



Psychology Vs Biblical Counseling

Psychology (Self-Centered)	Biblical Counseling (God-Centered)
Helps the person identify and change their mistaken beliefs about self, others, and life and participate more fully in a social world.	Helps the person identify and change sinful beliefs about self, others, life and God; Helps the person participate in genuine fellowship with God and other Christians as he/she interacts in the world without functioning according to the world's system but by the Word of God accordingly. (2 Corinthians 10:3-5)
Helps the person disclose and reevaluate feelings and behavior patterns, to understand and accept previously rejected aspects of herself/himself to take risks, to become more open and honest about herself/himself, to learn new methods of living with self and others and to gain new satisfactions from life.	Helps the person to disclose and reevaluate feelings and behavior in light of God's Word in order to learn who he is and who he is not according to God's word; This is to lead him to putt off sinful methods of living and live by righteousness gained by faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ; This is to result in living for God and enjoying satisfaction gained from living for God. (Romans 12:1-3, Ephesians 4:1-32, John 15:1-11)
Focuses on self-efficacy- the individual's belief or expectation that he or she can master a situation and bring about desired change.	Focuses on self-sacrifice- denying self, taking up one's cross and following Jesus Christ. One has the belief that through the power of God he/she can be and do all that God commands. (Matthew 16:24-26, Philippians 2:12-13)
Takes stock in choosing a direction that best suits a person.	Takes stock in leading a person into choosing God's will in all aspects of life. (Colossians 1:28-29)
Has the belief system that individuals are the authors of their lives, and can design the pathways they want to follow.	Has the belief system that people are created in the image of God and are created for His glory and should therefore submit to God's will and way for their existence. (Genesis 1:26-27, Isiah 43:7, Colossians 1:13-29)
Focuses on significant personality change and adjustment to situational and life problems.	Focuses on transformation of character into the image of Christ in all aspects of life so that one may function to the glory of God and have stability that comes from operating according to the glory of God in life situations. (2Corinthians 3:17-4:18, Colossians 3:1-25)



The Definition of Biblical Counseling

Biblical counseling can be defined as using the Word of God (the Bible) within the context it was written to provide solutions and the application to those solutions to non-organic, immaterial, spiritual, and what the world calls “psychological” or “mental disorder” problems. The Word of God is used in a precise and efficient manner to address these matters. The Word of God is used anticipating the salvation of sinners and the sanctification of Saints as a result. Biblical counseling can also be defined as using the Word of God to give comprehensive answers to non-physical problems on a small group level or one on one interpersonal level. In essence, biblical counseling is applied biblical systematic theology. It is the practical ministry that comes out of knowing and understanding the Bible and the theology of the Bible. Biblical Counseling is the practical, comprehensive ministry of soul care that comes out of knowing, understanding, and applying biblical systematic theology to life issues.

The Need For Biblical Counseling

I. We need biblical counseling because it is a means by which the issues of life can be addressed at their core level resulting in using the Scripture to lead individuals into life transformation according to stages of spiritual development. As God is working inside of individuals (Philippians 2:12), they are to respond accordingly (Philippians 2:13). Here is an example of how it works (2Timothy 3:16-17):

A. Teaching Stage: The Holy Spirit enlightens one’s mind through the Word of God bringing one into awareness of truth in various aspects of life through the teaching of God’s Word.

“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching”

Biblical counseling uses Scripture to teach one the right way to think, desire, feel, communicate, behave, relate and serve.

For the Unbeliever, Biblical counseling uses this is an opportunity to show him the reality of God’s word in light of his unbiblical Worldview within the context of the issue he has brought before you.

B. Conviction Stage: God begins to focus one’s attention into particular areas of life convincing one that change is necessary resulting in conviction, honesty, and godly sorrow through the teaching of God’s Word.

“ All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for reproof”

Biblical counseling uses the Scripture to lead one to awareness, conviction, honesty and brokenness about the sinful thoughts, desires, feelings, communication, behavior, relationship patterns and serving patterns or lack thereof one tends to have.

For the Unbeliever, Biblical counseling uses this is an opportunity to show him the



detriment of sin and his need for our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ within the context of the issues he has brought before you.

- C. **Correction Stage:** As a result of the teaching and conviction from the Word of God, one makes a decision to abandon a sin issue in his/her life.

“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable correction”

Biblical counseling uses the Scripture to guide one into putting off sinful thoughts, desires, feelings, communication, behavior, relationship patterns and serving patterns or lack thereof one tends to have.

For the Unbeliever, Biblical counseling uses this is an opportunity to guide them through process of repenting and receiving in genuine faith the Person and Work of Jesus Christ our Lord to deliver them out of their sin condition unto a right standing and right relationship with God.

