignment

Listen to the 2 Wayne Mack tapes (Rebuilding a Marriage After an Affair) together. Take notes. Discuss together.

Husband: Read: Repentance and the 20th Century Man. Psalm 51 32

- 1. How have you sinned against God?**
- 2. How have you sinned against your wife?**
- 3. How have you sinned against others?**
- 4. What are the consequences of your sin?**
- 5. What are you going to do to completely break off this relationship?**
- 6. What are you willing to do to avoid temptation?**
- 7. What level of accountability do you think you need?**
- 8. Make a list of things you appreciate about your wife.**
- 9. Make a list of the blessings God has given you through your family.**

You will “feel” like going back. You need to decide what you will do when that feeling comes.

Going back to the other woman in any sense will have significant consequences

This is not merely a matter of restoring your marriage to its previous condition. You need to make it better than it has ever been.

Future Assignment: The Complete Husband.

Wife: Read: From Forgiven to Forgiving, by Jay Adams

- 1. How have you sinned against your husband?**
- 2. How can you know someone is repentant?**
- 3. What does it mean when you say you forgive someone?**
- 4. What struggles do you anticipate having as you seek to forgive?**
- 5. How do you plan to deal with these struggles?**

BIBLICAL COUNSELING CENTER OF SONOMA COUNTY
 AN OUTREACH MINISTRY OF THE PETALUMA COMMUNITY CHURCH

CHILD-CENTERED OR GOD-CENTERED HOME?

For each numbered pair of statements, please indicate which one best describes your family situation, using the 1-5 scale.

CHILD-CENTERED

GOD-CENTERED

1. Interrupt adults when they are talking.	1	2	3	4	5	Not to interrupt parents when they are talking.
2. Use manipulation and rebellion to get their way.	1	2	3	4	5	Understand they will not always get their way.
3. Dictate family schedule.	1	2	3	4	5	Work their schedule around their parents schedule.
4. Take precedence over the needs of the spouse.	1	2	3	4	5	Cheerfully obey and serve the needs of others.
5. Have an equal or overriding vote in all decision making matters.	1	2	3	4	5	Have input into family decisions but not necessarily an equal vote.
6. Demand excessive time and attention from parents to the detriment of the other biblical responsibilities of the parents.	1	2	3	4	5	Understand that God has given their parents other responsibilities in addition to meeting their needs.
7. Escape the consequences of their sinful & irresponsible behavior.	1	2	3	4	5	Suffer the natural consequences of their sinful and irresponsible behavior.
8. Speak to parents as though they were peers.	1	2	3	4	5	Honor parents as spiritual authorities.
9. Be the dominant influence in the home.	1	2	3	4	5	Esteem others as more important than themselves.
10. Be entertained & coddled out of a bad mood.	1	2	3	4	5	Be disciplined out of a bad mood.

A CHECK LIST OF WAYS THAT PARENTS PROVOKE THEIR CHILDREN TO ANGER

(Taken from The Heart of Anger by Lou Priolo)

Please use the following scale to respond to the statements listed below, rating each as to the frequency they occur:

(5-always; 4-almost always; 3-frequently; 2-occasionally; 1-seldom; 0-never or hardly ever)

- ___ 1. Having a lack of marital harmony (Genesis 2:24)
- ___ 2. Establishing and maintaining a child-centered home (Proverbs 29:15)
- ___ 3. Modeling sinful anger (Proverbs 22:24-5)
- ___ 4. Habitually disciplining while angry (Psalm 38:1)
- ___ 5. Scolding (Ephesians 4:29)
- ___ 6. Being inconsistent with discipline (2 Corinthians 1:17-8)
- ___ 7. Having double standards (Philippians 4:9)
- ___ 8. Being legalistic (Matthew 15:8-9)
- ___ 9. Not admitting you're wrong and not asking for forgiveness (James 5:16)
- ___ 10. Constantly finding fault (Job 32:2,3)
- ___ 11. Parents reversing God-given roles (Ephesians 5:22-4)
- ___ 12. Not listening to your child's opinion or taking his/her side of the story seriously
(Proverbs 18:3 & 17)
- ___ 13. Comparing them to others (2 Corinthians 10:12)
- ___ 14. Not making time "just to talk" ((James 1:9)
- ___ 15. Not praising or encouraging your child (Revelation 2:2-4)
- ___ 16. Failing to keep your promises (Matthew 5:37)
- ___ 17. Chastening in front of others (Matthew 18:15)
- ___ 18. Not allowing enough freedom (Luke 12:48)
- ___ 19. Allowing too much freedom (Proverbs 29:15)
- ___ 20. Mocking your child ((Job 17:1-2)
- ___ 21. Abusing them physically (1 Timothy 3:3)
- ___ 22. Ridiculing or name calling (Ephesians 4:29)
- ___ 23. Unrealistic expectations (1 Corinthians 13:11)
- ___ 24. Practicing favoritism (Luke 15:25-30)
- ___ 25. Child training with worldly methods inconsistent with God' Word (Eph. 6:4)

