

SOUL CARE

People Helping Skills
From a Biblical Perspective

Dr. Mike Chapman
City Church of Chattanooga
7122 Lee Highway
Chattanooga, Tennessee 37421
www.thecitychurch.cc

Session One The Church as a Healing Institution

INTRODUCTION

This seminar is not designed to be a complete course in counseling. It is, however, an introduction to the basic principles of biblical change as it relates to the emotional/behavioral struggles that humans face in a fallen world. We begin this study by seeking to answer the question, "Where does the church fit into all this?"

I. THE CARE AND CURE OF SOULS

- A. A Biblical understanding of the *soul*
 - 1. Greek: *psuchê*
 - 2. The three-fold function of the soul
 - a. Mind
 - b. Will
 - c. Emotions
- B. What is the "care of souls" and the "cure of souls."
 - 1. The care of souls
 - 2. The cure of souls
- C. To whom has God committed the care and the cure of the soul?
 - 1. To the church
 - 2. To church leaders
 - 3. To every believer

- D. Three prerequisites that are necessary to bring people to wholeness:
 - 1. An understanding of human nature (a model of man)
 - 2. An understanding of how problems develop (a model of problems)
 - 3. An understanding of how people change (a model of change)

- E. The unique advantages of the church in the care and cure of souls
 - 1. The Scriptures as ultimate authority
 - 2. The supernatural power and guidance of the Holy Spirit
 - 3. The multifaceted experiences of a local church
 - 4. The support of a local, multi-gifted Body of believers

II. PEOPLE HELPING AND THE GREAT COMMISSION (Matthew 28:18-20)

- A. The four key verbs of the great commission
 - 1. "Go" is a Greek aorist participle.
 - 2. "Make disciples" is an imperative (command).
 - 3. "Baptizing" is a Greek present participle.
 - 4. "Teaching" is a Greek present participle.

- C. The Characteristics of a Disciple

1. Obedience (John 8:31)
2. Love (John 13:35)
3. Fruitfulness (John 15:8)

III. CHARACTERISTICS OF CHURCHES THAT HEAL

- A. Churches that heal respect personal boundaries.
 1. The "God only" boundary
 2. The boundaries of self-disclosure
- B. Churches that heal are willing to forgive and accept people.
 1. Grace versus legalism
 2. Acceptance versus condoning
- C. Churches that heal don't categorize and condemn people.
 1. The power of language
 2. Self-condemnation
- D. Churches that heal avoid using guilt and shame to motivate people.
 1. Good guilt versus bad guilt
 2. Understanding shame
- E. Churches that heal see Christianity as a journey instead of a goal.
 1. "Arrival" is not a worthy goal.
 2. Growth is the right goal.
- F. Churches that heal expect healing to occur.
 1. A faith-filled atmosphere
 2. You get what you expect.
- G. Churches that heal avoid pat answers to tough issues.
 1. The appeal of simple answers

2. The paradoxes of life
- H. Churches that heal are optimistic and nurture hope.
- I. Churches that heal aren't shocked when Christians fail.
1. Sad...yes! Disappointed...yes!
 2. Disgusted...no!
- J. Churches that heal contend for a realistic view of life.
1. Facing the hard, tough facts of life
 2. Truth, not fantasy, sets people free.
- K. Churches that heal major on building healthy relationship.
1. Relationships based on trust, honesty, genuineness
 2. Emphasis is on people over programs

CONCLUSION

God has designed the church to be a community of salvation, bringing healing, wholeness, freedom, and deliverance to the souls of men. The home of soul care and soul cure is the church. The church must be willing to step forward and reclaim its traditional and biblical role as the center of healing.

