

Basic Biblical Philosophy Flow Chart for Counseling Believers

The Bible

Biblical counseling is built on the following presuppositions

- 1) The Bible is inspired by God and is inerrant and infallible word of God and therefore true in every matter to which it speaks (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
- 2) The Bible is interpreted to us by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:20-21; 1 John 2:27), so only a Christian walking in the Spirit can properly interpret and apply its truths.
- 3) The Bible is able to expose the thoughts and intentions of man (Hebrews 4:12)
- 4) The Bible is sufficient because God has by His divine power granted us everything pertaining to life and godliness through the true knowledge of Christ (2 Peter 1:2-3).
- 5) The Bible will accomplish its work (Isaiah 55:11; 1 Thessalonians 3:13)
- 6) The Bible is the imperishable seed that brings about the new birth (1 Peter 1:23-25).
- 7) The Bible teaches, reproves, corrects and trains us so that we may be adequate & equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3:17). We keep our way pure by living according to God's word (Psalm 119:9-11).

For these reasons we use the Bible to diagnose and treat the spiritual (psychological) problems of the counselee. There may also be medical (biological) problems that also need to be addressed.

God's Standard

Obedience is essential. It demonstrates our love for Jesus - John 14:21-24

God's standard is His Word and faithful obedience to that Word is what He requires (1 Sam. 15:22-23; Jeremiah 7:23)

Love of God and toward others in both attitude and action is the expression of that obedience (Matthew 22:37-40).

This is God's standard, and anything less than this is sin.

The Christian Walk

We are called by God to walk with Him in newness of life as those baptized and raised with Christ (Romans 6:4). This includes walking in the Spirit (Romans 8:4) and not the flesh (Galatians 5:16); walking with Him by faith (2 Corinthians 5:7); walking in the good works which He has prepared for us (Ephesians 2:10); walking in a manner worthy of our calling (Ephesians 4:1; Colossians 1:10); walking in love as a reflection of Christ (Ephesians 5:2) and walking as children of light which includes all goodness, righteousness and truth (Ephesians 5:8; 1 John 1:6f)

The Christian walk is maintained by communication, knowledge, and restoration.

Communication = prayer. Pray about everything - Philippians 4:6

Knowledge = Know the word of God so that we are equipped - 2 Timothy 3:16

Restoration = confession - 1 John 1:9

This walk prepares enables us to continually grow spiritually and prepares us for the trials of life.

The Test

There are two aspects to the test. It describes both the normal Christian life in taking individual responsibility and those times in which our faith is tested.

Individual responsibility is key to living the Christian life. There are many things in daily life that pressure us or entice us to live contrary to the will of God such as: demands on our schedules, intrusions by others, frustration by things that break or don't work properly, our own limitations and inabilities, the various temptations of sin. The most natural thing for man to do when under pressure is to rationalistically try to escape the responsibility by placing blame on someone (thing) else. God directs responsibility to the individual for their attitudes and actions.

Children often try to blame parents (and psychologists often feed into this lie), but each person will be held responsible for their own actions, not those of others (Deuteronomy 24:16; Jeremiah 31:29-30; Ezekiel 18:20). Ignorance is not an excuse either for God has made Himself evident to man (Romans 1:18-20) and has placed a conscience in people that bear witness against them (Romans 2:1-16), and God will judge every act (Ecclesiastes 11:9; 12:13-14). God even provides a way of escape of temptations so that you may be able to bear them (1 Corinthians 10:13).

We are to accept our individual responsibility and faithfully obey God. The thrust of counseling is to identify that responsibility and encourage obedience to God in fulfilling it. When a Christian sins, there is no justifiable excuse for it. The only proper response is godly sorrow which leads to repentance and confession (1 Corinthians 7:9-11).

The second part of the test are the trials of life that test our faith. These are described in James 1:2-4 and Romans 5:3-5. We are challenged about what we really believe about God's nature, actions and commands to us.

Obedience and Growth

When the Christian accepts their individual responsibility and holds fast to their faith in the midst of any of the trials of life, their obedience will result in spiritual growth.

Romans 5:3-5 Tribulation → perseverance → proven character → hope → founded in the love of God. Our attitude is to be one of exultation.

James 1:2-4 Trials → tested faith → endurance → mature / complete. We are to consider it joy

1 Peter 1:6-7 Our testing can result in praise, glory and honor to Christ

Faithful obedience is simply trusting God and rightfully responding to what He has revealed in the text of Scripture. The result of obedience is spiritual growth.

Paul's examples: 2 Corinthians 1:8-9 & Philippians 4:10-13. Though Paul was afflicted beyond his own strength even to despairing of life, he learned to trust God in it. He learned to be content in all circumstances knowing he could respond in a way that would glorify God because Christ would strengthen him.

Disobedience and Conviction

Rebellion against God is as the sin of divination, and insubordination as iniquity and idolatry (See: 1 Samuel 15:22-23).

All disobedience is sin - John 16:9

Conviction leads to repentance & confession which results in forgiveness & cleansing (1 Jn 1:9).

Note on “false guilt.” The guilt is there for a reason, though it can be misplaced by associating it with the wrong thing. Example: a conscience trained in legalism will feel guilty for breaking the rules they have learned instead of their wrong beliefs about God and His word.

