

## INTRODUCTION

- In 51 messages covered our confession of faith. This was by and large more intensely doctrinal, though I always sought to make practical as well. My desire in this next series is to share with you some things that have been very helpful to me as I have been pursuing training on how to better help people.
- The purpose of this series is at least two-fold: (1.) to help you as I am being helped by this material and (2.) to equip you for the work of ministry both to believers and unbelievers.
- What does the word "counsel" bring to your mind? How about the word "counselor?" When someone says "I am seeing a counselor" what is the imagery that pops into your mind? Perhaps it is the person reclining on a couch, sharing their darkest, most suppressed childhood memories to a person with a clipboard who asks leading questions and responds by saying "hmm." Maybe it is more like a person sitting before someone at a big desk, their walls covered with degrees in psychology and psychiatry, the specialist who knows the deep dark secrets of the human mind, and more importantly can prescribe all the medication one needs to solve that person's problems.
- Or perhaps you think of a couple meeting with their pastor, as they share their struggles, and He directs them from Scripture as to what God says and how to glorify God in their marriage...or a single Christian woman who struggles with loneliness and is often depressed and bitter speaking with a sister in Christ who assures her that God is sovereign, loving, wise and good...or a Christian mom who is teaching her children why they should love another with God's love, and how to resolve conflict. If you thought about one of these last scenarios, then you have a better understanding of what the Scripture means when it speaks of counsel and counseling.

## I. AN OVERVIEW OF BIBLICAL COUNSELING

### A. The Sufficient Standard

- o John 17:17 God's Word is truth. Psalm 119:24. This is an area where the sufficiency of the Word of God is not worked out consistently. As will be seen, the fundamental elements of other perspectives are opposed to the Word of God. Yet, a great tragedy in our day is that pastors often refer to those trained in these methods, or Christian counselors who "integrate" the various methods (plundering the Egyptians).

### B. The Necessary Assistant

- o Isaiah 9:6/ Rev3:18 Jesus as the great counselor. Specifically by the Holy Spirit that would replace Him in His earthly ministry John 14:16. It is a supernatural work, not just advice. For this reason, biblical counseling is for the Christian. Otherwise, they do not have the necessary help.

### C. The Ordinary Means

- o God uses human instruments. Exodus 18:19 Jethro counsels Moses. Proverbs 27:9 delight of having friend giving right counsel. Acts 20:20, 27 held back nothing that was profitable...declaring the whole counsel of God. Romans 15:14 able to admonish ("competent to counsel") one another.

### D. The Supreme Goal

- o The Glory of God in making us like Christ – Romans 8:28-29.

## II. MAJOR HINDRANCES TO BIBLICAL COUNSELING

- 1.) Not seeking it - Joshua 9:14.
  - 2.) Despising it - Psalm 107:11-12. This is sometimes just prideful rejection Proverbs 12:15, behaving as if my way is better. I will ask "is your way working for you?"
  - 3.) Just not doing it – Matthew 7:24-27.
- Much of the misery and many of the problems in the Christian life are due to these things. It effects individuals, families, and churches.
  - It is not a failure in the counsel, but in the person – Luke 18:18ff (Rich young ruler)