

The Definition and Goal of Biblical Counseling and Discipleship

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**THE GOSPEL
INSTITUTE**

The Big Idea

1. Everyone gives and receives counsel every day.
2. Your counsel must be biblical.
3. Biblical counseling is compassionate burden-bearing, simply intentional discipleship.
4. The goal of biblical counseling & discipleship is to become more like Christ.
5. Biblical counseling & discipleship is the responsibility of the local church.

Introduction

What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you hear the word, counseling?

Wikipedia - Counseling is the activity of the counselor, or a professional who counsels people (gives them assistance, advice and guidance), especially on personal problems and difficulties. In order to become a licensed mental health counselor in the United States, one must hold at least a master's or doctoral degree.

Defining the Word ‘Counsel’

“Advice; opinion, or instruction, given upon request or otherwise, for directing the judgment or conduct of another; opinion given upon deliberation or consultation.” (Webster’s 1828)

“The act of exchanging opinions and ideas; Advice or guidance”
(American Heritage Dictionary).

All discussions of ideas, concepts and beliefs, especially those that “attempt to change the way a person believes, processes thoughts, acts, feels or establishes values”. (Adapted from Dr. Ed Bulkley)

Everyone Gives & Receives Counsel Every Day

If the word counsel means the exchange of information, opinions, ideas, thoughts, values, then you are a counselor.

1. Verbally – thru speech, emails, texts, social media, etc.
2. Non-verbally – thru your thoughts, body-language, facial expressions, even silence conveys something to others
3. Who do you counsel the most?
4. In your thoughts, you counsel your own heart
5. You cannot say, “I’m not a counselor”
6. **Your counsel must be biblical.**

First, What Biblical Counseling isn't

1. Not - “sin-hunting”
2. Not - “Just read your Bible more”
3. Not – “Disseminating Bible verses”
4. Not - “Just pray harder...”
5. Not - “If you were more spiritual...”
6. Not - “You just need more faith...”
7. Not shallow, simplistic, or a cookie-cutter approach.
8. Not – “Stop it” or “Deal with it”.

Our Definition

Biblical Counseling is...

1. Gospel-centered (Jn.8:26-29; Rom.1:16-17; (1Cor.2:2)
2. Christ-exalting (1Cor.1:30-31; 2Cor.1:20; Col.1:28-29)
3. Compassionate burden-bearing (Gal.6:1-1Th.2:7-12)
4. Thru the sufficient & authoritative Word (2Ti.3:14-17)
5. Empowered by the Holy Spirit & prayer. (Acts 20:20-27; Heb.13:7; 2Cor.3:18; Ja.5:14-16)
6. Within the authority & structure of the local church.
(Gal.6:1-2; Eph. 4; 1 Cor. 12; Rom. 12-15; 1 Pet. 4:7-9; Gal. 5; James 5:13-18)

This is a picture of biblical discipleship or biblical friendship. This is the call and culture of the local church.

Goals of Biblical Counseling & Discipleship

Create a culture of compassionate burden-bearing by lovingly _____ people (1 Thess. 2:7; Rom.12-15) to fulfill their life's purpose, to ...

_____, (Mt. 4:10; Jn. 4:22-24)

_____, (Rom. 15:1-9; Is. 43:7)

and _____ God (Jn. 8:29; 2 Cor. 5:9)

as they _____ (2 Cor. 3:18; Tit. 2:11-14; 2 Pet. 1:3-11),

to be more _____ (Col.1:28; Eph. 4:13-16)

A Portrait of Biblical Counseling

Meet the Sufferer...Point to CHRIST



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All Believers are to be Disciple-makers

“... Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you... (Matt. 28:18-20)

1. All believers are **commanded** to make disciples. Biblical counseling truths are strictly public domain, available to all
2. Believers who are ‘spiritual’ (Gal. 6:1-2) should be able to address a majority of the counseling needs of the local church.
3. Some (like pastors and those gifted in this area) are uniquely equipped by God to help with certain problems.

All Believers are to be Disciple-makers

4. Believers must be committed to becoming good theologians and good, biblical counselors, i.e. effective soul-care givers.
5. If you were to examine your conversations with family and friends in the last week, would your “counsel” be biblical? Have you spoken words of life and truth? Or have you given your opinions?