Session Two

The Distinctive Nature of Christian Soul Care

INTRODUCTION

What is Christian Soul Care? Is it merely counseling done by Christians? How does it differ from secular counseling? In this session, we will seek to address these questions by looking at some of the distinctive characteristics of biblical (Christian) soul care

I. FUNDAMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF CHRISTIAN SOUL CARE

- A. Christian soul care seeks to lead a person to establish a personal relationship with the God of the universe through his son, Jesus Christ.
 - 1. This is the most basic and fundamental need of man.
 - 2. Soul care that does not see the need to be evangelistic cannot truly bear the name "Christian."
- B. Christian soul care relies on the Bible as ultimate truth.
 - 1. Truth is not relative, but absolute.
 - 2. The Christian people helper looks to the Bible to gain insights into the nature of man, his motivations, his defenses, and the ultimate resolution to conflicts.
- C. Christian soul care relies upon the supernatural ministry of the Holy Spirit.
 - 1. The Christian counselor expects a third party in the process--the Holy Spirit.
 - 2. Gifts of discernment, wisdom, and knowledge are uniquely important to the people helping process.
- D. Christian soul care is concerned about both time and eternity.
 - 1. Keeping eternity in focus gives a different perspective to the problem and the solution.

2. Christian counselors always counsel in light of eternity.

II. THE AGENDA OF BIBLICAL SOUL CARE

- A. The basic agenda of Christian soul care
 1. Define the problem(s) biblically.
 2. Determine what Biblical principles apply.
 3. Develop a plan of action that brings these principles to bear on the problem, leading to understanding, obedience, and spiritual growth.
- B. Techniques
 1. Basic techniques: listening, demonstrating interest, asking questions, gathering information, giving direction, etc.
 2. Unique techniques of Christian soul care:
 - a. Prayer
 - b. Deliverance
 - c. Reading of Scripture
 - d. Confrontation with truth
 - e. Sharing one's faith
 - f. Encouraging involvement in a local church
 3. Five Biblical words related soul care (1 Thessalonians 5:14)
 - a. *parakaleo*
 - b. *noutheteo*
 - c. *parmutheomai*
 - d. *antechomai*
 - e. *makrothumeo*

III. THE QUALIFICATIONS OF CHRISTIAN COUNSELORS

- A. Personal qualifications

1. Spirituality (Galatians 6:1ff)
2. Empathy
3. Warmth
4. Genuineness
5. Confidentiality

CONCLUSION

There is not "one way" to help people. There are a variety of approaches which are committed to the distinctives presented in this session and ultimately to God's Word as the final authority of truth.

Session Three

A Biblical Model of Human Beings

INTRODUCTION

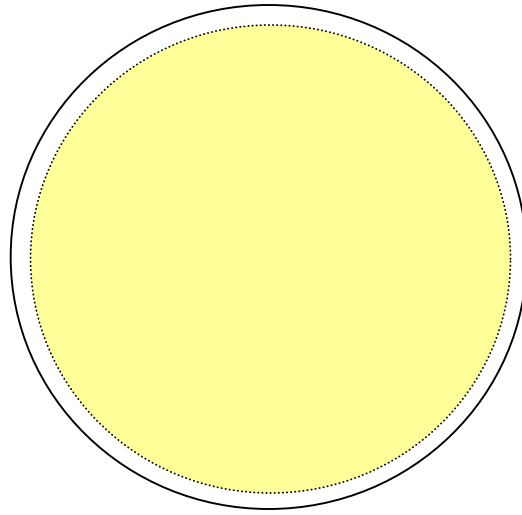
In order to develop a Biblical approach to soul care, we must develop a model for understanding people, problems, and solutions. Effective soul care is based on a clear theory of change, and a clear theory of change is based on a clear understanding of people and their problems. (*e.g.*, We will not do a good job of helping someone overcome depression without understanding why the depression existed in the first place.) We must have some clear idea of what is going on inside people before we can develop skill and confidence in seeking to help them. In this session, we take the first step to developing a Biblical soul care model by seeking to discover a set of basic ideas about human nature from the Scriptures (anthropology).

