Birmingham Theological Seminary 2200 Briarwood Way Birmingham, Alabama 35243 205-776-5344

Class Hours: 2 Meets Mondays 5:30-7:30 Fall 2012 Cell Phone: 205-527-3444 Introduction to Biblical Counseling Office: 2-5-776-5344

(BC7501)

Professor: Howard Eyrich, MA, ThM, DMin (ABD, PhD)

Graduate Certificate in Gerontology

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COURSE PURPOSE

The purpose of this course is to lay down the foundation upon which the student will be able to develop his/her Biblical approach to solving the problems of living. For the student earning a Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling, the course will outline the broad parameters of Biblical Counseling which will be particularized throughout the program. For the non-counseling major, this course provides a basic framework upon which a growing understanding of counseling can be built within the context of his or her ministry.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- 1. The student will be able to define Biblical Counseling.
- 2. The student will be able to delineate the presuppositional nature of Biblical Counseling.
- 3. The student will be able to differentiate Biblical Counseling from secular counseling and a Christian integrationist perspective.
- 4. The student will be able to articulate a Biblical methodology enabling her/him to begin to conduct responsible biblical counseling.

PRECEDENT LITERATURE

A general knowledge of the Bible

A familiarity with systematic theology is anticipated. It is recommended that the student have a copy of either/or both: Wayne Grudum, Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine; Louis Berkhof, Systematic Theology.

COURSE TEXTS

Required Texts:

Adams, Jay E. 1970. *Competent to Counsel*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P and R Publishing Co. Reprint: Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986. [Also available from Timeless Texts]

Eyrich, Howard A. and Bill Hines. *Curing The Heart* by Eyrich and Hines

Eyrich, Howard A. *The Art of Aging.* Focus Publishing. [*To be purchased in class the first night*]

Powlison, David. *Through New Eyes*. Philadelphia: New Growth Publishers, 2010. ISBN: 978-1935273134

Powlison, David. *The Biblical Counseling Movement: History and Context*. New Jersey: P & R Publishing, 2003. ISBN: 979-0875526089

Collateral Texts:

Eyrich, Howard and William Hines. *CD Homework Assignments for Biblical Counselors Vol. I* [Available at the Briarwood Counseling Office]

McArthur, John, et al. *1994. Introduction to Biblical Counseling.* Nashville: W Publishing. ISBN: 0849910935

Adams, Jay E. *The Christian Counselor's Manual*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P and R Publishing, 1973. Reprint, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986. ISBN: 031051150X.

BTS FORMAT AND STYLE STANDARDS

Note: All research papers must be formatted in accordance with Turabian Chicago standards including the title page, citations and bibliography. Any paper not conforming to these standards will automatically be dropped one letter grade. #12 Times New Roman font and double spacing is required on all papers

All course materials must be submitted by the last day of class. Thereafter, course materials may be submitted for up to six (6) weeks after the end of the semester directly to the office of the Registrar with the permission of the professor. If a student submits course materials after the end of the semester but within the six (6) weeks grace period, the student's grade will be lowered by one letter grade. The course materials will not be accepted after the six (6) week grace period and a failing grade will be posted to the student's transcript

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Reading and assignment completion schedule

First three weeks complete the reading of *Curing the Heart*

Second three weeks complete the reading of *Competent to Counsel*

Third three weeks complete the reading of *The Biblical Counseling Movement: History and Context*

Week ten: complete the reading of *Through New Eyes*. Submit component # 1-- Interview Project.

Week eleven: complete the reading of *The Art of Aging*. Submit component # 3 [Counts as mid-term grade]

Week twelve: Submit component # 2 [Capstone Paper].

Week thirteen: Complete component # 4 in class (Final exam)

COMPONENT 1: PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENT (25 POINTS)

Attending class, reading of the textbooks on time and Interview Paper [If you are taking this course as Distance Education watching the lectures counts as class attendance]

Interview ten Christians using the attached questionnaire. Write a five-page paper summarizing the results and your response to the results. (Briarwood members, please use no more than three Briarwood people in your Survey). Your paper should also include a chart displaying your results.