Practical Goals for the Discipler/B.C.

1. ¹⁵Rather, *speaking the truth in love*, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, ¹⁶from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. (Ephesians 4:15-16)
2. These are the things that you shall do: *Speak the truth to one another*, render in your gates judgments that are true and make for peace; (Zechariah 8:16)

Practical Goals for the Discipler/B.C.

3. A biblical friendship will minister God's Word to nurture a spiritually and emotionally relevant, hope-filled, prayer-saturated, Holy-Spirit-dependent lifestyle that is active within the local church...
4. Thru radically changed perspectives, viewing trials from an eternal vantage-point (Gen. 45:5, 50:19-20; Heb. 12:1-14; 1 Pet. 1:3-9, 2:18-25, 4:1-19)
5. By understanding and meekly embracing God's purposes in every trial (Gen. 45:5, 50:19-20; 2 Cor. 1:3-10, 4:1-12)

Practical Goals for the Discipler/Biblical Counselor

1. **Perspective** - Helping others develop an eternal perspective, viewing trials from a “30,000’ view (Gen. 45:5, 50:19-20).
2. **Purpose** -Teaching from the many passages that answer the “Why” question; showing God’s purposes in every trial (James 1:2-4 - Key word is “know”)
3. **Person** – Accurate understanding of 1) who God is and 2) who you are (Identity)... a disciple is learner. (Lu. 6:40)
4. **Practice** – practical, sanctified responses that glorify God in words, attitudes, intentions, thoughts, emotions, actions

The Culture of Biblical Counseling & Discipleship

Jesus' last command was based on his authority. Jesus gave the Local Church the authority over His flock. Therefore biblical counseling and discipleship is what the Local Church is and does.

Biblical counseling, discipleship or biblical friendship is the call and culture of the local church.

Suggested Assignments

1. Summarize your main take-aways from this session. Note any areas that were either unclear to you or that you disagree with.
2. Read the Introduction and chapters 1 & 2 in *Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling*.

Note: You are not obligated to do any of this, simply do what you have time for and are interested in. We will not collect homework. If you have any constructive thoughts or suggestions, please forward them to Heather Leman at heather@bethanycommunitychurch.org.

Other Helpful Resources

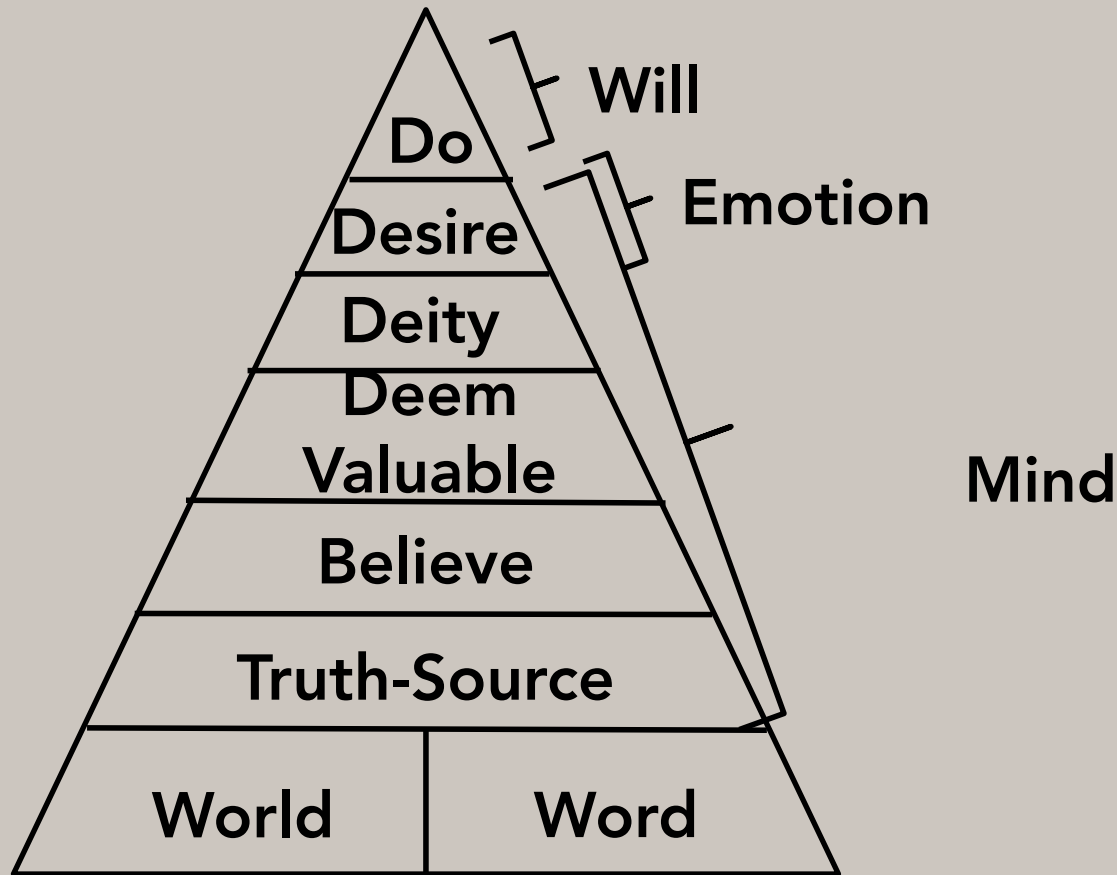
- *Speaking Redemptively*, by Paul Tripp, Journal of Biblical Counseling, Vol.16 #3 Spring 1998
- *How Biblical Counseling Helps Churches Fulfill the Great Commission*, Article by Rob Green
- *Side by Side*, Ed Welch, (book)
- *Counsel from the Cross*, Elyse Fitzpatrick (book)
- *Speaking Truth in Love*, by David Powlison (book)
- *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands*, by Paul Tripp (book)
- *How People Change*, by Lane/Tripp (book)
- *Crosstalk*, by Michael R. Emlet (book)
- *What to Do on Thursday*, by Jay Adams (book)

