

FOUNDATIONS OF BIBLICAL COUNSELING, PART 1: INTRODUCTION TO BIBLICAL COUNSELING *SYLLABUS*

Course Description

- This course is an overview of current trends in counseling theory and practice, and the role of counseling – most specifically, Biblical counseling – in public, private, and church settings.
- Basic counseling skills taught in this course include interviewing, assessment, and therapeutic listening in a counseling situation.
- Application is made to common matters, including premarital, family crisis, grief, substance abuse counseling, and sexual issues.
- Underlying emphasis is on developing Biblically consistent strategies and applying Scriptural principles.

Course Objectives

- To equip the students to do the work of counseling from a scriptural standpoint.
- To equip the students to train others to do the work of counseling.
- To introduce the students to the knowledge-base and categories necessary to engage and evaluate secular methods of helping.
- To model a method of evaluating secular theories of psychotherapy from an apologetic and evangelistic standpoint.
- To model a method of gleaning common-grace insights from secular theories of psychology in light of God's Word.
- To demonstrate that pastoral/Biblical counseling needs to be Bible-based, God-honoring, Christ-centered, Spirit-powered, Church-located, Elder-led, Lay-involved, Family-focused, and Neighborhood-involved.

Required Reading

Berger, Daniel R, II. *Mental Illness: The Necessity for Faith and Authority, Volume I.* Taylors, SC: Alethia International Publishing. 2016

Since the 1950s, psychiatry has controlled the definitions, theories, diagnoses, and suggested remedies for mental illness. Dr. Berger challenges that paradigm with extensive research, quoting from the secular sources themselves to demonstrate that they, themselves, do not believe their own paradigm.

Hoekstra, Bob. *How to Counsel God's Way.* Murrieta, CA: Living in Christ Ministries, 1999.

A concise yet easy-to-follow treatise on Christian counseling from a non-integrationist perspective.

Wright, Rogers H., and Cummings, Nicholas A., eds. *Destructive Trends in Mental Health: The Well Intentioned Path to Harm.* Ney York, NY: Taylor & Francis Group, 2005

This book begins with the assumption that the atmosphere of intellectual openness, scientific inquiry, aspiration towards diversity, and freedom from political pressure that once flourished in the APA has been eclipsed by an "ultra-liberal agenda," in which voices of dissent, controversial points of view, and minority groups are intimidated, ridiculed, and censored. It is intended to help consumers, practitioners, and policymakers to become better educated about a variety of recent issues and trends that have significantly changed the mental health fields.

Vancouver Bible Institute. *Why Biblical Counseling?* Vancouver, WA: Truth in Love Communications, 2012

Various class handouts

- Handouts are provided on a number of subjects for the course. These are included in a Supplemental Resources book. Keep these handy and refer to them often; they are exceedingly helpful tools.

Recommended Reading (Books marked with ☞ are Honors reading)

☞ **Adams, Jay E.** *Competent to Counsel.* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1986.

First published in 1970, this book has gone through over thirty printings. It established the basis for an introduction to an approach to counseling that

is being used in pastors' studies, in counseling centers, and across dining room tables throughout the country and around the world.

- ☞ **Berger, Daniel R, II.** *The Chemical Imbalance Delusion.* Taylors, SC: Alethia International Publishing. 2019

Daniel Berger presents a fresh and simplified navigational tool on a topic that is often overwhelming to those who have been told they have a chemical imbalance Here he helps both the diagnosed and those who care for them to understand that this idea is not supported by the science and that there is still hope.

- ☞ _____ . *Mental Illness: The Reality of the Spiritual Nature, Volume II.* Taylors, SC: Alethia International Publishing. 2016

- ☞ _____ . *Mental Illness: The Reality of the Physical Nature, Volume III.* Taylors, SC: Alethia International Publishing. 2016

- ☞ _____ . *Mental Illness: The Influence of Nurture, Volume IV.* Taylors, SC: Alethia International Publishing. 2016

- ☞ _____ . *Mental Illness: The Necessity for Dependence, Volume V.* Taylors, SC: Alethia International Publishing. 2016

- ☞ _____ . *Mental Illness: The Influence of Nurture, Volume IV.* Taylors, SC: Alethia International Publishing. 2016

- ☞ _____ . *Rethinking Depression: Not a Sickness, Not a Sin.*

Both inside and outside the church, what is commonly labeled “depression” is little understood, either scientifically or biblically. Daniel Berger brings a refreshing look to the discussion and, as always, brings a depth of scholarship that is unsurpassed in this field.