COMPONENT 2: Case Study, #1: Anthony (25 points)

[Counts as the Capstone paper for the course]

Review the relevant chapters in Adams and in Eyrich & Hines. Then write up a report on how you would counsel "Anthony" (see Case Study 1 after the bibliography). In your report include the following items:

- (1) How you will build involvement (develop rapport) with him
- (2) How you will answer his questions about a "biblical counseling approach" (Supply a possible transcript of what you might say.)
- (3) What further data (about his problems) you need from him—and the actual questions you would use to get the data
- (4) How you would conceptualize his problem in biblical categories—and the way in which you would help him understand your thinking (including discussion of relevant passages of Scripture) (Supply a possible transcript of what you might say.)
- (5) How you would confront any sin in his life (Supply a possible transcript of what you might say.)
- (6) How you would encourage a commitment to biblical change (Supply a possible transcript of what you might say.)
- (7) Three homework assignments you might use with him over the course of counseling—and why you think they could be valuable¹ (Note: the assignments should **not** only be "academically oriented"—i.e., Bible studies or reading other books.)
- (8) How will know when to terminate formal counseling with him

Your report should be 10-12 pages (2500-3000 words) long.

¹ Models of homework can be found in Wayne Mack, *Homework Manual for Biblical Counseling I and II* and the CD *Biblical Counseling Homework* by Eyrich and Hines.

COMPONENT 3: CASE STUDY #2: Gerontology Application (POINTS)

[Counts as the mid-term exam grade]

Review the relevant chapters in Adams' *Manual*, Eyrich & Hines' *Curing the heart*, and Eyrich's *Art of Aging*. Then write up a report on how you would counsel the Sheerers (see Case Study 2 after the bibliography). In your report include the following items:

- (1) What further data (about their problems) you need from him—and the actual questions you would use to get the data
- (2) How you would guide Mary Ann in improving communication with Jonathan from a biblical perspective (especially regarding her mother's care) (Supply a possible transcript of what you might say.)
- (3) How you might guide Mary Ann in making decisions about her mother's care from a biblical perspective (Supply a possible transcript of what you might say.)
- (4) How you would confront any sin in their life (Supply a possible transcript of what you might say.)
- (5) How you would encourage a commitment to biblical change, assuming both were willing to come for counseling (Supply a possible transcript of what you might say.)
- (6) Three homework assignments you might use with them over the course of counseling—and why you think they could be valuable² (Note: the assignments should **not** only be "academically oriented"—i.e., Bible studies or reading other books.)

Your report should be 10-12 pages (2500-3000 words) long.

COMPONENT FOUR: FINAL EXAMINATION (25 POINTS)

Preparation for the examination: See the study questions after the case studies. You should be able to answer them from what lectures and the textbooks.

COURSE GRADING

See above. Each component worth 25 POINTS

READING ASSIGNMENTS AND LECTURES

Due for September 10.

First Class

Due for September 24

Curing the Heart completed

No Class on Oct 1

Due for October 15

Competent to Counsel completed

Due November 5

The Biblical Counseling Movement completed

Due for November 12

Through New Eyes completed

[Note, use the week of Fall Break to complete Interview Project]

Due for November 19

Fall BREAK

Due for November 26

The Art of Aging and Interview Project <u>completed</u> Component # 3 Completed

Due for December 3

Component # 2 Completed

Due for December 10

Component # 4 Final exam executed

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE - INTRODUCTION TO BIBLICAL COUNSELING

INSTRUCTIONS: Ask ten everyday Christians, not professionals, if they would help you complete an assignment for a seminary course by answering... questions about Christian counseling. Simply record their answers as Yes or No.

