

Introduction to Biblical Counseling

Why Should Counselors be People of Holiness and Integrity?

Key Words: Holiness, Integrity

I. Introduction

A. Counselors in the USA are in the top three categories of professionals of those with a sex addiction. // Other two categories are gynecologists and pastors.

B. Many counselors have had affairs.

1. The counseling environment is a perfect set up for immoral relationships.
 - a. Men are sexually vulnerable to admiration from needy women. Men are also stimulated optically and are subject to provocative dress.
 - 1) That's the reason Job made covenant with his eyes that he would not look lustfully at a girl. (Job 31:1)
 - b. Women are vulnerable to deep, intimate conversation with men. It has the same effect on women as pornography has on men.
 - c. Seclusion, privacy, secrecy, confidentiality, secrets are all ingredients to set up potential immoral relationships.
 - 1) Proverbs 7:19-20, "For my husband is not at home; he has gone on a long journey; he has taken a bag of money with him, and will come home on the appointed day."
 - d. Key warning: If you start looking forward with delight to meeting a client of the opposite sex, and getting an emotional rush from it, a person of integrity will end that relationship immediately.
 - 1) Transference of emotions is an ever present danger in counseling both men to women and women to men. It can lead to an emotional affair.
 - 2) Through emotional transference, the client will seek to get a legitimate, unmet need met, illegitimately.
 - e. Many counselors have sex with their clients as a part of their therapy. Today a counselor, therapist, psychologist can be prosecuted in the USA for it and lose their license.

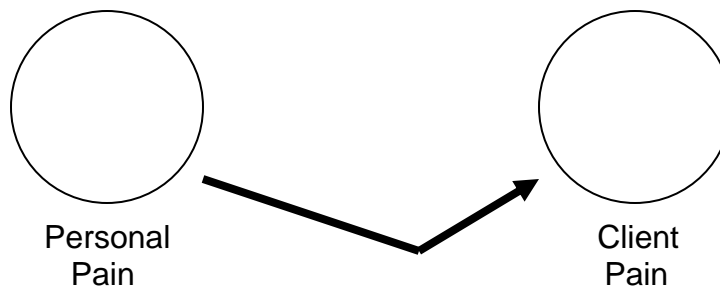
C. Many counselors have divorced and remarried clients or parishioners.

1. One of my favorite Christian writers on Christian counseling is married to his third wife.
2. A major pastor in one area of the USA had a secret door for his secretary. He was caught. He took another big church and did it again. He came back to his former church area and killed himself.
3. Multi-millions are being spent to pay off the lawsuits of Catholic priests who have molested boys in private under the guise of counseling or ministering. They have fathered many children as priests.
4. God is very upset with Christian counselors and pastors who counsel and minister while acting in hurtful ways to their wives.

a. Malachi 2:13-17

D. Some counselors use helping people to remove their pain or to avoid their own personal pain. // These do not counsel out of integrity.

1. **Drawing:**



2. A biblical counselor is one who does have problems, but he is working on them, learning from them and demonstrates to others how the biblical tools work in real life.

E. They get their worth and value out of fixing people, rescuing them; instead of from their personal relationship with Christ. (Gal. 2:20)

F. Some counsel out of the feeling of power and control they have over people like the New Testament Pharisees did to the Jews of their day. (Matthew 22:4, 27-28)

1. They strongly desire people to be dependent on them.
 - a. Any counselor who has a client emotionally dependent on him/her may have failed to have that client transfer their ultimate dependence over to God alone.
 - b. Matt. 5:16, "Let your light (life) so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."
 - c. I Cor. 3:5, "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed as the Lord gave to each one?"

2. Often those who are ministering from a power and control position are “lording it over” them while failing to be examples of what is being taught or counseled.
 - a. I Peter 5:3, “Not as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.”

G. Why is it important to be biblical counselors of holiness and integrity?

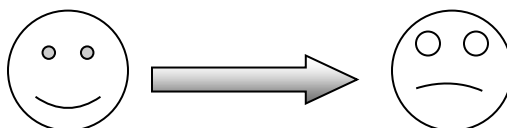
1. You are doing spiritual work in the lives of others.
2. You are doing spiritual work in your own life.
3. You are illustrating with your life what the change is going to look like.