I. MAN IS A FALLEN IMAGE BEARER

- A. Because people are created in the image of God, they are somehow similar to God.
 - 1. Genesis 1:26-28
 - 2. Man was created similar to God (the qualities of personhood).
- B. Something terrible happened which badly distorted the similarity.
 - 1. Things are now not as they should be.
 - 2. The image has not been lost, but it has been badly marred.

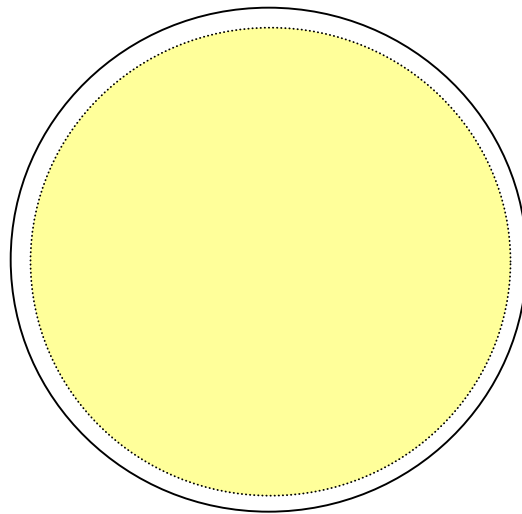
II. THE CAPACITIES OF PERSONHOOD

- A. Deep Longings (Man is a longing being.)
 - 1. Both God and man share the capacity to long.
 - 2. Deep longings are more than emotions. They are desires at the deepest level of our being.



Longing Circle

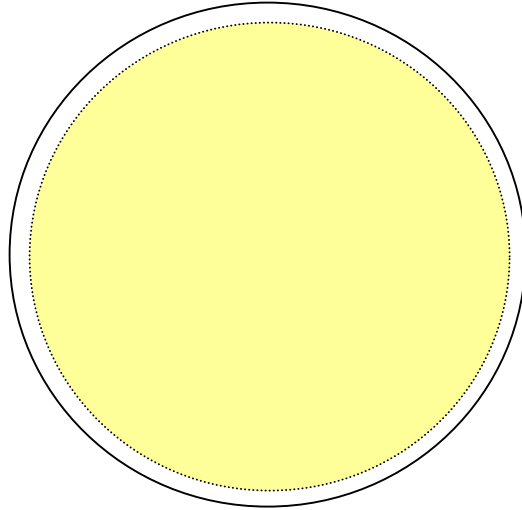
- B. Evaluative Thinking (Man is a rational being.)
1. Both God and man think.
 2. Evaluative thinking means that man is the capacity to look at his world and develop a set of ideas which will guide his life.



Rational Circle

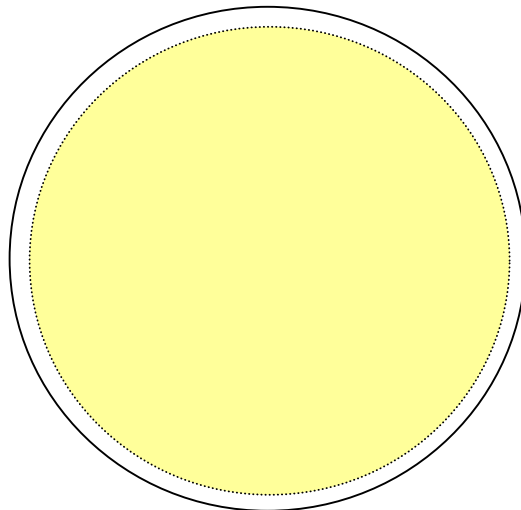
- C. Active Choosing (Man is a volitional being.)
1. Both God and man choose particular goals to pursue, and they choose specific actions designed to reach those goals.