- 1. Do you think there is any significant difference between Christian counseling and professional counseling? Yes No
- 2. Have you read any book about Christian counseling theory? Yes No
- 3. Does the Bible address such issues as kleptomania, clinical depressions, or anxiety attacks? Yes No
- 4. Is co-dependency a condition which the Bible recognizes? Yes No
- 5. The Bible condemns alcoholism. Yes No
- 6. Since all truth is God's truth, we can learn truth about man's psyche from psychology. Yes No
- 7. The Bible teaches that man is the product of his environment. Yes No
- 8. The Bible teaches that we can trust our feelings in relationships. Yes No
- 9. Psychotherapy and the Christian faith are compatible. Yes No
- 10. It is true that immaturity accounts for many of man's sinful behaviors. Yes No
- 11. The assimilation of secular psychologies is a dominant part of contemporary Christian counseling. This is as it should be since it makes the best of the Bible and Science. Yes No.
- 12. Man's basic needs are security and significance. Yes No
- 13. Inner healing and the healing of memories is a legitimate part of Christian counseling. Yes No
- 14. Temperaments are part of the Biblical teachings about the nature of man. Yes No
- 15. We must learn to love ourselves before we can learn to love others. Yes No

CASE STUDY 1: Anthony

Anthony³ is a single 36 year old Christian. He is a computer engineer who has worked at the same location since graduating from college. He lives in an apartment about fifty miles from where he grew up. He is close to his family, and sees his parents, aunts, uncles, and cousins often on weekends and holidays. He makes enough money to be "comfortable," but he would never describe his life using this word!

Anthony struggles with loneliness, anxiety, anger, and lust. He decides to seek counseling, since both his psychiatrist and pastor have recommended it. His psychiatrist offered him a list of licensed clinical social workers and psychologists to work with. His pastor recommended that he see a counselor who will explicitly endorse a biblical perspective on counseling, and he offers you as a person to talk to about his problems. Reluctantly, Anthony agrees to talk to you.

Anthony is no stranger to psychotherapy, having seen therapists for numerous years when he was younger--his mother first took him to a psychotherapist when he was 8 years old. He has been on anxiety and antidepressant medications off and on since his 9th birthday. (His sporadic use of the medications has been due to his frustration with their side-effects or his lack of discipline about taking them.) Currently Anthony is on an anxiety medication, because his psychiatrist says he has "Generalized Anxiety Disorder." This diagnosis is the result of the symptoms he exhibits:

- (1) "Excessive anxiety and worry (apprehensive expectation), occurring more days than not for at least 6 months, about a number of events or activities." [In Anthony's case his worry is most intense when a family member gets ills (with more than a cold), when he has to report to his supervisor at work, and when he tries to talk to women in whom he is interested.]
- (2) "The person finds it difficult to control the worry." [Indeed, Anthony cannot remember a time when he did not struggle with worry in his life.]
- (3) "The anxiety and worry are associated with three (or more) of the following symptoms (with at least some symptoms present for more days than not for the past 6 months).⁵
 - (a) "restlessness or feeling keyed up or on edge [In Anthony's case, yes]
 - (b) "being easily fatigued [In Anthony's case, usually when he is approaching a scheduled meeting with his supervisor, such as an annual performance review, or when he knows a family member is ill.]

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³ Anthony is a fabricated character, but his experiences are true to life.

⁴ American Psychiatric Association. *Desk Reference to the Diagnostic Criteria from DSM-IV-TR* (Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Publishing, 2000), 222. The *DSM-IV-TR* is the *Diagnostic & Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 4th ed, Text Revision. It is the standard guide used by American psychiatrists and psychologists to arrive at diagnoses.

⁵ Desk Reference, 222-223.