II. You are doing spiritual work in the lives of others. // What does that mean?

A. Your primary base of communicating is spirit-to-spirit. // What does that mean?

1. There are at least four levels of communication. // None of these are wrong in and of themselves.

2. **Drawing:**

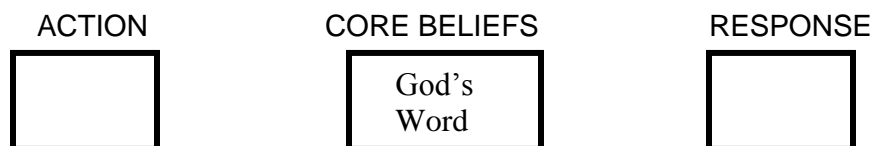


Mind-to-Mind
Will-to-Will
Emotion-to-Emotion
Spirit-to-Spirit

- a. Mind-to-mind: // What does this look like?
 - 1) It is important to convey facts, reality, truth, insights.
 - a) Paul had to convey biblical truth to those who lost loves ones before the Lord returned, “I do not want you to be ignorant brethren concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow like those who have no hope.” (I Thess. 4:13)
 - 2) We are to convey truth to transform the mind.
 - a) Rom. 12:2, “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and perfect will of God.”
 - b) II Peter 1:5, “But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue, knowledge.”

- 3) If you exclusively speak mind-to-mind, you will connect intellectually but you may not change a heart, soul.
 - 4) This is why Paul did not use an intellectual approach alone to reach the Corinthians.
 - a) “1 Cor 2:1-5 “And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. 2) For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. 3) I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. 4) And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 5) that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.”
- b. Will-to-will: (Your strong will forcing a change in their will)
- 1) This is the power of persuasion to motivate them to accept a specific way of thinking or acting.
 - 2) Paul warned about the exclusive use of persuasive words.
 - a) 1 Cor 2:4-5 “ And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 5) that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.”
 - 3) But Paul did “urge” believers to pursue a specific course of action.
 - a) Rom 12:1 “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.”
 - b) That urging was based on 11 chapters of very specific information.
 - 4) You cannot force a lasting change exclusively through the intellect or by manipulating the will without a change in the core belief system called the heart.
- c. Emotion-to-emotion:
- 1) Most all people can be manipulated by their emotions. But after the emotions are reduced, a person will return to his former state of mind or pattern of behavior. Three of the most common emotions that are used to manipulate are guilt, fear and shame.
 - 2) Believers can be worked up into an emotional frenzy and experience an emotional high.
 - a) The problem with this is that in order to feel normal or spiritual, they have to keep trying to reproduce that emotional high.

- 3) True, we are to identify with others' emotions. // But identifying with them and whipping them up into an emotional high are two different things.
 - a) Rom 12:15, "Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep."
 - b) Jesus cried over Lazarus. (John 11:34-36)
 - 4) People will experience some deep emotions when they are working through a past hurt, loss or conflict. // But these emotions are normal, not a result of a counselor purposefully stimulating them.
3. Your primary means of communication is on the fourth level: Spirit-to-spirit.
- a. Yes, God speaks to us through His word (Heb. 4:12), His people (Gal. 2:11-14), and through circumstances (Acts 16:24-31).
 - b. But for deep communication to take place, it must be His Spirit speaking through our spirit.
 - 1) Rom 8:14, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God."
 - 2) Rom. 8:16, "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God."
 - 3) 1 Cor 2:14, "But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."
4. God takes His words through you down to a level you cannot go with human words alone.



- a. Heb 4:12, "For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart."
 - b. John 17:17, "Sanctify them by Your truth, Your Word is truth."
5. Often we will pray with a client that God will take his word through us down where we can't go. Why? Because they are spiritually taught.
- a. 1 Cor 2:9-10, "But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for

those who love Him. 10) But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.”

B. You are engaging in spiritual warfare, not just spiritual reduction.

1. Your fight (counseling) is not on a flesh and blood level, but a spiritual level.
 - a. Eph 6:12, “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.”
 - 1) They are not physical opponents.
 - 2) They are demonic dictators.
 - 3) They are very powerful.
 - 4) They are master spirits who are world rulers controlling this present darkness.
 - 5) They are the spiritual power behind wickedness.
2. Whether by some form of control or deep influence, demonic spirits may be at work.
 - a. 1 Tim 4:1, “Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,”
3. You must be spiritual (under the control of the Holy Spirit) to do effective spiritual warfare.
 - a. Gal 6:1, “Brethren, if a man is overtaken (caught or grabbed) in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted (by the same sin).”
 - 1) “Spiritual” believers who walk or live by the Spirit. (Gal. 5:16, 25)
 - 2) Note: Paul does not refer to a position or title, only that they not be beginners in the faith, but strong in the Spirit.
 - b. 1 Cor 2:15a, “But he who is spiritual judges all things...”
 - 1) (Amplified) “But the spiritual man tries all things (that is) he examines, investigates, inquires into, questions, and discerns all things...He can read the meaning of everything...”
 - c. James 5:16, “Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails (accomplishes) much.”

