

Counseling Class
Marriage & Human Sexuality Issues

5a) A spouse comes to you upset that they just found out their marriage partner has been having an affair and they do not know what to do. The marriage partner has admitted the wrong, asks for forgiveness and claims to want to change. What are the Biblical options? What would be the godly response? How will you advise?

Conflict Issues - presenting problem: An affair and all the emotions that accompany that

Possible sin issues: Adultery and those related to it (lying, deceit). Yielding to hurt from it allowing it to cause bitterness and unforgiveness

Main Biblical Issues: Adultery, repentance, forgiveness.

Matthew 19 - while there is an allowance for adultery, it is because of "hardness of heart."

Matthew 18 - example of the extent of forgiveness Christians should have

Eph. 4:32 - Christ is example of forgiveness we should extend.

2 Cor. 7:9f - true repentance

Observations on:

Emotional - hurt, confused

Rational - must clarify - they do not know what to do. What are they thinking?

Volitional - They will make a choice about how they will respond

Personal - What is their relationship to Christ? What would be the basis for forgiving and staying with the unfaithful spouse?

Options / Advise -

The Biblical options allow for staying in the marriage and working things out; separating and working things out. Divorce would be a possibility, but that would not be the godly option (1 Cor. 7) when the spouse is seeking forgiveness and expresses desire to change. The unfaithful spouse would need to put into place clear barriers to prevent going back to an affair - both would need ongoing counseling to restore the marriage and deal with the issues that led to the affair.

5b) Follow-up to 5a above. The spouse comes to you again very upset that in a final confrontation, the marriage partner choose to continue the extramarital affair and has left. What advice will you give this spouse about Biblical options? What strategy will you develop to help this spouse deal with the reality of separation and possibility of divorce?

Conflict Issues - presenting problem: Continued adultery. Lack of repentance.

Main Biblical Issues: Adultery, lack of repentance. Separation. Divorce 1 Cor. 7

Possible sin issues: Adultery. Selfishness. Lack of repentance.

Danger of unforgiveness leading to bitterness.

Observations on:

Emotional - hurt / distraught / frustrated / anger. This could range from devastating to freeing

Rational - possibly confused. Possibly clear about what needs to be done and why

Volitional - clarify options and choices that can be made

Personal - Explore. Can they get past this in living for Christ or will it devastate them?

Options / Advise -

- 1) 1 Cor. 7:15. The adulterer can be let go and not pursued
- 2) 1 Cor. 7:11. The innocent party can remain separated and work toward reconciliation
- 3) Matt. 5:32; 19:9. The innocent party can suffer a divorce and remain innocent

Help this victimized spouse deal with the realities of what has occurred and move toward a closer relationship with God and living for Him. The rejection for someone else can cause serious emotional reactions of such things as anger and / or depression and will need help navigating those into thinking clearly and Biblically to then respond in a godly manner.

6) A woman in your church asks you to talk with her husband because he seems disinterested in the relationship. He stays late at work, speaks little when home and does not approach her even for marital intimacy. You talk with him and find out that he resents her nagging and belittling of him and that he would rather stay at work or watch TV than to be around her. Upon further questioning you find that he has been losing weight and sleeps well, but has a hard time getting up in the morning. What counsel would you give him? What will you tell his wife?

Conflict Issues - presenting problem; A concerned, but nagging wife and a depressed husband

Possible sin issues: Nagging on her part and all the reasons related to it. Lack of leadership, love and engagement with wife on his part. Neither are fulfilling the Biblical roles properly.

Main Biblical Issues:

Biblical roles and fulfilling them in a godly manner

Nagging / Contentious wife: Proverbs 21:9; 19; 25:24; 26:21; 27:15. This is the opposite of a godly wife - Prov. 31; Eph. 5, 1 Peter 3

He needs to rise up to deal with the issues - Eph. 5; 1 Peter 3:7

Observations on:

Emotional - Wife is concerned, perhaps angry / upset. He is depressed and disengaged

Rational - Wife is not thinking Biblically about how to fulfill her purpose as a wife. He is not thinking Biblically about his role as a husband. Both have come up with strategies they think will enable them to achieve personal goals.

Volitional - Her choices are beating down her husband. His choices are allowing sin to reign in their marriage.

Personal - Neither demonstrate Godliness as a core value. Both demonstrate selfishness and sinful strategies in an attempt to survive their marriage.

