

# Biblical Counseling Ministry Basic Training

Dr. Steve Swartz  
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## Foundation and Introduction

Romans 15:14 I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to instruct one another.

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## Foundation and Introduction

- The ministry itself
- Today's training
- Why counseling ministry vs. paid staff doing all counseling?
- Assumptions of counseling ministry volunteers

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## Basics of Biblical Counseling

- Definition: The application of Scripture to life
- Scriptural Authority—2 Tim 3:16-17
  - Successful counseling: The constant application of biblical thinking, principles, and behaviors. Putting off the old and putting on the new (Eph 4:17ff)
- Beware of pop psychology that has infiltrated your thinking
- The Gospel is paramount
- Hope is Key—Ps 4:8. Basis for hope: Scripture, Spirit, Positive effects of obedience

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## Basics of Biblical Counseling

- Respectful compassion and care
- You are not the solution
- Biblical Analysis of a Problem
  - The perception of pain
  - The identification of contradictions to scriptural principles
  - The counsel toward heart change which leads to behavior change
    - Matt 15:18-20; Gal 5:16-17
- Watch for blame-shifting—Gen 3:11-12
- Changing the goal to Ephesians 4:1

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## Being Good Observers

- Difference between secular psychology and medical neurology
- The family as an interactive structure

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## A Very Basic Theology of Forgiveness

- A theology of forgiveness can't be reduced to one verse
- Forgiveness has basically two components:
  - Internal heart attitude (unconditional and commanded)
  - External offer of relationship restoration (may be conditional)
- Pattern of salvation:
  - God changes your heart
  - God offers forgiveness based in repentance
  - God forgives and sins are never held against you again
  - NOTE: Forgiveness is asked for, not demanded.

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## A Very Basic Theology of Forgiveness

- The issue of trust
- Beware of Penance vs. Repentance
  - Repentance = a change of mind and direction
  - Penance = the use of gifts or actions to substitute for repentance
  - Repentance includes a crushed and broken spirit (Ps 51:17)
  - Repentance is centered on what God thinks of my actions (Ps 51:4)
  - Penance is focused on what another person thinks of my actions
- Repentance is not perfectionism

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## When Biblical Counseling is Effective WITHOUT Solving the “Problem”

- Achievement of peace and joy
- Sovereignty of God truly accepted
- Personal sinful responses acknowledged and repented of
- Gospel comes to the forefront
- When the counselee discovers HE may be the problem!
- When humility and thankfulness replace pride and bitterness

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## A Simple Way Forward in Marriage Counseling

- Question #1: “What percentage of the problem do you think your spouse is?”
- Question #2: “What are you doing to contribute your percentage?”
- NOW: Homework and teaching geared to the answers to #2.

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The LASER Question of Biblical Counseling ...

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The LASER Question of Biblical Counseling

“What do you think Satan  
wants you to do?”

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## Dynamics of Counseling Sessions

- Basic Basics
  - Attire, grooming, being on time, set end time, seating
- Basic Structure of a Counseling Session
  - Prayer
  - Review Homework (focus on successes especially)
  - Assess how obedience, Christ-likeness, peacefulness
  - Encourage with Scripture and compliment well-done homework and/or exhort to do better and take homework more seriously
  - Great Question: “What did I miss?”
  - Give/explain homework for following session

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## Dynamics of Counseling Sessions

- Taking Notes
  - Date, Counselee, Counselor
  - Steve’s Two-Column system: Content and items to address
  - Bottom of page (or last page): Homework (OR place date assigned to next homework if it is part of an overall counseling plan)

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## Dynamics of Counseling Sessions

- Be the leader, not the follower of the session
  - “Rabbit trails”
  - Avoid a continual “crisis-flavor-of-the-day”
  - Confront someone who may not actually want to change
  - Stick to the plan in most cases
  - You run the session start to finish
  - Avoid marathon sessions which turn to endless “venting”

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## Dynamics of Counseling Sessions

- Content vs Process
  - Know the different and be observant
  - Don't try to be a “body language” expert
  - Use common sense and remember the “tip of the iceberg” rule
- Random Helpful Ideas
  - Reframe the problem in light of the sovereignty of God.
  - Point to solutions vs. never-ending processing of the problem

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## Dynamics of Counseling Sessions

- Dynamics of Counseling as a Couple Together:
  - Must have a clear leader—in almost all cases should be the husband to model this dynamic.
  - Leader should ask for input from spouse periodically
  - Learn your own “dance” as a couple while staying on track time-wise and goal-wise.

