

LIGHT UNIVERSITY

BICO 110 8 WEEK

INTRODUCTION TO BIBLICAL COUNSELING II:

BREAKING FREE

BREAKING FREE CAPSTONE ESSAY

BY

REVEREND CHRISTINA DICKERSON

DUE DATE:

DAY 7 OF THE MODULE

WEEK 1

PRESENTATION 2

LIVING THE LIFE: PURSUING AFTER GOD'S HEART WITH ALL YOUR HEART

While reviewing the content of Week 1, I was drawn to Presentation 2 because pursuing God with my whole heart is my passion. Encouraging others that they can do the same and have a close relationship with the Creator of the universe is what I hope to help develop in others.

The concept at the core of Internal Transformation is aptly described in Proverbs 27:19 (TPT) Just as no two faces are exactly alike, so every heart is different. Even though every heart is different, each person is born with a hunger to know and have a relationship with God, Christ, Holy Spirit and other people in their lives. Heart Transformations begin with this foundation of relationship. Counselors need to guide others into healthy relationships with the Godhead through faith. Out of that internal transformation, the external relationships can begin to heal and be healthy. The counselee's attitudes and actions that were once colored by the "lenses" of the past that defined everything around them will start to shift. Their personality may not change but it will be brought in line as their beliefs and values line up with the word and they start to take on the image of Christ.

Learning how each person connects with the Godhead and other people will make the techniques individual to each counselee. Men and women even need different techniques because of the gender difference. The goal is to help them move toward heart transformation. For men, they would possibly feel more comfortable diving into scriptures that will help them conquer the issues in their life. Women on the other hand would have a better understanding from scriptures about the intimacy of Christ's love for them and His desire for closeness.

WEEK 2

PRESENTATION 3.2

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES: TAKING PEOPLE CLOSER

TO THE HEART OF GOD, PART TWO

When a person begins to attend a church and they accept Jesus as Savior, it is so sad that it doesn't bother people when there seems to be no lasting change in that person. Discipling is

critical for a new convert so that they can learn to grow in the character of Christ. It's not just about church attendance or works, but relationship.

I've chosen the Spiritual Disciplines as the key concept of this module. Ultimately, the purpose of these disciplines is to bring true freedom, so they can live the life that God has called them to live. The Discipline of Abstinence helps us to overcome the sins that we committed in the past and may be still dealing with as a new believer; for example, solitude and silence will help overcome the temptation to gossip when you are with a certain group of people. If the counselee needs to have that time of solitude to overcome their urge to gossip and find the root cause of what drives them to gossip (jealousy or envy), then it is something that they can put in place. During this time of solitude, working on self-examination will help them to find areas that need change. Learning that authenticity will lead into true fellowship with other believers.

WEEK 3

PRESENTATION 1

DOING BRIEF, SOLUTION-FOCUSED COUNSELING FOR CHRIST

The fact that most people cannot receive therapy indefinitely requires setting a minimum number of sessions so that you can determine how much time the counselee spends with you. Short term treatment can be very effective if the approach is individualized to the counselee and the issues they have presented with.

If a woman came to my office for counsel because she is struggling with unforgiveness towards her husband. In the first conversation, talk about the unforgiveness and the when it began, also ask what she would want her life to look like if this problem were solved. From that point solutions may start to present themselves that God can use to help the healing process. When the solutions and goals start to form, the sessions can focus on her growing closer to God, mature, and be conformed to the image of Christ.

Because the sessions are limited, I would encourage the counselee to apply the solutions and goals learned in the sessions to other areas in the future. As she grows closer to God and He reveals other issues in her life that need work, the structure will be there for her to use.

WEEK 4

PRESENTATION 2

SPIRITUAL FREEDOM: DISARMING STRONGHOLDS, CHANGING HABITS

So many things in the world, and the church world especially, are out of focus. This presentation helped me to understand that it is important that I enjoy my relationship with God and cultivate my hunger and passion for Him.

As a teen, I experienced so much anger towards people and resentment towards God for what I thought was an injustice that He ignored; it wrecked my relationship with Jesus for a time and I was led away into witchcraft. All of this led to strongholds in my life that took years to break free from. Once I came back to Christ, I learned the three C's before I knew that it was a counseling concept!