Seven Steps of Parenting

Weekly Report for _____

Name:	Name:
Praise a lot	Praise a lot
Play a lot	Play a lot
Pray a lot	Pray a lot
Teach a lot	Teach a lot
Use cause and effect when possible	Use cause and effect when possible
When you spank, do it slowly, lovingly, thoroughly, but not often	When you spank, do it slowly, lovingly, thoroughly, but not often
Parents have to be the example	Parents have to be the example



Faith Biblical Counseling Ministries

PROVIDING TRAINING *and* COUNSELING BASED on GOD'S SUFFICIENT WORD

Child Rearing

1. Praise a lot.

The child that is praised as well as corrected consistently can tell the difference between right and wrong. Rom. 13:7

2. Play a lot.

While we as adults must be firm, life has many problems and they need to see us work and play, laugh and be serious, taking enough personal interest to play their games with them. Prov. 17:22

3. Pray a lot.

We need God's help. Talk to Him much about them. Jas. 1:5

4. Teach a lot.

Eph. 6:4: "Admonition" = putting into the mind; building inner convictions.

5. Cause and effect a lot (for correction).

This is the most natural way of learning that actions have results. Gal. 6:7

6. When you do spank, do it,

lovingly, slowly, prayerfully, and thoroughly so you do not do it often.

7. Be an example.



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Some Suggested Steps When Spanking

(Applications may differ with some children.)

- Remember: Play much; pray much; praise much; use cause and effect where possible; everything is not a major issue. Instruct a lot.
 1. Give clear expectation (have the "forgetter" repeat them over to you).
 2. You may give a warning the first time, but do not repeatedly give warnings.
 3. Ask: "What were you expected to do?"
 4. When guilt is established, send to room.
 5. When you are in control, go to room.
 - "What was expected?"
 - "What did you do?"
 - "What should have been done?"
 - "What must I do?"(Spouse prays for both.)
 6. Instruct: "Lean over bed." Slowly, lovingly, prayerfully, thoughtfully.
 - Using paint stick, 1/4" dowel rod, etc.
 - Goal is correction - not punishment.
 - Determine swats required beforehand.
 7. Instruct: "Stay on bed, I will be back."
 8. Return - repeat #5
 - Child may ask God and appropriate person's forgiveness.
 9. Hug; wipe tears; air is cleared.
 10. Follow through in love.
 - a. Avoid discipline in uncontrolled anger. Jas. 1:20
 - b. Avoid words and tones that attack the person instead of the problem. Eph. 4:29
 - c. Give help where needed.
 - d. Remember, you teach by actions.
 - e. Expect pressure.
 - "If you really loved me . . . "
 - "What kind of Christian are you . . . ?"
 - "If I die, you'll be sorry . . . "
 - "If they challenge, it is a good experience for them when the parent wins decisively."

I Kings 1:6: David had not displeased his son, Adonijah, at any time.



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Manipulation Test

The following quiz will help you discern the degree to which your children are manipulating you. On the blank beside each statement, write the number that best describes what you believe to be true of your family situation.