2. Man is a responsible being, capable of setting a direction and pursuing it.



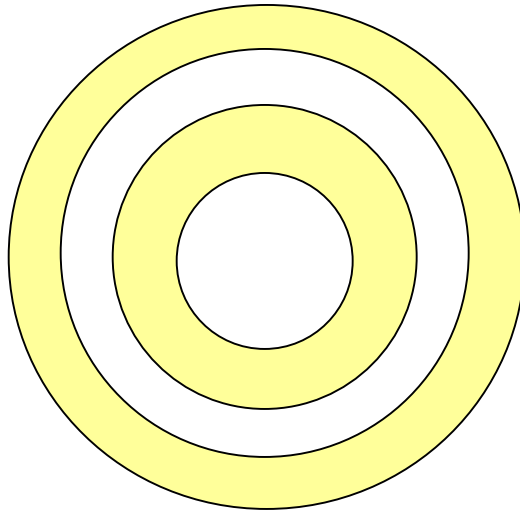
Volitional Circle

- D. Emotional Experiencing (Man is an emotional being.)
1. Both God and man feel emotions as they interact with the world.
 2. As man comes into contact with the world, he experiences what he bumps into with feeling.



Emotional Circle

III. THE CONCENTRIC NATURE OF THE FOUR CIRCLES OF HUMAN NATURE



CONCLUSION

God is an independent person with the capacity to long, think, choose, and feel. A human being, because he/she is created in God's image, is a dependent person with the same four capacities. Our beginning framework for understanding people is simply stated as. Each person is...

- ...a personal being who longs deeply;
- ...a rational being who thinks;
- ...a volitional being who chooses;
- ...an emotional being who feels.

Each of these capacities will be examined for the purpose of developing Biblical anthropology, a theory of change, and answer to the question, "Who am I?"

Session Four

Implications: People Have Longings and People Are Rational

INTRODUCTION

In our last session, we came to see that humans bear the image of God. This means that they possess the qualities of personhood: longings, rationality, volitionality, and emotions. In this session we will begin with the first two of these qualities to seek to answer the questions, "Why do we do what we do?"

I. PEOPLE HAVE LONGINGS

- A. Man must understand what he longs for before he can find the source of satisfaction.
 - 1. Our longings help us understand what motivates us.
 - 2. The basic motivation within the human heart is the quest for satisfaction.
- B. Three Biblical propositions about man's longings and his search for satisfaction.
 - 1. God uses longings as the basis of his call to man.
 - 2. Whatever satisfies our longings will become our god.
 - 3. Satisfaction found in a false god will eventually lead to inner and relational conflict.
- C. Three Categories of Human Longings
 - 1. Casual longings
 - 3. Critical longings
 - 3. Crucial longings

- D. Man's Sin produces a hollow core.
 - 1. As a result of the fall, all men are born spiritually dead (Hollow Core).
 - 2. The Hollow Core is an empty personal circle.
 - a. It is a void, an empty space that desperately longs to be filled.
 - b. This thirst becomes the motivation of a person's life.
 - 3. A model of counseling that fails to address the Hollow Core by promoting an acute awareness of emptiness is not biblical.
 - a. As Christian counselors, we must attack the core problem in the human personality.
 - b. The real culprit behind all non-organically caused human distress is a steadfast determination to remain independent of God and still make life work.
- E. A Biblical framework for finding satisfaction to our longings
 - 1. A person must acknowledge what he is longing for.
 - 2. A person must face the fact that the real intent of his heart is to satisfy his own longings according to his own wisdom.
 - 4. A person must have a clear understanding on what longings God promises to satisfy.

II. PEOPLE ARE RATIONAL

- A. This means that people have the capacity to think, to reason, to form opinions, to develop ideas and attitudes.
 - 1. The Bible calls this capacity the "mind" and presents it as the central mechanism for change (Romans 12:1, 2).

2. What a person does with his/her life depends on how he/she thinks about his/her world. What a person feels about his/her life depends on how he/she thinks about his/her world.



