

## Week One: Introduction to Biblical Counseling

### Introductory Remarks

Christ will build His church not only in spite of us personally, but will build it through us (Eph. 4:14-16). Do you know your role in this terrific work?

### What Do We Mean by Counseling?

1. Narrowly Considered – someone seeks help with a particular issue or struggle from an educated/trained counselor.
2. Broadly Considered – every time we engage in conversation our words influence, intend, persuade, etc.
3. Biblical – What makes our counsel intentionally biblical?
  - Words that come from a biblical worldview/lens
  - Words that come with biblical intentions
  - Words that work toward biblical goals
  - Words that work through biblical means

### Working Vision of Our Life Together

#### *What We are After*

1. We are after “a culture of helpful relationships, both inside and outside the church, in order that EVERYONE might be made complete in Christ” (Mike Perry).
2. We are after a “Culture of Grace and Growth” (Timothy Lane)
  - Grace (a place of acceptance, love, no condemnation, etc.)
  - Growth (a place of encouragement, teaching, counsel, accountability, etc.)
3. Everyone can grow in wisdom, love, and skill to better engage one another toward full maturity in Christ.
  - We are after **all** people becoming more helpful in their relationships that currently exist within this body.
  - We are after training **some** people to biblically handle the more difficult questions and situations that inevitably arise in our lives.
  - We are after training **some others** who are especially gifted and will receive ongoing fine-grained training in order to handle the most difficult situations.
  - By the grace of God this is not just a season in the life of our church but an ever increasing aspect of our life together for the duration of the life of this church.

#### *What We Do*

##### *Intelligent and Helpful Conversations*

1. **Care** is being a helpful, “compassionate companion toward a person in need” and it “requires being involved” (Eugene Peterson, *Subversive Spirituality*)
2. **Cure** is intelligently “nurturing a person toward health” and “requires knowing what we are doing” (Eugene Peterson, *Subversive Spirituality*).

## **Introduction to Love, Know, Speak, Do (A Personal Ministry Model from *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands* by Paul Tripp)**

### **Introductory Remarks**

1. Paul Tripp emphasizes that these are not necessarily steps but they are aspects that work in tandem within good helping relationships.
2. The usefulness of this biblical model is demonstrated in its relevance to a five minute conversation and a five month counseling relationship.

### **LOVE**

"Love highlights the importance of relationships in the process of change. Theologians call this a covenantal model of change. God comes and makes a covenant with us. He commits himself to be our God and he takes us as his people. In the context of this relationship, he accomplishes his work of making us like him" (Tripp, *Instruments*, p. 110).

### **KNOW**

"Knowing the person means knowing the heart. When you say you are getting to know someone better, it's not that you are gaining a more intimate understanding of her kneecap! You mean that you know more about her beliefs and goals, her hopes and dreams, her values and desires. If you know your friend, you will be able to predict what she will think and how she will feel in a given situation" (Tripp, *Instruments*, p. 111).

### **SPEAK**

"Speak involves bringing God's truth to bear on this person in this situation. To do this you need to ask, 'What does God want this person to see that she doesn't see? How can I help her see it?...It means helping your friend see her life clearly. For lasting change to take place, your friend must see herself in the mirror of God's Word. She also needs to see God and the resources for change that he has provided in Christ" (Tripp, *Instruments*, p. 111-112).

### **DO**

"Finally, you must help your friend Do something with what she learns—to apply the insights God has given to her daily life and relationships. Insight alone does not change; it's only the beginning. Insights about who we are, who God is, and what he has given us in Christ must be applied to the practical, specific realities of life" (Tripp, *Instruments*, p. 112).

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Do you have the sense that this means something to you and your relationships in and outside this church? Does it fit, does it have a place?
2. Does anyone have any examples of church life where this care was done well or poorly?
3. What concerns rise up in your minds as we begin this journey toward a more wise-love in our relationships as a church?
4. What is the place of psychology in understanding people and how to help them?