4. Satan is the prince of the power of our environment (air).
 - a. Eph 2:2, "In which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,"
5. Satan is fully in control and works his will in the sons of disobedience. (Eph. 2:2)
 - a. But He only has delegated power, not absolute power.
6. You are in hand-to-hand combat with him and his fallen angels.
 - a. Wrestling is not a group sport.
 - b. 1 Cor 9:26-27, "Therefore, I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. 27) But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified."
7. All deep changes must take place on the spiritual level.
 - a. Phil 1:6, "Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;"
 - b. Phil 2:13, "For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure."
 - c. Eph 2:10, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."
 - d. Matt 17:21, "However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."
 - e. John 17:19, "And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth."
8. All meaningful conviction of sin, righteousness and judgment is done by the Holy Spirit.
 - a. John 16:8, "And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:"
 - b. Your task is never to play the role of the Holy Spirit.

C. You are ultimately an instrument of the Holy Spirit.

1. Paul sensed this reality in his ministry.
 - a. I Cor. 3:6, "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase."

- b. Gal. 4:19, “My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you.”
2. Paul reminded Timothy of this same concept.
- a. 1 Tim 4:6, “If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed.”

III. You are doing spiritual work in your own life while helping others. // (How?)

A. Acknowledge to yourself your own needs while helping others.

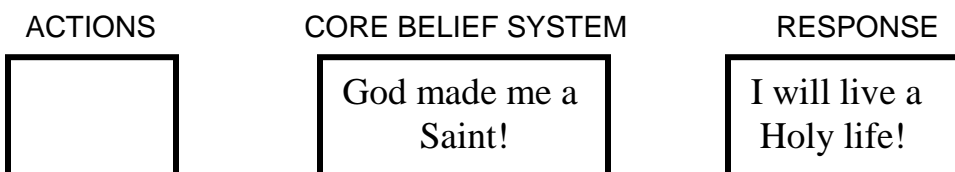
1. You need to admit to yourself (not live in denial), to others (James 5:16) and to God (Rev. 3:17,18) that you have needs and you are purposing to work on them by using the same biblical tools you expect others to use. (1 Cor. 9:26,27)
 - a. Your personal testimony can be very powerful.
 - 1) 1 Thess 1:3-4, “Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father, 4) knowing, beloved brethren, your election by God.”
2. Most all the greats of scripture experienced needs, disappointments and failures before, during and after times of ministry.
 - a. Peter was a classic illustration of one still struggling personally while ministering publicly. He was not a perfect Pope.
 - 1) Gal 2:11-13, “Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; 12) for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. 13) And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy.”
 - b. Paul struggled greatly with his flesh. But he used his biblical tools to control the flesh through the Spirit.
 - 1) 1 Cor 9:27, “But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to (counseled) others, I myself should become disqualified.”
 - a) Paul was not concerned with losing his salvation; he was concerned with being able to stay in the race and not be cut short by God’s disciplinary disapproval and laid aside.
 - 2) (Amplified) “but (like a boxer) I buffet (discipline) my body – handle it roughly, discipline it by hardships – and subdue it, for fear that after proclaiming to others the Gospel and the things pertaining to it (by

counseling), I myself should become unfit, not stand the test and be unapproved – and rejected (as counterfeit).”

- c. Elijah experienced some depression and discouragement after his defeating the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel and destroyed them all. (I Kings 18,19)
- d. Paul started well, fought well and ended well. Many pastors and counselors do not end well. Often moral failure in their lives causes them to leave the ministry.
 - 1) II Tim 4:7, “ have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.”

B. Actively use your biblical tools to process your own needs and continue to grow through those needs into Christ-likeness! // This is the same goal you have for your clients.

1. Christ-likeness means holiness with integrity in your words, actions and attitudes.
 - a. 1 Peter 1:15-16, “but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16) because it is written, ‘Be holy, for I am holy.’ ”
 - b. In the Roman church, outward appearance and performance are stressed instead of inner character.
 - 1) Many Roman priests have sexual concubines or are exploiting children.
2. Your core identity must be holiness. // You are a saint! A pope does not make you a saint. God does!
 - a. 1 Cor 1:2, “To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:”
 - b. 1 Cor 6:11, “And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.”
3. Check out your core belief regarding sainthood.



IV. You are illustrating with your own life what those changes are going to look like.

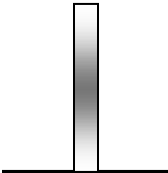
A. Because the church was so new in the first century, there were few role models of what the followers of the Way (Acts 9:2) were to act, think and speak like.