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## Dynamics of Counseling Sessions

- Dynamics Session #1:
  - Fill out of give Counselee Data Form and read briefly
  - Establish leadership: set target time and agenda UPFRONT
  - Explain GBC counseling policy of 6-ish sessions
  - Work through the mud to establish do-able spiritual goals
  - Use discernment to suggest getting physical exam as needed

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## Dynamics of Counseling Sessions

- Dynamics Session #2: Giving a Direction with Goals and Objectives
  - GOAL = an achievable measure of success
  - OBJECTIVE = concrete ways to meet that goal (homework)
  - Sample GOOD goals...
  - Sample BAD goals...
- Dynamics of Final Session
  - Review successes, give long-range homework, acknowledge the bond you have built together, shift toward discipleship/body-life

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## Short Sample Counseling Homework Plan

~~Presenting Problem: Overwhelmed by what he defines as a pornography “addiction”

### 1. GOAL 1—Redefine Addiction vs. Sin

- a. [OBJECTIVE] Read Romans 6 and take notes (conquerors over sin)
- b. Read 1 Cor 6 and take notes (seriousness of sexual immorality)
- c. Read and discuss 1 John 1:9
- d. Do exercise on page XX of Mack’s Homework book (photocopy)

### 2. GOAL 2—Increase depth of walk with Christ in general

- a. Establish and execute a daily Bible reading plan
- b. Establish and execute a daily prayer plan
- c. Memorize 1 Cor 10:13
- d. Memorize a gospel account of Christ’s death
- e. REQUIRED: Church attendance Sunday morning and evening--bring sermon notes to counseling
- f. Read solid book XYZ by Christian author

### 3. GOAL 3—Practice Practical Wisdom in specific ways

- a. Evaluate and fill up dead space in schedule with godly things
  - i. “Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.” (Ephesians 5:15–16, ESV)
- b. Identify situation/circumstances in which pornography is most tempting and change those circumstances as able
- c. If necessary, limit or change use of devices (but beware of external solutions only—we are going for a change of heart, not change of electronics)
- d. Identify what pornography is substituting for—trust in the Lord? Stress reliever? Identify biblical solution instead.

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## Simplified Logistics and Counseling Policy

- Be patient—no way to know how often you will be used
- Confidentiality—it has limits
- Determine if one session is all that is necessary
- Counseling session series:
  - Counseling itself is not the solution
  - Series: 6-ish maximum
  - Between session 1 and 2, write: synopsis of information gathered, presenting problems, proposed plan with goals and objective
  - Final session—potentially a follow-up = to about four sessions' time

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## Simplified Logistics and Counseling Policy

- Location: use the church building if possible with few exception
- Coordinate with church admin staff and/or Shepherding Ministry Coordinator for building use times
- Wednesday evenings and Sunday evenings before service work well
- Scheduling: Keep Shepherding Ministry Coordinator apprised
- Limitations of counseling...

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## Simplified Logistics and Counseling Policy

- Counseling Records
  - They stay at the church
  - Record should contain Counselee Data Form, counseling notes, counseling plan and final follow-up plan
  - Admin staff can help with notepads, Counselee Data Forms, files, etc.
  - Under NO circumstances unless with permission of the elder over counseling are counselors to look through files of counselees not their own past or present.

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## After-Service Counseling Rotation

- 3-Tier Evaluation as you talk to someone requesting counseling:
  - Tier 1 = 5-10 minutes or prayer
  - Tier 2 = one longer meeting now or later with a counselor
  - Tier 3 = request multiple counseling sessions
- ALWAYS point them to the Shepherding Ministry Coordinator
- “I’d rather see the pastor...”

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## Future Support and Training

- February 26, 2021—All day with Stuart Scott
- June, 2021—Biblical Counseling Conference, Placerita Bible Church
- Consider further training on your own, up to and including Association of Certified Biblical Counselors

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## Apply for Counseling Ministry

- Sign up to be considered for the counseling team
- Sign up to be considered for After-Service Counseling Rotation

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