Confession and Repentance

- 1) Repentance is to change one's mind resulting in a change of behavior. It is to turn the opposite direction. *“To change one’s way of life as the result of a complete change of thought and attitude with regard to sin and righteousness”* (Louw-Nida)
 - 2) Confession is *“to agree with, to say the same thing with.”* *to acknowledge a fact publicly, often in reference to previous bad behavior—‘to admit, to confess’* (Louw-Nida). Confession is agreeing with God about sin. It does not allow for excuses or reasoning for the sin such as Saul did in 1 Samuel 15:11-31. Psalm 51 is an example of true confession.
 - 3) Works - the fruit of repentance. See Matthew 3:8 / Luke 3:8 and 2 Corinthians 7:8-10. Godly sorrow leads to repentance. Worldly sorrow produces death.
- * The truly repentant will be concerned about their own sin instead of trying to bring up the sin of others - See: Matthew 7:3-6
 - * People who cannot forgive themselves for their sin are also guilty of pride. Only God has the power to forgive sin (Luke 5:20-25). Neither man nor church has authority to forgive sins. Man can only proclaim the forgiveness that is a gift from God.

The Continuation of Sin

A Christian in sin cannot lose their salvation (John 10:27-30; Romans 8:28-30), or be separated from the love and forgiveness of God (Romans 8:31-39, Colossians 2:13-14), but they will stop experiencing God’s love and forgiveness and the blessings of being used by Him in the lives of others.

The Consequence of Sin

No longer walking in the Spirit results in grieving the Spirit (Ephesians 4:30) or even quenching Him (1 Thessalonians 5:19).

Internal Characteristics of Unconfessed Sin:

- * Anxiety / fear is a primary symptom of a problem (Matt. 6:25-34, Philippians 4:6-7) resulting in no longer experiencing God’s peace (1 John 4:18)
- * Discontentment - A general unrest. No longer experiencing contentment or God’s peace (Philippians 4:9,12)
- * A Critical / Judgmental Spirit / Attitude (Matthew 7:1-2)
- * Self-Righteousness & Pride (Luke 10:25-25; 16:14-15)

Alienation from God and His people.

Chastening - God is inescapable and He chastens those He loves - Hebrews 12:7

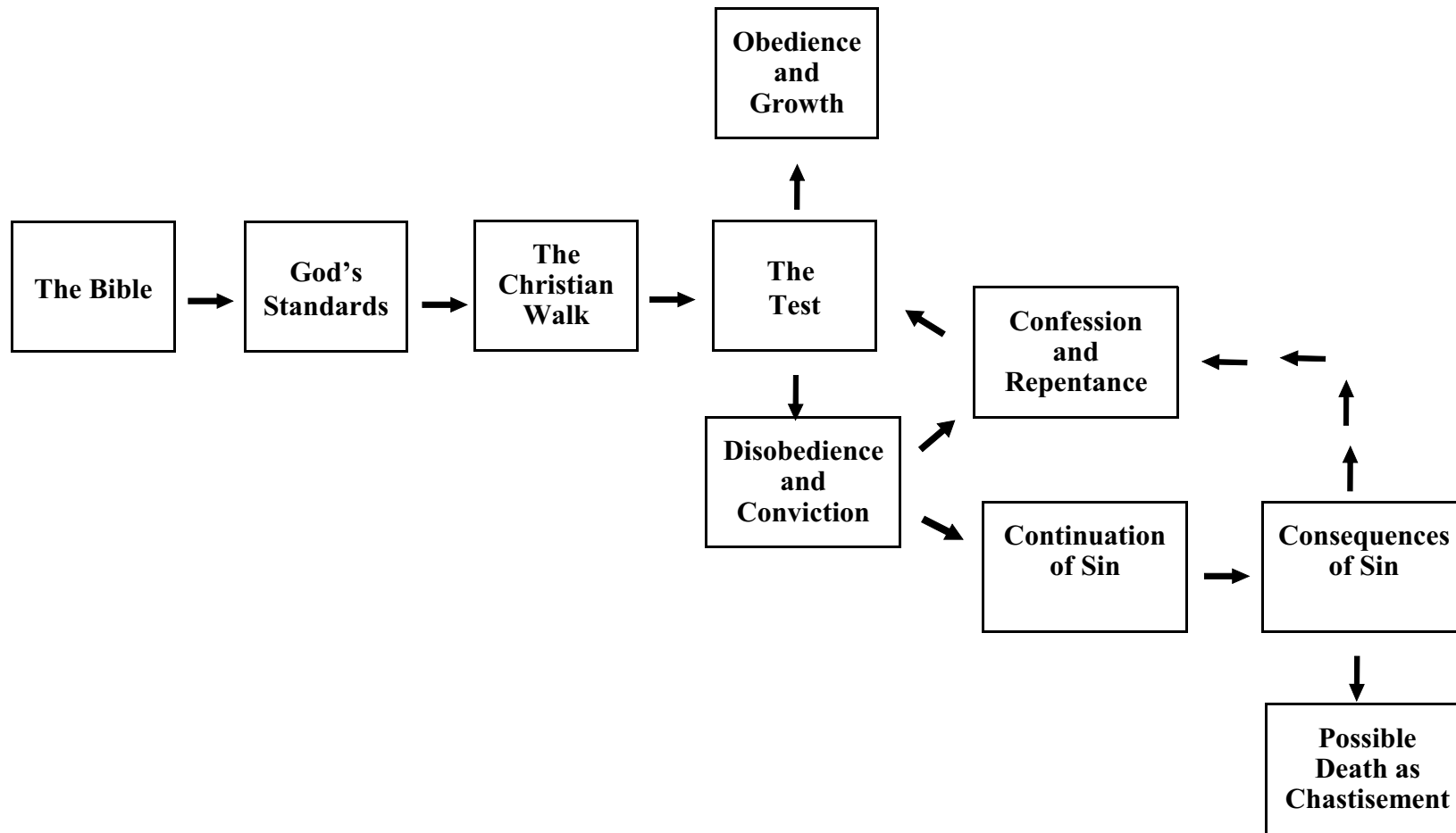
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The Possibility of Physical Death as Chastisement

Sin unto death - 1 John 5:16-17

An example in 2 Corinthians 11:30



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