Rating scale: 0 = Never 2 = Seldom 4 = Frequently 6 = Always
 1 = Hardly ever 3 = Occasionally 5 = Almost always

1. I have to repeat and/or re-word instructions before my children follow them. _____
2. When I ask my children to do something, they ask me "Why?". _____
3. I find myself having to justify my decisions to my children. _____
4. I have grown weary of certain "topics" which seem to be discussed over and over again with my children. _____
5. My children play one parent against the other. (They know if one says no, they can appeal to the other.) _____
6. I walk away from discussions with my children feeling guilty. _____
7. My children lie to me. _____
8. All of the children are disciplined almost entirely by one parent. _____
9. I rescind disciplinary actions (or lift restrictions) because of sympathetic appeals by my children. _____
10. I find myself negotiating and compromising value issues with my children. _____
11. I find myself defending my positions to my children. _____
12. I get frustrated because my children seem beyond my control. _____
13. I get sidetracked by my children's clever distractions when I attempt to discipline them. _____
14. My children try to obligate me to behave a certain way by telling me what I should, ought to, or must do (for other than Biblical reasons). _____
15. When my children want something from me, they try to motivate me to give it to them without telling me directly what they want. _____

Developed by Lou Priolo, Montgomery, AL

Scoring your test: Add up the total number of points and subtract from 100 to determine your score. 90 or above probably handling child's manipulative activity. 75 to 90 manipulated to some degree. Below 75 manipulated to greater extent.



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50 Questions To Ask Your Wife

1. What are your 5 favorite foods, with the most favorite first?
2. What are your 5 favorite kinds of meals, with the most favorite first?
3. What are your 5 favorite desserts, with the most favorite first?
4. What are your 5 favorite restaurants, with the most favorite first?
5. What is your favorite color?
6. What are your 5 favorite hobbies, with the most favorite first?
7. What are your 5 favorite recreations, with the most favorite first?
8. What are your 5 favorite sources of reading, with the most favorite first?
9. What gifts do you like?
10. What is your favorite book(s) of the Bible? Why?
11. What is your favorite verse(s) of the Bible? Why?
12. What is your favorite song?
13. What makes you the most fulfilled or happiest as a woman?
14. What makes you the most fulfilled or happiest as a wife?
15. What makes you the most fulfilled or happiest as a mother?
16. What makes you saddest as a woman?
17. What makes you saddest as a wife?
18. What makes you saddest as a mother?
19. What do you fear the most?
20. What other fears do you have?
21. What do you look forward to the most?
22. How much sleep do you need?
23. What are your skills?
24. What is your spiritual gift?
25. What are your weaknesses?
26. What things (personal, home, car, etc.) need repairing?
27. With what chores and responsibilities do you like my help?
28. What caresses do you enjoy the most?

29. What caresses do you enjoy the least?
30. What action of mine provides you the greatest sexual pleasure?
31. What other things stimulate you sexually?
32. At what times do you need assurance of my love the most?
33. How can that love be shown?
34. What can I do that will make it easier to discuss and work on areas or problems that are uncomfortable to you?
35. What concerns do you have that I do not seem interested in?
36. What things do I do that irritate you?
37. What desires do you have that we haven't discussed?
38. What do you enjoy doing with me, with the most enjoyable first?
39. What things can I do that show my appreciation for you?
40. What varying desires (spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual, social, worth, appreciation, recreational, security, etc.) would you like me to provide?
41. In what ways would you like me to protect you (physically, spiritually, socially, emotionally)?
42. In what ways would you like me to sacrifice for you?
43. What things are first in my life? As you look at me, what do you see? What is your perception of me?
44. What implied or unspoken desires and wishes of yours would you like for me to fulfill?
45. What concerns and interests of yours would you like me to support?
46. How much time would be good for us to spend together each day?
47. In helping family members to use their skills and develop their abilities, what motivating factors would be helpful for me to use?
48. What can I do that provides the greatest comfort and encouragement for you when you are hurt, fearful, anxious, or worried?
49. What personal habits do I have that you would like changed?
50. What ways demonstrate to you that you are a very important person who is as important or more important than I am?

Are You a Fool?

Rate yourself on the following characteristics. Are you more like a wise person or a fool?