- ☞ **Breggin, Peter Roger.** *The Anti-depressant Fact Book.* NY: Perseus, 2001.

The drug revolution in psychiatry is actually of recent origin having begun in earnest only a few decades ago. There is now an unsettling pattern of discovering the unintended side effects of a compound only after many years of administration in the field, e.g., Valium. See also www.breggin.com.

- ☞ _____ **and Cohen, David.** *Your Drug May Be Your Problem, Revised Edition: How and Why to Stop Taking Psychiatric Medications,* Philadelphia, PA: Da Capo Press, 2007.

This is the only book to provide an uncensored description of the dangers involved in taking every kind of psychiatric medication when first published in 1999; it was also the first and only book to explain how to

safely stop taking them. Since then, there have been numerous studies suggesting or proving the dangers of some psychiatric medications, and even the FDA now acknowledges the problems; more studies are underway to determine their long-term and withdrawal effects.

- ☞ **Carlat, Daniel.** *Unhinged: The Trouble with Psychiatry - A Doctor's Revelations about a Profession in Crisis.* NY: Free Press, 2010.

Psychiatrist Daniel Carlat exposes deeply disturbing problems plaguing his profession, revealing the ways it has abandoned its essential purpose: to understand the mind so that psychiatrists can heal mental illness and not just treat symptoms.

- ☞ **Ganz, Richard.** *PsychoBabble: The Failure of Modern Psychology – and the Biblical Alternative.* Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

Foreword by Dr. John MacArthur, this book seeks to examine and explain the dichotomy between secular psychology and Biblical counseling. As the title suggests, the author has no love lost for secular approaches.

- Goldman, Steven.** *Science in the Twentieth Century: A Social-intellectual Survey.* Chantilly, VA: The Teaching Company.

Dr. Goldman shows the tremendous change in the approach of science from 1900 to 2000, from the study of things to the study of relationships, and its increasing “priestcraft” of mathematics.

- ☞ **Johnson, E.L. and Jones, S. L., eds.** *Psychology and Christianity: Four Views.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000

This work provides the opportunity to examine defenses for the four prevalent views related to counseling within the context of Christianity and the Church in our current context.

- ☞ **Playfair, William.** *The Useful Lie.* Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1991.

A medical doctor and student of theology, Dr. Playfair reviews the empirical research and the biblical principles necessary for an evaluation of 12-step programs, a popular method for counseling with life-dominating problems.

(NOTE: This is one of the Required Reading books for the Addiction & Recovery Models Module.)

- ☞ **Powlison, David.** *The Biblical Counseling Movement: History and Context.* Greensboro, NC: New Growth Press, 2010.

An objective look at the anti-psychiatry/psychology movement within Conservative Protestantism that has been on-going since the 1970's.

☞ **Robinson, Daniel.** *Philosophy of Psychology (Critical Assessments of Contemporary Psychology)*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1989.

Robinson, with expertise in neuropsychology, history of psychology, and philosophical psychology, squarely addresses fundamental problems that professional psychologists have tended either to neglect or to assume are negligible. He challenges much of the “conventional wisdom” on the nature and prospects of psychological “science.”

☞ **Sommers, Christina and Satel, Sally.** *One Nation Under Therapy: How the Helping Culture is Eroding Self-reliance*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2005.

“Ideas have consequences” ... such as the cultural effects from how we see the counseling enterprise. At both individual and social levels, modern psychology has affected our expectations for living in good times and bad. While the Biblical counselor will not want to embrace the intermittent Stoicism of the authors in exchange for reliance on the Lord and His Word, here is critical thinking—from a secular perspective—about the results of psychological theories that have been tried and rejected by even the academic world.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

For those students seeking to benefit the most from the course, completing the following assignments will do the most to ensure that. **Working toward a grade is not necessary to pass the course.** Of course, the more of the assignments completed, the greater the benefit to you and your future counselees.