- B. The fall of man had a dreadful effect on our thinking.
 1. Man's thinking is distorted (Biblically: foolishness).
 - a. Prov. 22:15
 - b. Psalm 14:1
 - c. Romans 1:22
 - d. Luke 12:13-21
 2. Foolishness is a conviction that life (satisfaction of crucial longings) is available without God (through my own wisdom).
 - a. Biblical counselors accept the fact that at the center of the problem is foolishness.
 - b. The first step toward lasting change is repentance.
 - (1) Becoming aware of the foolishness in one's life
 - (2) A conscious turning away from my own foolishness
- C. Two parts of the rational circle.
 1. Beliefs and convictions
 2. Images of ourselves
- D. There is value in going back in a person's history.

1. This is not to excuse present responsibilities.
 2. This is done to help you and the person you are helping discover how his/her unique foolishness has been shaped.
 3. Foolishness can be understood as the wrong attitudes toward life that a person has developed in order to avoid the pain (self-protection) of insecurity (lack of felt love) and insignificance (lack of felt worth).
 4. Biblical soul care is not through until we understand what a person is demanding in order to have life.
- E. Two basic errors in human foolishness.
1. The satisfaction of my longings will require a change in my circumstances.
 2. The satisfaction of my longings will require a change in my feelings.

CONCLUSION

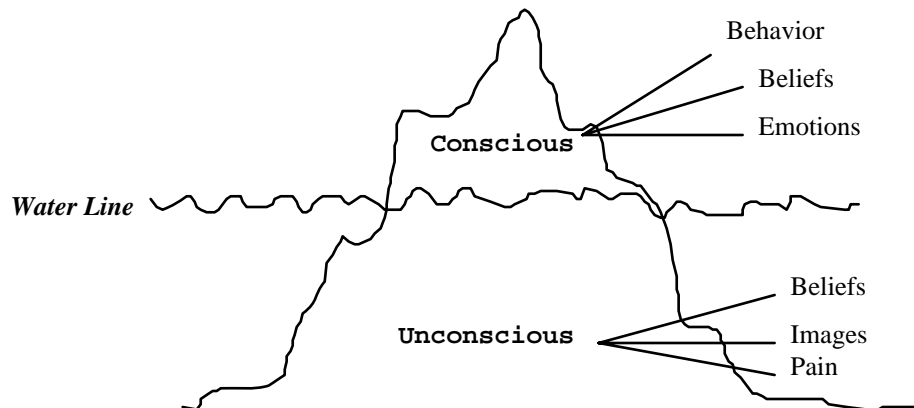
We are now beginning to see that real change begins from the inside out. Dysfunctional living finds its motivation (energy) in a Hollow Core. It finds its direction in foolishness. Next we will see how a Hollow Core and foolishness lead to sinful behavior and emotional instability.

Session Five

Implications: People are Volitional and People are Emotional

INTRODUCTION

In this session, we will deal with the third and fourth elements of personhood--volitionality and emotion. As we move into these areas, we move into "above the water line" issues.



I. PEOPLE ARE VOLITIONAL

- A. The Scriptures consistently treat people as responsible beings.
 1. Because people are choosing beings, they are responsible beings.
 2. The Biblical doctrine of judgment requires a doctrinal assumption of man's volitionality.
- B. A biblical view of responsibility requires that we see people as moving in a chosen direction toward a chosen end.
 1. Every behavior has a goal.
 2. Everything we do has a purpose. The Biblical counselor must look not only at the "what" of a person's actions, but he must also seek to understand the "why."
- C. The volitional circle consists of two parts.
 1. Behaviors (Strategy)
 2. Goals