- (c) "difficult concentrating or mind going blank [In Anthony's case, in the situations mentioned above.]
- (d) "irritability [Primarily when Anthony is preparing a report or when family members ask if he is "seeing anyone" or they ask about some past date.]
- (e) "muscle tension
- (f) "sleep disturbance"
- (4) "The anxiety, worry, or physical symptoms cause clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning."
- (5) "The disturbance is not due to the direct physiological effects of a substance . . . or a general medical condition."⁷

Because of the anxiety that he experiences around pretty women, he is very lonely. He spends his free time after work in his apartment watching TV or reading (novels or software manuals), or in the apartment complex's gym working out. Occasionally he views Internet porn (probably about twice a month he succumbs to the temptation). Anthony tries to take care of himself: he eats properly and exercises often (though not "regularly").

Anthony's parents are quite mystified about why he can't find the "right girl." He is in fact quite handsome, though they do not seem to appreciate the extent to which his anxiety limits his conversations with others (since he does not have the struggle when talking to them). They know of women interested in him, but he never seems to "connect" with them. When they inquire about his dates or why he is not seeing anyone regularly, Anthony is prone to blow up. Though he has never told his parents this, he does have a particular fear regarding marriage: He fears that if he had to protect his wife, he's not confident he could do so.

At work Anthony is very competent in his responsibilities. He does not talk much with co-workers, both because of "freezing up" when asked certain kinds of questions and because he gets irritated at others' questions about issues he thinks they should already understand. Anthony has no close friends.

At church Anthony tends to arrive for Sunday services just before the worship services start (there are two at the American Baptist Church he attends). He operates the sound equipment, again, very capably. But when the senior pastor suggested training others to do the job as well as he does, he quietly resists. He knows he struggles to answer certain types of questions, and he knows he gets impatient with people after he thinks they should "get it." So far, the pastor has not insisted that such training occur (in part because Anthony rarely misses a service), but Anthony is concerned that a "show-down" is imminent.

⁶ Desk Reference, 223.

⁷ Desk Reference, 223.

WHEN ANTHONY ARRIVES FOR HIS FIRST CONVERSATION WITH YOU, HE HAS SOME QUESTIONS: "WHAT, EXACTLY, IS *BIBLICAL* COUNSELING? I'VE BEEN TO SEE SEVERAL COUNSELORS OVER THE YEARS; WHAT MAKES THIS TYPE DIFFERENT? WHAT MAKES YOU THINK IT WILL HELP *ME*? I'VE STRUGGLED WITH THESE PROBLEMS FOR YEARS. SOMETIMES I WONDER, IF I AM A CHRISTIAN SINCE I HAVE ALL THESE PROBLEMS THAT NORMAL PEOPLE DON'T HAVE YET ALONE CHRISTIANS.

CASE STUDY 2: THE SHEERER FAMILY

MARY ANN AND JONATHAN SHEERER⁸ ARE NEARING RETIREMENT. MARY ANN (63 YEARS OLD) IS A JEWELRY STORE OWNER, AND JONATHAN (64 YEARS OLD) IS A TELEPHONE COMPANY EXECUTIVE. THEY HAVE BEEN SAVING FOR THEIR RETIREMENT SERIOUSLY FOR ABOUT 15 YEARS. THIS WAS ALSO ABOUT THE TIME EACH OF THEM BECAME A CHRISTIAN. BEFORE THAT TIME, THEY LIVED THE "GOOD LIFE" (AS THEY USED TO CALL IT) AND DID NOT THINK MUCH ABOUT THE FUTURE. BUT NOW THEY LOVE TO SIT AND TALK ABOUT WHAT THEY WILL HOPEFULLY BE DOING WHEN THEY CAN QUIT THEIR JOBS.