Summary of Assignments

- Attend lectures and participate in role-plays.
- Course Paper
- Counseling Dialogue
- Reading/Video Synopses
- Course Application Paper

Class Participation (30%)

Participation in class discussions and role-plays is critical to ensuring a sure grasp of the material.

Reading/Video Synopses (30%)

A three- to five-page synopsis of each book on the Required Reading list and of the YouTube video for Class Session 3, with a final personal assessment of the work as the conclusion.

One of the Following Course Papers (40%):

Critique Paper

A three- to five-page description and critique of the theory and practice of a major modality or school-of-thought of secular psychology. Use footnotes for references.

Counseling Dialogue

A three- to five-page imaginary dialogue between a Biblical counselor and a (1) scientific **or** (2) subjectivist professional counselor.

Course Application Paper

A three- to five-page imaginary dialogue between a Biblical Counselor and counselee of your choosing.

Submitting Assignments for Grading

All assignments not given a specific “when due” in the “Reading and Assignment Schedule” (Syllabus Page xiii) are due the last day of the course. All assignments are to be submitted via Google Docs with an invitation to comment for the professor (or for your TA if you are a Self-paced student). For those who find writing and typing to be over-burdensome, the professor may grant permission to

submit assignments in video format instead of Google Docs. Extensions must be pre-approved prior to the relevant due date.

Honors

Honors Reading: Read any Recommended Reading list item marked ➤. Submit a three- to five-page summary/ analyses of the work.

Honors Project: Submit an original research paper on any approved topic. The topic must be taken from the lectures, the required reading, or the recommended reading.

Final Course Grade Meanings

A with Honors = You far exceeded expectations and completed an Honors Project or Reading.

A = There were dimensions to your work that went above the requirements.

B = At TIL, a “B” means that you successfully fulfilled the requirements.

C = You missed some important facets of the material or the assignment.

Contact Information

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COURSE OUTLINE

SESSION ONE: INTRODUCTION TO BIBLICAL COUNSELING

Basic Theories

What is Biblical Counseling?

A Brief History of Biblical Counseling

Why Biblical Counseling?

What are the Differences Between Biblical Counseling and Psychological Counseling?

Are Christians Different from Unbelievers?

Qualifications for Biblical Counselors

Motivations for Biblical Counselors

Why Biblical Counseling Belongs in the Church

Formal vs. Informal Counseling

Biblical Counseling Model

Counseling Theory

SESSION TWO: CONTRASTING AND COMPARING WITH PSYCHOLOGY

Brief History of Modern Psychology

“6 Pillars” of Psychology

“6 Pillars” of Biblical Counseling

Claims of Modern Psychological Theory

The Full Sufficiency of God’s Word

SESSION THREE: GETTING STARTED WITH COUNSELING

Biblical Counseling and Common Grace

Gaining a Working Knowledge of the Bible

Bible Study Resources

Systematic Theology

The Non-Negotiable Basics of Doctrine

Beginning the Counseling Session

The Counseling Environment, Prayer, the Visible Bible

Getting a Clear Understanding of the Problem (A.S.K.)

The Importance of Homework

Holding Counselees Accountable

SESSION FOUR: DYNAMICS OF BIBLICAL CHANGE, Part 1

Defining Change

Basic Biblical Model

Partnered with the Holy Spirit

Biblical Case Histories of Change

Characteristics of the Transformed Life

SESSION FIVE: INTERVIEWING AND THE COUNSELING PROCESS

Interviewing

Tools

Gathering Data

Note Taking

Effecting Biblical Change (review)

The Counseling Process

Sample Forms

SESSION SIX: DYNAMICS OF BIBLICAL CHANGE, Part 3

Redemptive Relationships in Counseling

Courageous Listening

Counseling for True Transformation

Responsibility and Accountability

Homework and Accountability

Homework Tools & Methods

SESSION SEVEN: COMMON ISSUES ADDRESSED IN BIBLICAL COUNSELING, I

Biblical Paradigm for Marriage
Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage

SESSION EIGHT: COMMON ISSUES ADDRESSED IN BIBLICAL COUNSELING, II

Leadership in the Home
God's Organizational Plan for the Home
Spiritual Headship
Issues with In-Laws
Practical Decision Making
Financial Issues
Priorities: Work, Ministry, Hobbies, Sports, Friends

SESSION NINE: COMMON ISSUES ADDRESSED IN BIBLICAL COUNSELING, III

Impurity and Pornography
Unfaithfulness
Rebuilding Trust
Difference Between Forgiveness and Trust

SESSION TEN: PARENTING ISSUES

Biblical Paradigm for Parenting – Ephesians 6:4
Shepherding vs. Behavior Modification
Understanding the Child's Heart
Dealing with Rebellion
Biblical Discipline
Peer Pressure
Sexual Curiosity
Significant Behavior Problems
Passing-on One's Faith

SESSION ELEVEN: EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL ISSUES, PART 1

The Reality of Organic, Metabolic, and Chemical Issues

Removing Excuses

PMS, Postpartum Depression

Depression, Suicidal Thoughts

Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco, Substance Abuse

Gluttony

Addictions

Life-Dominating Sins

SESSION TWELVE: EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL ISSUES, PART 2

ADD/ADHD, Bi-Polar Disorder, Clinical Depression

PTSD/CPTSD, FMS (False Memory Syndrome)

Abuse Survivors

Perpetual Victimization

Understanding Psychiatry and Psychiatric Drugs

READING AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

	READING	ASSIGNMENT
* PRIOR TO CLASS SESSION 1	Berger; Chapters 1 & 2, plus Appendix B Hoekstra; Sections 1 & 2 Wright/Cummings; to end of Chapter 1	This reading needs to be completed prior to the first session.
PRIOR TO SESSION 2	Berger; Chapters 3 & 4 HANDOUT #1: <i>Ambiguously Cured Soul</i> VBI Booklet, <i>Why Biblical Counseling?</i>	
PRIOR TO SESSION 3	Berger; Chapter 5 HANDOUT #2: <i>Common Mistakes Biblical Counselors Make</i> Wright/Cummings; to end of Chapter 5 *YouTube Video (See Link Below)	
PRIOR TO SESSION 4	Hoekstra; Section 3 HANDOUT #3: <i>Affirmations & Denials</i>	Video Synopsis , YouTube Video
PRIOR TO SESSION 5	Berger, Chapters 6 & 7 Hoekstra; Section 4 Wright/Cummings; to end of Chapter 8	
PRIOR TO SESSION 6	Berger; Chapter 8, Conclusion, Appendix A Wright/Cummings; to end of Chapter 9	
PRIOR TO SESSION 7	HANDOUT #4: <i>Counseling Those Who Are Depressed</i> Hoekstra; COMPLETED	Reading Synopsis , Berger
PRIOR TO SESSION 8	HANDOUTS #5 & 6: <i>A Theologically-Informed Approach to Sexual Abuse Counseling; Predator, Prey, and Protector</i> Wright/Cummings; to end of Chapter 11	Reading Synopsis , Hoekstra
PRIOR TO SESSION 9	HANDOUT #7: <i>Addictions: New Ways of Seeing, New Ways of Walking Free</i>	
PRIOR TO SESSION 10	Wright/Cummings; to end of Chapter 13	
PRIOR TO SESSION 11	HANDOUT #8: <i>What if Your Father Didn't Love You?</i> HANDOUT #9: <i>Ritalin Gone Wrong</i>	
PRIOR TO SESSION 12	HANDOUT #10: <i>The Serotonin Theory of Depression</i> Wright/Cummings; to end of Chapter 15	Wright/Cummings Reading Synopsis, Course Paper
		ALL ASSIGNMENTS DUE

Assigned reading can be done at your own pace, but be prepared to bring reading assignment information into the class discussion during the next session's Lesson following the session listed. Assignments listed "**Handout**," are found in the "Supplemental Materials" Guide.

* Link for YouTube Video to be viewed before Session 3: https://youtu.be/_5dSZnbugpc