- | | | |
|---|-----------|--|
| 1. Submissive to authority. | 1 2 3 4 5 | Rebellious. |
| 2. Patient. | 1 2 3 4 5 | Hot-tempered. |
| 3. Selfless. | 1 2 3 4 5 | Selfish. |
| 4. A peacemaker. | 1 2 3 4 5 | Divisive. |
| 5. Diligent. | 1 2 3 4 5 | Lazy. |
| 6. Has wise friends. | 1 2 3 4 5 | Hangs out with fools. |
| 7. A learner. | 1 2 3 4 5 | Doesn't change. |
| 8. Self-controlled. | 1 2 3 4 5 | Undisciplined. |
| 9. Builds up others. | 1 2 3 4 5 | Spreads slander. |
| 10. Loves discipline. | 1 2 3 4 5 | Hates correction. |
| 11. Realistic and hard working. | 1 2 3 4 5 | Daydreamer. |
| 12. Listens to advice. | 1 2 3 4 5 | Always thinks s/he is right. |
| 13. Overlooks insults. | 1 2 3 4 5 | Easily annoyed. |
| 14. Seeks forgiveness and provides restitution. | 1 2 3 4 5 | Doesn't ask forgiveness or make restitution. |
| 15. Thoughtful. Coolheaded. | 1 2 3 4 5 | Hothead. Reckless. |
| 16. Respects parents. | 1 2 3 4 5 | Despises parents. |
| 17. Puts others interests first. | 1 2 3 4 5 | Opinionated. |
| 18. Takes responsibility for sin. | 1 2 3 4 5 | Blames God and others. |
| 19. Saves for the future. | 1 2 3 4 5 | Spendthrift. |

How Do I Rate As An Encourager?

Rate yourself using the following scale:

- 5 - Excellent.
- 4 - Good.
- 3 - Fair.
- 2 - Weak.
- 1 - Serious improvement needed.

- | | | |
|-----|--|-----------|
| 1. | I say kind words to those who are discouraged. | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 2. | I give honest opinions when asked. | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 3. | I help those who are irritated or annoyed by saying something gentle. | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 4. | I smile. | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 5. | I make it a point to tell others good news. | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 6. | I plan in advance how I will encourage others. | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 7. | I share with others who are hurting how God's word has comforted me in the past. | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 8. | I listen. | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 9. | I persevere in encouraging others. I don't give up. | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 10. | I am happy when others are happy. | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 11. | I mourn with those who are broken-hearted. | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 12. | I keep in touch with those far away. | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 13. | I am trustworthy. | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 14. | I remind others of their reward in heaven. | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 15. | I forgive others. | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 16. | I tell others I love them. | 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 17. | I get along with others. | 5 4 3 2 1 |

18. I repent and ask forgiveness.	5 4 3 2 1
19. I meet physical needs of others.	5 4 3 2 1
20. I am growing in obedience to God.	5 4 3 2 1
21. I refrain from complaining.	5 4 3 2 1
22. I don't say things which might cause others to focus on wrong desires.	5 4 3 2 1
23. I show respect to others.	5 4 3 2 1
24. I praise others appropriately.	5 4 3 2 1
25. I take an interest in others' interests.	5 4 3 2 1
26. I consider others as more important than myself.	5 4 3 2 1
27. I am a team player.	5 4 3 2 1
28. I seek to solve problems.	5 4 3 2 1
29. I set an example of facing trials with joy.	5 4 3 2 1
30. I recognize that God is the source of all true encouragement.	5 4 3 2 1

Do I Have a Servant's Heart?

Rate yourself on the following questions.

- | | | |
|---|-----------|---|
| 1. Do I serve simply because it is expected? | 1 2 3 4 5 | Do I serve to show love and gratitude for God? |
| 2. Do I serve simply because others are doing it? | 1 2 3 4 5 | Do I serve for Jesus' sake? |
| 3. Do I have to be persuaded or pled with in order to serve? | 1 2 3 4 5 | Do I voluntarily take the servant's role. |
| 4. Do I have to be told what to do? | 1 2 3 4 5 | Do I take initiative in serving? |
| 5. Do I expect to serve according to my schedule? | 1 2 3 4 5 | Do I adapt my schedule to meet others needs? |
| 6. Do I serve only when I feel like serving? | 1 2 3 4 5 | Do I serve whether I feel like it or not? |
| 7. Do I begrudge the time I spend serving and wish I could be [fishing, watching tv] instead? | 1 2 3 4 5 | Do I have a joyful attitude about serving? |
| 8. Do I make statements like, "I wish I didn't have to do this tonight"? | 1 2 3 4 5 | Do I thank God for the opportunity to be like Christ? |
| 9. Does God get only leftover time? | 1 2 3 4 5 | Is service a priority? |
| 10. Does God get only leftover effort? | 1 2 3 4 5 | Does service cost me something? |
| 11. Does God get only leftover finances? | 1 2 3 4 5 | Do I give sacrificially? |
| 12. Do I try to make sure others see what I do so they'll think what a great servant I am? | 1 2 3 4 5 | Am I willing to serve behind the scenes where no one will see me? |
| 13. Do I make sure pastor knows all that I do? | 1 2 3 4 5 | Do I serve in ways that others will never know? |