Practical Goals for the

Discipler/B.C ^(con't.)

3. By becoming a Learner, (a disciple is a learner by definition). Growth & change will not happen without a commitment to learn from trials. (Lu.6:40; Ja. 1:2-4[the key word here is “Know”]; Job 42:5-6)
4. By Responding to trials (pleasing & glorifying God) by becoming more like Christ. (Rom. 8:28-29; Rom. 12:1-2; Ps. 119:65-67; Ps. 19:14; 2 Cor. 5:9)
5. By becoming a disciple-maker within the local church. (2Tim.2:2; Tit.2; Matt. 28:16-20)

X. Example of Discipleship



XI. Examples of Biblical Counseling

Testimonies (not part of the handout)

Biblical Counseling is Discipleship

1. Jesus – Matt. 28:19-20; Jn. 7:16
2. Paul - Acts 20:20,27; 2 Tim. 3:14-17
3. Peter - 2 Pet. 1:3-11
4. Moses - Deut. 30:11-14
5. Isaiah - Is. 30:1-5

VI. Models of Biblical Discipleship

1. No longer do I [Jesus] call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. (John 15:15 ESV)
2. “You yourselves know...how I [Paul] did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house,”
3. (Acts 20:18-20 ESV)

IX. Practical Goals of the DISCIPLER

“To glorify God as we proclaim Jesus Christ as LORD and prepare His people to worship Him forever”

A. Gain _____, as you meet the sufferer in their pain and trials.

1. (Adapted from Wayne Mack and John MacArthur)

IX. Practical Goals of the DISCIPLER

- B. Proclaim the Gospel so unbelievers may come to faith and repentance through gentle, compassionate sharing of the practical answers of the Gospel for life's problems.
- C. Offer _____ and comfort

IX. Practical Goals of the DISCIPLER

- D. Gather _____ (from Dr. Wayne Mack)
- E. Reinterpret their life and change _____,
- F. Embrace God's purposes
- G. Give biblical _____, (disciplers must become intentional learners.)

IX. Practical Goals of the DISCIPLER

H. Equip to _____ - create a new life-plan that is spiritually & emotionally relevant.

Key thought— Our sources of truth determine how we interpret and respond to our world.

IV. Presuppositions of Biblical Counseling

1. A. The Bible is true and foundational
2. B. General revelation is not reliable
3. C. The Bible is sufficient and authoritative
4. D. The Bible is robust and comprehensive
5. E. The Bible must be interpreted and applied in context
6. F. Counseling is everyone's responsibility