
BIBLICAL COUNSELING

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TOOLS AND SCRIPTURES FOR OFFERING TRUTH

What makes ‘Biblical counsel’ biblical? The question may seem redundant to some, but it actually is at the heart of a major struggle within the Church over what kind of help ought to be given to people who are struggling with various needs—situational, emotional, psychological and spiritual.

Biblical and spiritual counseling is very different from psychological counseling in virtually all respects. We start from a different place; we take a different approach and we use many different tools. We look for spiritual explanations rather than psychological ones, and we focus much more on bringing people to repentance and change, than we do in bringing people to understand why they are the way they are. While acknowledging that people are affected by what other people have or have not done to them, we teach that each of us is responsible for our own sins and the consequences of those sins.

We neither affirm nor condemn other types of counseling, but we are fully committed to spiritual (biblical) counseling as the type of counseling that is most appropriate for us as a church to offer people. We rejoice in whatever overlap there may be between spiritual counseling and Christian psychology, but we no more expect to be guided by that approach than we expect to guide it and those who teach it.

THE PURPOSE OF BIBLICAL COUNSELING

Biblical counseling attempts to deal only with issues or circumstances which result from or are influenced by sin or demonic bondage. When either the counselee or the counselor feels the issues or circumstances are not the result of, or influenced by, sin or demonic bondage (i.e. physiological abnormalities, vocational grievances), we will direct people toward appropriate solutions.

In addition, Biblical counseling seeks to discover the Truth about any situation or issue as revealed in the Scriptures, and to encourage people to embrace that Truth in the grace and mercy of God. Conversely, the counselor may point out anything which is not Truth (i.e., issues of sin, bondage, error), and encourage people to renounce it.

SPIRITUAL TOOLS FOR SPIRITUAL RESTORATION

With all 'tools' we use, we must always come to people in an attitude of love, compassion and mercy. That atmosphere makes it far more possible for people to receive what we have to offer them:

1. The stories, principles, verses and phrases of the Bible.
2. Prayer, counsel and revelation.
3. Words of wisdom and words of knowledge.
4. Discerning of spirits and prophecy.
5. Gifts of healings.
6. Personal experience as fellow-travelers.

USEFUL SCRIPTURAL COUNSEL TO GIVE AFTER PRAYING FOR PEOPLE:

1. Jesus said to her, "Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?" And she said "No one, Lord." And Jesus said "Neither do I condemn you; go your way. From now on sin no more." ~John 8:10-11
2. For with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. ~Romans 10:10
3. Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. ~Romans 12:1-2
4. Do this, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. The night is almost gone, and the day is at hand. Let us therefore lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts. ~Romans 13:11-14
5. So then let us pursue the things which make for peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. ~Romans 15:13
6. Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. ~Romans 15:13

7. For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, so that no man may boast before God. But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, so that, just as it is written, "Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord." ~1 Corinthians 1:26-31
8. For I am conscious of nothing against myself, yet I am not by this acquitted; but the one who examines me is the Lord. Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God. ~1 Corinthians 4:4-5
9. Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God. ~1 Corinthians 6:9-11
10. Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified. ~1 Corinthians 9:24-27
11. For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ. But if we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; or if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which is effective in the patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer... ~2 Corinthians 1:5-6
12. For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. ~2 Corinthians 4:17-18
13. Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. ~2 Corinthians 5:17
14. Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. ~2 Corinthians 7:1

15. For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, or the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ... ~2 Corinthians 10:3-5
16. And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong. ~2 Corinthians 12:9-10
17. Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? ~Galatians 3:3
18. Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each on looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted. ~Galatians 6:1
19. Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith. ~Galatians 6:7-10
20. Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ~ Ephesians 4:1-3
21. Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ. ~Ephesians 5:15-21
22. For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus. ~Philippians 1:6
23. Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this attitude in yourselves

which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. ~Philippians 2:3-7

24. Do all things without grumbling or disputing; so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world... ~Philippians 2:14-15
25. Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything [is] worthy of praise, dwell on these things. ~Philippians 4:4-8
26. ...Having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him. ~Colossians 2:14-15
27. Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving. ~Colossians 4:2
28. Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. Do not quench the Spirit; do not despise prophetic utterances. But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; abstain from every form of evil. Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass. ~1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
29. It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all. Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life. ~1 Timothy 1:15-16
30. This command I entrust to you, Timothy, my son, in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you fight the good fight, keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith. ~1 Timothy 1:18-19

31. But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons. ~1 Timothy 4:1
32. Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe. Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching. Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed on you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery. Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them, so that your progress will be evident to all. Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you. ~1 Timothy 4:12-16
33. For this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline. ~2 Timothy 1:6-7
34. No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier. Also if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not win the prize unless he competes according to the rules. The hard-working farmer ought to be the first to receive his share of the crops. ~2 Timothy 2:4-
35. The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will. ~2 Timothy 2:24-2
36. You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. ~2 Timothy 3:14-17
37. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires. ~2 Timothy 4:3
38. To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled. They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed. ~Titus 1:15-16
39. For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it. For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable,

and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard... ~Hebrews 2:1-3

40. Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted. ~Hebrews 2:17-18
41. Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. ~Hebrews 3:12-14
42. And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient? *So* we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief. ~Hebrews 3:18-19
43. For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard. ~Hebrews 4:2
44. For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. ~Hebrews 4:12-13
45. But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil. ~Hebrews 5:14
46. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a *hope* both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil... ~Hebrews 6:19
47. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the House of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their minds, and I will write them on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be My people." ~Hebrews 8:10
48. Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, and since *we have* a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled *clean* from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. ~Hebrews 10:19-22

49. Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised. ~Hebrews 10:35-36
50. And without faith it is impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and *that* He is a rewarder of those who seek Him. ~Hebrews 11:6
51. Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ~Hebrews 12:1-2
52. All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness. ~Hebrews 12:11
53. For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears. ~Hebrews 12:17
54. This *expression*, “Yet once more,” denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, so that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. ~Hebrews 12:27
55. Obey your leaders and submit *to them*, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you. ~Hebrews 13:17
56. Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. ~James 1:2-4
57. What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? You lust and do not have; *so* you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; *so* you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend *it* on your pleasures. You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: “He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us”? But He gives a greater grace. Therefore *it* says, “God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded... Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you. ~James 4:1-8, 10