Recently, however, there have been challenges that have arisen, and they are not sure how to respond in a way that honors the Lord. First, Mary Ann's mother, Marilyn Samson (89 years old), is probably not going to be able to live on her own much longer. Mrs. Samson has had several minor strokes over the past 10 years that have diminished her of her memory (primarily short-term memory) and her ability to walk confidently. She now uses a cane or walker. She also must use medications to manage her hypertension and diabetes. Mary Ann and her two sisters are sure that Mrs. Samson is irregular in taking her medications and that she does not eat regularly on her own. Mrs. Samson, however, is reluctant to answer questions about these matters when asked; she is stubborn and does not like to think she cannot care of herself. Fortunately her three daughters live within a reasonable driving distance from her and can "drop in for visits" periodically throughout the week. Mary Ann and her sisters have discussed how they might convince their mother to consider another living arrangement. Among themselves they have discussed nursing home options or having Mrs. Samson move in with one of them. Though all three women are willing to have Mrs. Samson move in, practically speaking, it makes the most sense for Mrs. Samson to move in with the Sheerers. This is where the second challenge occurred.

Jonathan and Mrs. Samson have never been very close. She never considered him to be "good enough" for Mary Ann, and even though she softened over the years of the Sheerer' married life, she has never fully shown acceptance of Jonathan. Conversations between them are short and strained. It does not take much provocation for either one to walk away from one another in silence—something that happens frequently at family gatherings, Thanksgiving and Christmas. Although Mary Ann and Jonathan get along well together—and neither one is prone to explosive anger—if there is going to be an argument it likely will be about Mrs. Samson.

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⁸ The Sheerers are a fabricated composite of real people in real cases.

Mary Ann is torn emotionally over this state of affairs. She loves her mother and Jonathan very much. She also understands Jonathan's frustrations with Mrs. Samson, but she always wants to be the "peace maker." Mrs. Samson, in particular, makes this difficult, because unlike her daughter, she is not shy about verbalizing her point of view without considering the potential impact of her words. Mary Ann knows her mother can be a challenge for Jonathan, but she says, "This is the way it is, Jonathan. Mother is not

going to change. You should be the mature one and make some adjustments." Jonathan verbally assents to Mary Ann on this point, but he has not changed much about his attitude or mannerisms around Mrs. Samson. Mary Ann is getting increasingly frustrated and anxious about how her mother's need for new living arrangements will be resolved.

The Sheerer have experienced an increase in verbal fights in the past three months, and Jonathan even left the house for about five hours after one particularly loud fight a week ago. Mary Ann was asleep on the sofa when he returned home that night, and he just went to bed without waking her. Though Mary Ann said she thought they needed to talk about that incident—and Jonathan said OK—they never did discuss it.

It was this last, as yet unresolved, fight that prompted Mary Ann to seek biblical counseling. She wants help with improving her relationship with Jonathan (so they can communicate more effectively under stress), and she wants guidance on how to make good decisions regarding her mother's increasing need of care. Jonathan knows that Mary Ann made the appointment for counseling, but it happened to be on a night that he had a committee meeting at church. He seemed ambivalent about going to counseling, but Mary Ann is of the opinion that he would come if he knew how important it is to her.

STUDY QUESTIONS

Note: Your answers to these questions should reflect your understanding of the course texts and the audio lectures. You should be able to substantiate your answers on the basis of biblical teaching.

- 1. What is meant by the expression the "sufficiency of Scripture"? What are the implications of the sufficiency of Scripture for counseling?
- 2. In what ways is the Bible suited to be a counseling tool, that is, provide a counseling framework?
- 3. What is meant in the Bible by the term "heart"? Of what relevance is this concept for counseling?
- 4. Why is it necessary for Christian counselors to think of themselves as "theologians"?
- 5. How can biblical counselors "build involvement" with counselees?
- 6. Of what value is "isolating the problem" at the four levels identified by Eyrich?
- 7. How does the concept of "habituation" figure into biblical counseling?
- 8. What steps are discernible in the dehabituation/rehabituation process?
- 9. Why is "reframing the problem" so often necessary when counseling Christians?
- 10. Why is "confrontation" so often necessary when counseling Christians? How should it be done?
- 11. What are three possible reasons for a counselee to struggle with commitment to biblical change? How can each obstacle be addressed in counseling?
- 12. What are the advantages to using homework in counseling for the *counselee?* What are the advantages for the *counselor?*
- 13. What are 4 guidelines for constructing helpful homework assignments?
- 14. What qualifies a person to be a counselor?
- 15. On what basis can Christians be encouraged that *real* change is possible for them?
- 16. How might you offer hope to a distressed counselee?
- 17. How does biblical counseling differ from Freudianism in its presuppositions? From behaviorism? From Rogerianism?