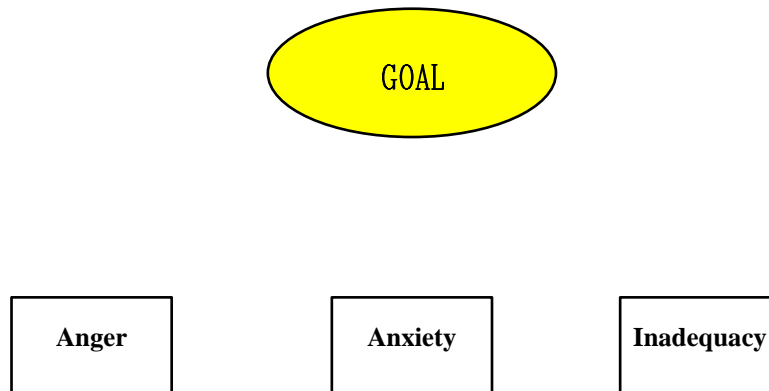
- D. The loss of felt choice is a result of the fall.
1. There is no joy in the Christian life apart from volitional circle fullness (the experience of one's actions as a willful choice).
 2. Compulsion is the experience of the loss of felt choice.
 3. The key to dealing with problems of loss of felt choice is the recognition that every action has a purpose.
 - a. The degree to which a person is unaware of the goals he/she is pursuing is the degree to which that person will be unaware that his/her behavior is a choice.
 - b. Unrecognized goals lead to compulsiveness, not volitionality.
- E. The key to recovering the thrill of volitionality requires that a person see that the basic goals of each human are either self-protection (independence) or trusting vulnerability (dependence).
1. The goal of self-protection must be recognized as the controlling energy behind compulsiveness.
 2. When self-protection becomes evident as a motivational theme of life, people come to see that overcoming compulsive behaviors involves a deep shift in direction--from self-protection to loving vulnerability.
 3. Vulnerability can only come through profound trust in Christ

II. PEOPLE ARE EMOTIONAL

- A. People have the capacity to feel.
1. Emotions should be acknowledged, not avoided or denied.
 2. Emotions need to be understood.
- B. Emotional Categories

1. Pleasant vs. Unpleasant Emotions
2. Constructive vs. Destructive Emotions
3. A commitment to self-protection rooted in foolish thinking has the power to corrupt every emotion, whether pleasant or unpleasant, and make them all destructive.

C. The Source of Painful Emotions



D. The Usefulness of Emotions

1. The pleasantness of our emotions tells us little.
2. The constructiveness of our emotions tells us much more.
 - a. When the way we feel interferes with living in relationships as we should, the evidence is strong that the foolishness of our heart is at work...screaming for attention.
 - b. Emotions are to serve as the "warning lights" of what's going on "underneath the hood" of our life.
 - (1) A person can ignore the warning light.
 - (2) A person can claim something is wrong with the warning light.
 - (3) A person can heed the warning light.

E. Handling Our Emotions

1. Acknowledge them; don't deny them.
2. Evaluate and deal with acknowledged emotions
3. Submit the expression of our emotions, limiting expression to the purpose of love.
4. The ability to do these three things is the essence of Emotional Circle Fullness.