Options / Advise -

Both will need to be counseled for a variety of issues.

- 1) Start with man to start dealing with his depression and anxieties (obvious by his actions and loss of weight and sleep. Direct to the power of the gospel to change him into a godly man that can love and lead his wife.
- 2) Work with wife to deal with her ungodly actions as a wife directing her to understand her God given role and purpose in life and how to walk with God to achieve those things.

7) A woman in your church comes to you wanting advice on how to respond to her husband. They have been married for 15 years and generally have a good relationship including marital intimacy. He has lately been pressuring her for anal sex. She does not know where he got such an idea, and though she wants to please him, she has been able to put him off so far. It is starting to put tension in their relationship. How will you advise her? What additional actions might you take?

Conflict Issues - presenting problem. Man's desire for an ungodly sexual practice

Possible sin issues: Husband's selfishness - desire to use wife for his own pleasure instead of loving her to seek her holiness and what is best for her. Pornography is probably involved.

Main Biblical Issues: Selfishness; Love, kindness, gentleness

It is selfish to seek for own pleasure - James 4:1

It is against the principles of the basic characteristics of love to seek a sexual practice that 1) is contrary to what the partner is comfortable doing, and 2) will cause hurt and physical damage. The basic characteristics of love include kindness, thoughtfulness, and being thoughtful of the partner's desires. A loving husband will seek the best interest of his wife instead of his own pleasures - Phil. 2:3-4; Eph. 5:23-33.

Observations on:

Emotional -

Rational -

Volitional -

Personal -

Options / Advise -

1) Wife is not being "unsubmissive" to tell him, no

2) Man needs to be talked with about seeking to abuse his wife in this manner and where he got the idea.

8a) A man in his early twenties comes to you to confess that he is sexually attracted to other men. He has already been involved in one homosexual relationship. He does not think it is right and wants to change. How will you advise him? How will you direct him for the help he needs?

Conflict Issues - presenting problem. Man has a homosexual orientation and has acted on it - and now wants to change.

Possible sin issues: Pursuit of sexual abomination and whatever is behind it

Main Biblical Issues: Proper sexual expression exists only within monogamous man / wife marriage

Observations on:

Emotional - guilt

Rational - Recognizes sin and desires to change

Volitional - his actions are the result of his choices

Personal - develop a purpose in life centered in Christ instead of sexual fulfillment

Options / Advise -

1) Repent - if not a Christian, to become one

- 2) Break off all homosexual relationships
- 3) Change pattern of life to avoid all places, activities that feed the homosexual desire
- 4) Begin discipleship to focus purpose of life on serving Christ and pursuing holiness instead of selfish self-fulfillment - worldliness
- 5) Hold accountable for actions and pursuits in life

8b) A woman in her early twenties comes to you to confess that she is sexually attracted to other women. She has already been involved in one lesbian relationship. She does not think it is right and wants to change. How will you advise her? How will you direct her for the help she needs?

Main Biblical Issues:

Conflict Issues - presenting problem

Possible sin issues:

Observations on:

Emotional -

Rational -

Volitional -

Personal -

Options / Advise -

9) A couple comes to you for counseling. Both have recently been saved and they have a dilemma they need you to help them solve. They have been married for 3 years. The woman was a man that had a sex change operation. They are not sure what they should do. How will you advise?

Conflict Issues - presenting problem: The “woman” is a man - the “marriage” is an abomination before God.

Possible sin issues: Sexual perversion / deviation / abominations have resulted in physical mutilation. The “woman” is still a man both biologically and before God.

Main Biblical Issues:

The Biblical and biological nature of manhood and womanhood.

The Biblical and biological purposes of marriage

Observations on:

Emotional - guilt? Confusion?

Rational - Irrational thought got them into this position. Must be directed to Biblical reasoning

Volitional - Made many sinful choices resulting in current dilemma. Choice must be made and carried out to correct it.

Personal - selfish desire directed pursuits. Must be changed to pursuit of God and His will

Options / Advise -

- 1) Sexual relationship end immediately. “Marriage” ends immediately and they must separate including figuring out how to fairly divide assets to establish new, separate lives.
- 2) Counseling for both to bring them to a Biblical understanding of human sexuality - especially for the mutilated man
- 3) Provide emotional support for establishing new identity and lifestyle
- 4) Active discipleship to establish new life in Christ