- 18. What is the "intensive approach" to data gathering? The "extensive approach"? In what ways is each one valuable?
- 19. What does Adams mean: by Total Restructuring; by Radical Amputation?
- 20. What are important guidelines for overcoming the following problems?
 - a. Anger
 - b. Depression
 - c. Homosexuality
 - d. Debilitating fear
- 21. Is retirement a biblical concept? Why or why not?

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following resources are recommended for further research of the topics in this course.

Journals

Journal of Biblical Counseling. Contact: www.ccef.org

The Transdisciplinary Journal of Christian Psychology: http://christianpsych.org/wp/scp/publications/edification/

Journal of Counseling & Discipleship: http://christiancounseling.com/member-resources/21

Societies and Organizations

Association of Biblical Counselors. www.christiancounseling.com

Biblical Counseling Foundation. www.bcfministries.org

The Christian Counseling & Educational Foundation. www.ccef.org

Institute for Nouthetic Studies. www.nouthetic.org

The International Association of Biblical Counselors. www.iabc.net

The National Association of Nouthetic Counselors. www.nanc.org

Southern Baptist Association of Biblical Counselors. www.sbabc.org

Strengthening Ministries International. www.mackministries.org

Books & Articles on Biblical Counseling

"Selected Classical Works"

Adams, Jay E. 1981. *Ready to restore: The layman's guide to Christian counseling.* Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing.

Broger, John C. 1978. *Self-confrontation: A manual for in-depth discipleship.* Palm Desert, CA: Biblical Counseling Foundation.

- Eyrich, Howard A. 1991. *Three to get ready: Premarital counseling manual.* Grand Rapids: Baker. Revised and published by Bemidji, MN: Focus Publishing, 2005.
- Mack, Wayne. 1979. A homework manual for biblical counseling, vol. 1: Personal & interpersonal problems. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing.
- Mack, Wayne. 1980. A homework manual for biblical living, vol. 2: Family and marital problems. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing.

"Recent Works"

- Adams, Jay E. 2000. Committed to craftsmanship in biblical counseling. Woodruff, SC: Timeless Texts.. 2007. Compassionate counseling. Stanley, NC: Timeless Texts.
- . 2007. Encouragement isn't enough. Stanley, NC: Timeless Texts.
- Berg, Jim. 2000. *Changed into his image: God's plan for transforming your life.* Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press.
- Fitzpatrick, Elyse. 2001. *Idols of the heart: Learning to long for God alone*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing.
- Fitzpatrick, Elyse, and Carol Cornish, eds. 1997. Women helping women: A biblical guide to the major issues women face. Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers.
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- Piper, John. 2002. God's glory is the goal of biblical counseling. *Journal of Biblical Counseling* 20 (Winter): 8-21.

- Powlison, David. 2000. Affirmations & denials: A proposed definition of biblical counseling. *Journal of Biblical Counseling* 19 (Fall): 18-25.
- _____. 2005. *Speaking the truth in love: Counsel in community*. Winston-Salem, NC: Punch Press.
- Smith, Bill. 1996. Authors and arguments in biblical counseling: A review and analysis. *Journal of Biblical Counseling* 15 (Fall): 9-20.
- Smith, Robert D. 2000. *The Christian counselor's medical desk reference*. Stanley, NC: Timeless Texts.
- Tripp, Paul David. 2002. *Instruments in the Redeemer's hands: People in need of change helping people in need of change*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing.
- Welch, Edward T. 1997. What *is* biblical counseling, anyway? *Journal of Biblical Counseling* 16 (Fall): 2-5.