CONCLUSION

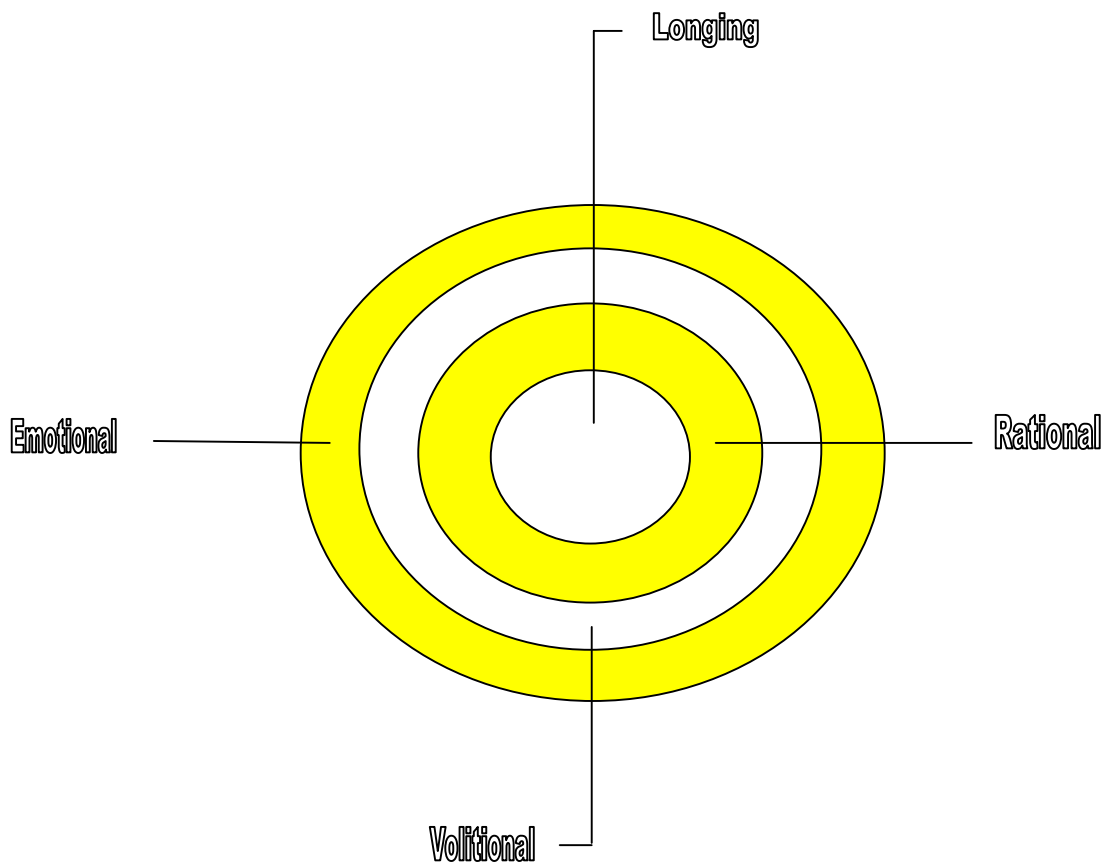
With the conclusion of this session, we have addressed the implications of the doctrine that people are fallen image bearers. In our next session, we will use this information to show how problems begin and offer a basic model for change.

Session Six A Biblical View of Problems and Change

INTRODUCTION

In this session, we will look at how the four circles of man's personhood fit together. The circles, as we have seen, are concentric--each operating at the same time. We will use this Biblical model of man to address how problems develop and how a counselor can facilitate meaningful change.

I. HOW PROBLEMS DEVELOP



- A. An empty Longing Circle is at the core of the problem.
 1. Instead of security and significance, there is fear, shame and demanding.
 2. The thirst for satisfaction becomes the energy (motivation) of our life.
- B. The Rational Circle provides the direction.

1. A person develops convictions about life based on foolishness.
 3. Human wisdom, not godly wisdom prevails.
- C. The Volitional Circle provides the motion.
1. A person begins to set goals based on his/her convictions.
 2. A strategy for achieving these goals is pursued.
- D. The Emotional Circle is the consequence.
1. Unconstructive emotions occur because a false god is being pursued to meet the legitimate needs of the Hollow Core (empty longing circle).
 2. Rarely is a person's problem truly emotional. Usually, his/her emotions are working the way they are supposed to.

II. A BIBLICAL VIEW OF CHANGE

- A. Biblical Soul care is the promotion of maturity (the aim of discipleship) in all four circles.
1. This will require discernment.
 2. This will require discrimination
 3. This will require diagnosis
3. Five Most Common Soul care Mistakes
- a. Topic Jumping
 - b. Quick Advice
 - c. Moving too quickly through information
 - d. Narrow, closed questions
 - e. Avoiding personal issues that cause pain

B. A Simple Model for Change

1. Step One: Identify the painful emotions.
2. Step Two: Explore the sinful behaviors and goals.
3. Step Three: Expose the wrong convictions and personal images that are at the core of the sinful goals and behaviors.
4. Step Four: Identify where the wrong assumption was learned.
5. Step Five: Support the person as he/she seeks to repent and change his/her convictions
6. Step Six: Teach the correct Biblical convictions (Renewing the mind).
7. Step Seven: Secure a commitment from the person to act on the basis of the newly learned convictions.
8. Step Eight: Plan what the person will do differently now that his/her thinking has changed.
9. Step Nine: Identify the lack of sin-related feelings and the presence of Spirit-controlled feelings.