- D. **Training Stage:** As a result of the teaching and conviction from the Word of God one puts to practice what God has commanded in His Word.

“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for training in righteousness”

Biblical counseling uses the Scripture to guide one into developing godly thoughts, desires, feelings, communication, behavior, relationship patterns and serving patterns.

For the Unbeliever who now has become a Christian Biblical counseling uses this as an opportunity to guide him into the basic principles of living out his new life accordingly within the context of the issues he has brought to you and beyond.

II. Biblical Counseling also guides people into on how to live life accordingly in relation to the pursuit of wisdom for the best course of action. (Proverbs 1:5, 13:10, 19:20, 27:9) When the Unbeliever comes for wisdom, Biblical counseling will use the wisdom of God to lead the person back to the Gospel of Jesus Christ accordingly. (1 Corinthians 1:21, 25; 2:2-5, 3:18-20)

- A. Biblical counseling guides people to direct their *minds* toward a full understanding of human life and toward its moral fulfillment.¹
- B. Biblical counseling guides people into the development of the *mind*, an expansion of knowledge, and an understanding of both the meaning of life and how that life must be lived.²

¹ Walter A. Elwell and Philip Wesley Comfort, *Tyndale Bible Dictionary*, Tyndale Reference Library (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2001).

² Ibid.



- C. Biblical counseling guides people into the art of being successful, of forming the correct plan to gain the desired God-honoring results.³
- D. Biblical counseling guides people into the practical skills associated with living a successful life. These skills range from the ability to create highly skilled works to the intellectual capability required to make choices that result in favorable outcomes and avoid troubles.⁴
- E. Biblical counseling guides people into factual knowledge, the situational insight, and the necessary resolve that together have the greatest likelihood of success in achieving the intended, righteous goal.⁵

III. Biblical counseling also provides support, encouragement, and guidance through those difficulties of life not created by the person focusing on the support and sanctification Christians and the support and salvation of Unbelievers. (1 Thessalonians 5:14)

- A. If people are suffering from soil evil and situational evil counseling guides people to worship God as they grieve over suffering accepting the Sovereignty of God over their lives while working through the matter with endurance; pursuing wisdom to fix, resolve, or work through the matter. (Job 1:19-20, Ecclesiastes 7:13-14, 9:1, James 1:1-5, Romans 12:15) (Presenting support and the Gospel to Unbelievers) (Soil Evil)Genesis 3:17, Romans 8:20—22, Job 1:19) (Creation subjected to futility ; Hence great winds striking the homes of Job’s children leading to their death.) (Situational evil)malfunction of man-made items. (Luke 13:4-5) (Eighteen died from the tower in Siloam falling on them.)
- B. If people are suffering from sickness counseling guides people to pray for help, repent of sin if there be any tied to the sickness, trust in the Lord and function in obedience in spite of their sickness. (James 5:13-15, Proverbs 3:5-8) (Presenting support and the Gospel to Unbelievers)
- C. If people are suffering from the sin of others counseling guides people to embrace the reality that what others meant for evil, God will use to bring good to their lives while obeying God in spite of the sin of others; Where appropriate, counseling will guide people to confront them about the sin accordingly. (Genesis 50:12, Romans 8:28, Romans 12:17-21, Luke 17:3, Galatians 6:1) (Presenting support and the Gospel to Unbelievers)

³ D. R. W. Wood and I. Howard Marshall, *New Bible Dictionary* (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996).

⁴ John D. Barry et al., eds., *The Lexham Bible Dictionary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016).

⁵ John Piper, *How To Get Wisdom Become a Fool*, April, 2018, accessed August 11, 2018, <http://www.desiregod.org/messages/how-to-get-wisdom>.



- D. If people are suffering from *Satan* counseling guides people to submit to God and resist the devil with the spiritual armor given to them by God which will cause the devil to flee from them. (James 4:7, Ephesians 6:13-17) (Presenting support and the Gospel to Unbelievers)

- E. If people are suffering from *servin* counseling guides people to embrace the fact that God will provide comfort in the midst of their affliction while continuing to serve which will result in developing in endurance leading to Christ-like character being developed. (2 Corinthians 1:1-7, James 1:1-4) (Presenting support and the Gospel to Unbelievers)

“The revelation of Jesus Christ creates a distinctive conception of the relationship between counselor and counselee, a distinctive understanding of methodology, a distinctive social location for counseling practice to flourish. This care and cure for the soul systematically differs from how other psychotherapies deal with the same problems in living. Nothing comes ready-made. Biblical counseling wisdom is an ongoing construction project, like all practical theological work. It is one outworking of biblical faith into the particulars of our time, place, problems and persons.” David Powlison (Psychology & Christianity: Five Views pp. 245)