-
- | | | |
|--|-----------|---|
| 14. Do I get upset when I am not thanked for what I do and think about quitting? | 1 2 3 4 5 | Do I see serving God as a privilege rather than something for which gratitude is owed? |
| 15. Would my employer/pastors say that I seek my own good? | 1 2 3 4 5 | Would my employer/pastors say that they have prospered because of me? |
| 16. Is self-denial rare in my life? | 1 2 3 4 5 | Do I think of others to such an extent that s-denial is becoming the rule rather than the exception in my life? |
| 17. Do I seek to please people to such an extent that I will sometimes fail to take a stand when I should or fail to confront? | 1 2 3 4 5 | Do I so desire good for others that I am willing to risk their displeasure if necessary? |
| 18. Do I refuse to get up early to help others? | 1 2 3 4 5 | Do I get up early to help others? |
| 19. Do I refuse to stay up late to help others? | 1 2 3 4 5 | Do I stay up late to help others? |
| 20. Do I avoid hard physical labor or crummy jobs? | 1 2 3 4 5 | Do I willingly do hard physical labor or crummy jobs to help others? |
| 21. Do I quit when treated unfairly? | 1 2 3 4 5 | Do I continue to seek another's best even if they don't treat me right? |
| 22. Do I compare how much I am doing with how much others are doing? | 1 2 3 4 5 | Do I see that I could never do enough to show my love for God? |
| 23. Do I complain? | 1 2 3 4 5 | Do I have a thankful attitude? |
| 24. Do I drag into church/work after being up 'til 2:00 A.M. watching Godzilla V? | 1 2 3 4 5 | Do I prepare to serve so that I'll be able to serve with all my strength? |
-

Anger Journal

1. *What circumstances led to my becoming angry?
What happened that provoked me to anger?*

2. *What did I say/do when I became angry?
How did I respond to the circumstances?*

3. *What is the biblical evaluation of what I said/did when I
became angry? (How does the Bible classify what I said/did
when I became angry?)*

4. *What should I have said/done when I became angry?
How could I have responded biblically when I became angry?*

Heart Journal

1. *What happened to provoke me to anger?
(What were the circumstances that led to my becoming angry?)*

2. *What did I say to myself (in my heart) when I became angry?
(What did I want, desire or long for when I became angry?)*

3. *What does the Bible say about what I said to myself when I
became angry? (What does the Bible say about what I wanted?)*

4. *What should I have said to myself when I became angry?
(What should I have wanted more than my own selfish and
idolatrous desire?)*

Journal of Upsets

Sunday	What triggered the upset? (what happened)	What did you think?	What did you do?	What did you want?
7:00 _____	1.	1.	1.	1.
7:30 _____				
8:00 _____	2.	2.	2.	2.
8:30 _____				
9:00 _____				
9:30 _____				
10:00 _____				
10:30 _____				
11:00 _____				
11:30 _____				
12:00 _____	3.	3.	3.	3.
12:30 _____				
1:00 _____				
1:30 _____				
2:00 _____	4.	4.	4.	4.
2:30 _____				
3:00 _____				
3:30 _____				
4:00 _____				
4:30 _____				
5:00 _____	5.	5.	5.	5.
5:30 _____				
6:00 _____				
6:30 _____				
7:00 _____	6.	6.	6.	6.
7:30 _____				
8:00 _____				
8:30 _____				
9:00 _____				
9:30 _____				
10:00 _____	7.	7.	7.	7.
10:30 _____				
11:00 _____				

Journal of Upsets

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
7:00					
7:30					
8:00					
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11:00					

Part V: Quizzes

Introduction to Biblical Counseling: Quiz 1

Try to support all answers with Scripture. Answer in pen without looking at your notes. Then you may look at your notes and add to your answers in pencil.