CONCLUSION

The key to effective Biblical soul care is working from the outside in and then working from the inside out.

Session Seven

Specific Skills for the Biblical Counselor

INTRODUCTION

This session will be a very practical one. We will discuss some of the important skills that will aid in making your counseling more effective.

I. THE INITIAL ENCOUNTER (CONVERSATION)

- A. The first conversation is very important.

- B. You will want to obtain some basic information in this first session.
 - 1. Why has the person chosen to talk to you now?

 - 2. What has the person done in the past to seek to resolve the problem?

- C. The goals of the first conversation.
 - 1. Build rapport and exhibit genuine concern.
 - 2. Seek a commitment from the person to the process.
 - 3. Center the conversation on Christ and Biblical principles from the outset.
 - 4. Get an initial idea of the person's relationship with Christ.
 - 4. Get a clear grasp on the presenting problem.
 - 6. Give hope.
 - 7. Seek to solve some initial problems first.
 - 8. Assign homework that will bring some initial success.

II. IMPORTANT PEOPLE HELPING SKILLS

- A. Listening

1. Giving your undivided attention to the person
 2. Body Language that communicates effective listening: eye contact, a relaxed posture, encouraging statements, nods, etc.
 3. Empathetic listening means seeking to understand.
 4. Listening also involves "halo data," the unspoken communication.
 5. Reflective listening helps the person to probe deeper into their own feelings and thoughts.
 6. The Christian counselor will also learn how to "listen" with his/her spirit to the inner voice of God.
- B. Leading (Asking the right questions)
1. Open-ended questions are vital to the people helping process.
 2. Questions should never be asked to satisfy the your curiosity.
 3. A person should never be made to feel like he/she is being interrogated.
- C. Supporting
1. The counselor must remain unshockable.
 2. The person you are helping should not feel personal rejection.
 3. Giving emotional and spiritual support as the person works through difficult issues is vital.
- D. Confronting
1. This involves pointing out sin.
 2. It also involves point out inconsistent behavior or information.
 3. The effective counselor will learn the art of "care-fronting," speaking the truth in love.

- E. Teaching
 - 1. This is basically what soul care is.
 - 2. Counselors must know how to teach the truth of God's Word.
- F. Prayer
 - 1. Healing prayer focuses the power of God to the immediate need at hand.
 - 2. Prayer should never be "ritualistic" in Biblical soul care, nor should it be seen as "magical."

III. THE VALUE OF HOMEWORK

- A. The counselor who perfects his ability to use homework will see the difference in his effectiveness.
 - 1. Homework should be Biblical.
 - 2. Homework should be relevant.
 - 1. Homework should be behavior oriented.
 - 4. Homework should require some time and effort commitment.
- B. The purpose of homework in helping people
 - 1. Regular homework sets a pattern for expected change.
 - 2. Regular homework enables you to provide additional help outside of your conversations.
 - 3. Regular homework will help to renew mind of the person you are helping.
 - 4. Regular homework keeps the person you are helping from becoming dependent on you.
 - 5. Regular homework reinforces insights and knowledge gained from the previous conversation.

6. Regular homework helps the person you are helping to establish good habits and accountability.
7. Regular homework helps you and the person you are helping to gauge progress.
8. Regular homework provides a starting point for the time you talk.
9. Regular homework weeds out people who are not truly serious about changing.

C. Types of Homework

1. Descriptive Writings
2. Discussion Guides (marriage issues)
3. Topical Bible studies
4. Books and Tapes
5. Special assignments
6. Daily quiet times
7. Church attendance

CONCLUSION

Skills are not mastered overnight. With patience and effort, a believer can develop effective people-helping skills. The Holy Spirit will help the believer who truly submits to Him.