

## *SESSION 2: GETTING STARTED WITH COUNSELING*

### ***GAINING A WORKING KNOWLEDGE OF THE BIBLE***

*(PSALM 119)*

#### **A. Personal Time Studying God's Word**

#### **B. Topical Studies** ("What does the Bible say about...")

1. Marriage
2. Parenting
3. Depression
4. Anxiety
5. Finances
6. Addictions
7. Etc.

#### **C. Sermons, Bible Classes**

- A.** Sundays
- B.** Mid-Week Services
- C.** Weekday Bible Studies
- D.** Small Groups

## ***BIBLE STUDY RESOURCES***

**A. Available in print and electronic forms**

**B. Study Bible**

**C. Computer Bibles**

**D. Online Bibles and Study Helps**

**E. Concordances**

**F. Bible Dictionaries**

**G. Bible Handbooks**

**H. Commentaries**

## ***SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY***

**Luke 1:1-4; John 20:30-31;**

### ***THE NON-NEGOTIABLE BASICS OF DOCTRINE***

In order to engage in Christian Discipleship and Biblical Counseling, there are several basic doctrines of the Christian faith that are essential (without which, not) and non-negotiable.

Start with an official "Statement of Faith" or "What We Believe" from a church you are confident holds to orthodox Christian beliefs. (Grace EV Free's can be found on the website at [graceevfree.org/about-us/what-we-believe/](http://graceevfree.org/about-us/what-we-believe/).)

Basic doctrines that are usually considered essentials are:

- A. Trine Nature of God**
- B. Humanity and Deity of Jesus Christ**
- C. Substitutionary Atoning Death of Jesus Christ**
- D. Bodily Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus Christ**
- E. Sinfulness and Culpability of Humankind**
- F. Salvation by Grace Through Faith**

There are a number of secondary yet important doctrines that will be important for you to know what you believe and why, yet ought not be “deal breakers” when it comes to discipling and counseling others.

## ***BEGINNING THE COUNSELING SESSION***

### **A. The Counseling Environment**

1. Pleasant, clean, private, yet visible
2. Open Bible, Pen, Paper
3. Matching Counselees with counselors

### **B. Warm and confident welcome**

1. Put counselee at ease
2. Communicate genuine concern

### **C. Prayer**

1. Acknowledging God's Presence—Matthew 18:20
2. Ask for God's Wisdom—**James 1:5; Proverbs 18:13, 17**

- a. To Be Able to Listen Carefully
  - b. To Be Able to Discern the Real Issues
  - c. To Be Able to Find and Explain Biblical Principles
3. Praying for Counselee
- a. To Be Open and Honest
  - b. To Be Able to Articulate the Problems
  - c. To Be Willing to Listen to God's Principles
  - d. To Be Willing to Obey God's Word

**D. Explain How Biblical Counseling Works—Romans 15:14**

- 1. Different from Psychotherapy and Psychology (**2 Corinthians 10:3**)
- 2. Superiority of Biblical Wisdom (**1 Corinthians 1:18-25**)
- 3. Relies on Bible for Diagnoses and Solutions (**2 Peter 1:3-4; 2 Timothy 3:16-17**)
  - a. Read from (better yet, have *them* read from) passages that speak directly to the issue(s)
  - b. Help them see and understand how Scripture addresses the issues
  - c. Help them see and understand what God is requiring of them going forward
- 4. Primarily Interested in Focusing Forward, Not on The Past (**Philippians 3:13-14**)
  - a. Except as how it affects the present

- b. Unless there are issues of bitterness and unforgiveness that need to be resolved
5. Relies on Facts, Not Feelings
6. Truth is Paramount (**John 8:32**)
7. Focus is Upon the Sinful Thinking and Behavior of the Counselee, Not Others (**John 21:21-22**)
8. Mind and Heart Change (**Romans 12:2; 2 Corinthians 5:17**)

## ***GETTING A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROBLEM*** ***(A.S.K.)***

### **A. ASK Intelligent Questions (Genesis 4:6-7)**

1. "Am I understanding you correctly? Is this what you mean?..."
2. "Can you describe exactly what happened?"
3. "Are you being accurate to say that he *never/always* \_\_\_\_\_?"
4. "Did you contribute to the problem? In what way?"
5. "Explain what you meant when you said..."
6. "I'm sorry. I don't think I understood that last statement."

### **B. SEEK the Truth about Every Issue (John 14:6; 16:13; 18:37; Galatians 4:16; Ephesians 4:15, 25)**

1. This is where taking notes can help, as you can review and compare conflicting answers.
2. Be alert to distortion, exaggeration, lies, blame-shifting

### **C. KEEP the Focus on Biblical Principles**

1. Where is the counselee violating God's Word? (**1 Samuel 15:22b**)
  - a. Sinful Actions
  - b. Sinful Responses to Other's Sinful Actions
  - c. Rebellious Attitudes toward God, His Word, Authority
  - d. Unwillingness to Accept Personal Responsibility for Behaviors and Attitudes (**Ezekiel 18:20**)
  - e. Unforgiveness/Bitterness
  - f. Mind controlled by sinful desires (**Galatians 5:17**)
  - g. Need for Self-Discipline (**Proverbs 13:18**)
  - h. Other:
1. Prioritize the Problems: First Things First!
  - a. Most Pressing (life threatening, damaging to family, etc)
  - b. Secondary Issues (often will be solved when primary issues are solved)
2. What Biblical Principles and Commands Apply to the Issues?
  - a. May take research on counselor's part
  - b. Ask for help from a pastor or other counselor, if you have researched and cannot find an answer

## ***THE IMPORTANCE OF HOMEWORK***

### **A. The Word of God Becomes the Counselor**

### **B. Counseling Continues Through the Week as Counselee Studies**

- C. Exposes Whether the Counselee is Committed**
- D. Indicates that the Counselor Takes the Problems Seriously**
- E. Gives a Mechanism to End Counseling and/or Seek Church Discipline if Counselee Is Not Committed**

### ***HOLDING COUNSELEES ACCOUNTABLE***

- A. Follow-up on Homework at Each Session**
- B. Recruit Others for Support and Accountability**
- C. Revisit Previous Homework to Ensure Ongoing Growth**
- D. Make Sure They Know Leadership Will Become Involved as Needed**