1. What are some harmful errors of modern psychology?
2. What is wrong with calling sins (such as drunkenness) a disease?
3. Why should Christian counselors be very wary of doctors who prescribe drugs for depression or anxiety?
4. Why shouldn't a pastor send a troubled member to a secular counselor or psychologist?
5. What are the dangers of integrating (mixing) the Bible with secular psychology?
6. What does it mean that the Bible is "sufficient" for counseling?
7. How should unbelievers be counseled?

Introduction to Biblical Counseling: Quiz 2

Try to support all answers with Scripture. Answer in pen without looking at your notes. Then you may look at your notes and add to your answers in pencil.

1. In what ways should a counselor be “involved” with his counselee?
 - a. What kinds of involvement should the counselor avoid?
2. How and why should a counselor “investigate” his counselee’s problem?
3. What “interpretation” must a counselor do?
4. What will be the focal point of the “instruction” given by a counselor?
5. What is the place of “intention” in the counseling process?
6. When and how is good counseling “implemented”?
 - a. What is the place of “homework”?
 - b. Give examples of possible homework assignments?
7. In what ways is Biblical Counseling “integrated” into the life of the counselee?
8. What is the goal of Biblical Counseling?

Introduction to Biblical Counseling: Quiz 3

Try to support all answers with Scripture. Answer in pen without looking at your notes. Then you may look at your notes and add to your answers in pencil.

1. Should a counselor guarantee absolute confidentiality to a counselee?
 - a. Why or why not?

2. What are the stages of dealing with a sin (church discipline)?

3. Mary has come to you because she is worried about many things: her husband may lose his job, one of her children may have a serious learning disability, and her father is very sick and may die.
 - a. What questions might you ask her?

 - b. What would you tell her from Scripture?

 - c. What homework would you give to mary?

4. John has come to you with a problem of depression. He has been unable to sleep at night. He has no energy during the day. He does not want to go on living.
 - a. What questions might you ask him?

 - b. What would you tell him from Scripture?

 - c. What homework would you give to John?

Introduction to Biblical Counseling: Quiz 4

Try to support all answers with Scripture. Answer in pen without looking at your notes. Then you may look at your notes and add to your answers in pencil.

1. Amy and Ferdinand come to you for counseling. Ferdinand has been unfaithful to Amy. He says that he is sorry. Amy is not sure that she can forgive Ferdinand and may want to leave him.
 - a. What questions would you ask them?
 - b. How would you instruct Ferdinand from Scripture?
 - c. How would you instruct Amy from Scripture?
 - d. What homework would you give to Ferdinand?
 - e. What homework would you give to Amy?

2. Jun and his wife have come to you because he has a problem with drinking and gambling. Sometimes when he has been drinking he is verbally or even physically abusive. He and his wife are members of your church and have been hiding this behavior.
 - a. What questions would you ask them?
 - b. What instruction would you give them from the Bible?
 - c. What homework would you give them?
 - d. Is there anything else you would do?

Introduction to Biblical Counseling: Quiz 5

Try to support all answers with Scripture. Answer in pen without looking at your notes. Then you may look at your notes and add to your answers in pencil.

1. Jane has come to you because she is overwhelmed. She is busy working in the church, in her home, and volunteering in the community. She can't say "no". She is concerned that people don't think that she is doing enough.
 - a. What do you think Jane's problem is?

 - b. What instruction would you give her from Scripture?

 - c. What homework would you give Jane?

2. Sam, a 16 year old boy who helps in your mid-week children's program has come to you. He is having a terrible time struggling with lust. Sometimes he looks at pornography. He has a girlfriend.
 - a. What questions would you ask Sam?

 - b. What instructions would you give Sam from Scripture?

 - c. What homework would you give Sam?

3. Ron is 25 years old and has a wife and a small child. He has held several jobs, but keeps quitting because he is not finding job satisfaction. He is wondering how he can know God's will for his career. He has considered going to Bible school, but this will require his wife going back to work and putting the baby in day care.
 - a. What else would you want to know about Ron?

 - b. What counsel would you give Ron from Scripture?