1. God selected the Apostle Paul to be an example (pattern) of what God was talking about in becoming Godly or Christ-like.
 - a. I Timothy 1:12-16
 - b. "Pattern" - example, prototype
2. Paul often said, "If you want to know how you should act, think or talk like God, imitate me."
 - a. I Cor. 11:1, "Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ."
 - b. 1 Cor 4:15-17, "For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. 16) Therefore I urge you, imitate me. 17) For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church."
 - c. 1 Tim 1:16, "However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life."
3. Paul told Timothy to teach and to correct many things in Ephesus. But he also told Timothy to be an illustration of all the teaching and counseling he did.
 - a. 1 Tim 4:12, "Let no one despise your youth, but be an example (pattern) to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity."
4. Paul urged others to follow his example (pattern).
 - a. Phil 3:17, "Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern."
 - b. Note Paul's grief over those who do not live out the same pattern.
 - 1) Phil 3:18, "For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:"
5. By encouraging people to follow Timothy or Paul, Paul did not mean they should imitate him in every single area of his life because he admitted he was not perfect (Phil. 3:12). But he was stressing the matter of relentlessly, aggressively, enthusiastically pursuing Christ-likeness in attitude, word, and behavior.

B. Many people tell others what to do and how to do it but fail to illustrate with their life what it looks like.

1. Scripture refers to them as hypocrites (i.e. they teach one thing, but do another).
 - a. Jesus never had anything good to say about religious hypocrites.

C. Many people excuse their wrong behavior because they fail to see holiness and integrity in those who teach it. (Read Romans 14:14-23)

1. In the church. Life  Ministry
2. In the home.
3. In the work world.

D. A counselor characterized by holiness and integrity will do a lot of healthy personal examination.

1. He will ask God to examine him.
 - a. Ps. 26:2, “Examine me, O Lord, and prove me.”
 - b. Ps 139:23-24, “Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; 24) and see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.”
2. But God also expects us to examine our own works.
 - a. Gal 6:4, “But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.”
 - b. (Amplified) Gal. 6:4a, “But let every person carefully scrutinize and examine and test his own conduct and his own work...”
3. God expects you to counsel out of a pure heart and a clear conscience.
 - a. 1 Tim 1:5, “Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith,”

E. God will often convict you of a personal need while you are counseling. This is normal and healthy, especially if you respond favorably to God’s conviction.

F. God is going to have the last word on our works (counseling ministry).

1. There will be a time that all our counseling and conduct will be judged by God.
 - a. II Cor 5:9-11, “Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. 10) For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. 11) Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences.”

- b. 1 Cor 4:5, "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God."
- 2. Salvation will not be an issue here at this judgment because your eternal destiny is determined by faith. (Eph. 2:8-9)
- 3. Ministry that is issuing from saving faith will be evaluated by God.
 - a. I Cor. 3:13-15
- 4. The issue at this judgment is not quantity but quality.
 - a. Human success can be achieved by human effort, but unless it is empowered by God in accordance with His plan, it cannot last.
 - 1) Ps 127:1a, "Unless the LORD builds the house, they labor in vain who build it;..."
- 5. We are not told in detail what the reward is, but it will include praise from God. (I Cor. 4:5)
- 6. Both building materials (wood, hay, stubble, gold, silver, precious stones) will co-exist and appear indistinguishable until that judgment. (CF. Matt. 13:30)
 - a. Many very old churches have wooden or plastered pillars that have been painted to look like marble, but will easily burn when put in contact with fire.

G. But as we examine ourselves in a healthy way, we may want to include at least these personal questions.

- 1. How do you deal with your own anger? (temper, short fuse, impatient)
- 2. How do you respond to other people's anger?
- 3. What do you do when you are lonely?
- 4. How do you deal with your own lust and fantasies?
- 5. What do you do when you are fearful? (Do you live in a comfort zone defined by fear?)
- 6. How do you respond to failure?
- 7. How do you forgive? (Who do you secretly carry in your heart of unforgiveness?)
- 8. How do you deal with past memories of hurts and rejection?
- 9. How do you deal with problems, trials, afflictions, temptations?

10. What Godly disciplines have you developed in your own life (prayer, Bible study, meditation, fasting)

H. Holiness is not how high you climb, but how straight you walk when you hit the bottom.

V. Conclusion

A. Why should we be counselors of holiness and integrity?

1. We are doing spiritual work in others.
2. We are doing spiritual work in ourselves.
3. We are illustrating with our own lives what those changes are going to look like.