In taking the time to have conversation with God, I found that He is okay with me unloading my thoughts, dreams and fears. When I did that, He revealed His love for me in the word. Deciding to be completely honest in every area of my life with Him has brought true communion and this has helped me overcome deep seeded fears from the past. Walking out forgiveness (of others and myself), being given the gift of reconciliation so that I could understand true union with God through Jesus opened my eyes to the consummation of this beautiful relationship.

WEEK 5

PRESENTATION 2

STRESS & ANXIETY: OVERCOMING

FEAR, PHOBIAS, AND PANIC DISORDERS

In watching this video, I have been reminded of the internal struggle that many Christians have in dealing with stress and anxiety.

If a college aged young woman came for counsel and just stated on her application that she is stressed out, we would first have to discuss the type of stress in her life. It would also be important to determine if there are any physical conditions being caused by the stress that may need medical attention. Should conditions such as acid reflux, fatigue, or migraines be listed then a medical consultation, with her permission, would need to be scheduled to determine if any medications are needed and for how long. As the medications work to calm her system, we can

begin to work on ways to deal with the stress of college and life in general. Making sure that she has at least 8-9 hours of sleep each night, adequate exercise, finding humor in daily life, and nurturing her hope in Christ that helps maintain an optimistic outlook will help to lower the stress hormones.

WEEK 6

PRESENTATION 3

EMOTIONAL EATING: THE TRUTH ABOUT DIETING AND WEIGHT CONTROL

To be honest, I have chosen this presentation because this is a struggle in my personal life. This lesson has helped me dig to the root of my issues with food addiction, being overweight, and yo-yo dieting.

Should a young mother enter my counseling office that is struggling with the way she looks and feels, I will be able to empathize with her and walk her through the process of learning healthy eating and life habits. Understanding the difference between hunger and appetite is essential. Hunger is about the body surviving and needing essential nourishment. Our appetite is about a sense of satisfaction and comfort. Working through the three elements of appetite control (physiological, psychological and emotional factors) during sessions will help her recognize the cycle of a distorted appetite: compulsive eating, constant snacking, binge eating, overeating at meals. Also, working on other ways for her to manage her stress and learn to relax will help to keep the appetites from kicking in.

WEEK 7

FAMILIES IN CRISIS:

HOPELESS PARENTS AND ANGRY/DEFIANT CHILDREN

Ephesians 6:1 tells us that kids are to honor their parents, but as verse four clearly states the parents cannot provoke them; they are to bring them up in the nurture/admonition of the Lord. Parents can have an adverse effect on their kids by either being too harsh or too lenient. Telling a child “no” because you love them is a good thing, if done correctly.

When a parent comes in for counsel, they need to have a clear understanding that anger and defiance can be the result of several issues combined. Kids want to laugh and have fun, but

sometimes pattern issues start to emerge. The pathways to defiance have three keys: 1) a difficult temperament makes them more impulsive, reactive and emotional about things. 2) family stressors like health problems, parent's marital issues, financial problems, or major transitions can have a negative effect on their emotions. 3) attachments in the child's life that they feel are being threatened will throw them into chaos. The parents need to help transition through their child's anger and defiance. They have to take the lead in this process with floor time, special time, bringing empathy into the relationship, and healthy problem solving.

WEEK 8

PRESENTATION 3

BOUNDARIES AND VIOLATIONS I:

CONFIDENTIALITY, CONSULTATION, & REFERRAL

The need for being transparent in lay counseling is important in building trust with counsees. So that this is possible, several things need to be set in place before the program can begin. Violations of trust can lead to major issues later on.

Determining who the lay counseling will be available to will set many of the needed standards. If it is only open to church members, make sure that the pastors or elders have set guidelines in place about what you should report for church discipline. Put these guidelines in writing for the counselee to read and then discuss them in the session. Should members of other churches request counsel, it may be best to contact their church leadership to determine what they require for reporting. It is necessary to check your states mandatory reporting requirements for issues like child abuse, spouse and elder abuse or any other such issues. All notes should be kept in a locked cabinet in files that protect the counselee's name and case information. If issues are too difficult for the counselor to handle, have a list of referrals on hand. Be sure to utilize more than one referral resource and know their specialties.