
The Three Basic Questions of Biblical Counselling

A Definition of Biblical Counselling

Biblical counselling is using the Bible in wise and appropriate ways to bring God-glorifying change to God's people.

Biblical counselling applies the great theological truths, commands, and promises of the Bible to the problems of daily life so that believers change more and more into conformity to the character of Christ, and thus live more and more for His glory in the wisdom, righteousness, peace, stability, and strength of godly living.

The Goal of Biblical Counselling:

The goal of biblical counselling is to teach Christians *to counsel themselves* by the power of the Spirit, using the Bible to become more and more like Christ.

THREE BASIC QUESTIONS THAT GUIDE ANY COUNSELLING SITUATION

- What is your problem?
- What does *God* say about your problem?
- What does God say *to do* about your problem?

QUESTION 1: WHAT IS YOUR PROBLEM?

What you are looking for:

1. Ordinary sins
2. Patterns
3. Specific information

QUESTION 2: WHAT DOES *GOD* SAY ABOUT YOUR PROBLEM?

Six Steps of Reinterpretation

1. Using the notes you took while asking questions, identify the counselee's main problems.
2. Label each problem with the appropriate biblical name, calling it what God would call it.
 - Mark 7:21-23 (*from within, out of the heart of men, proceed ...*)
 - Romans 1:28-32 (general expressions of depravity)

- Matthew 22:37-39 (love God; love neighbour)
 - Galatians 5:19-21 (the fruits of the flesh)
 - 1 Cor 6:9-11 (the Corinthians' pre-conversion behaviours)
 - Ephesians 4:25-32; 5:3-5 (relationship and entertainment sins)
 - Colossians 3:5-17 (relationship sins)
 - 2 Timothy 3:1-5 (last-days behaviour)
 - 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 (the opposite of love)
 - Exodus 20:1-17 (the Ten Commandments)
 - Proverbs (almost every sin imaginable)
 - specific verses on individual sins
3. Jot down key passages that you want to use to address the problem.
 4. Prioritise the problems, deciding in which order to address them.
 5. Explain your biblical interpretation of the problems. If the counselee gives new information, correcting your interpretation based on this further input.
 6. If necessary, do more research on the subject both in the Scripture and in biblically minded books.

QUESTION 3: WHAT DOES GOD SAY *TO DO* ABOUT YOUR PROBLEM?

Ephesians 4:22-24 is always at the centre of the target when you are answering the question, *What does God want you to do about your problem?*

1. *Put off*. What does the counselee need to stop doing or saying?
2. *Be renewed in your mind*. How does the counselee's thinking (his theology, values, attitudes, desires, and expectations) need to change?
3. *Put on*. What is the equal and opposite good the counselee needs to start doing to replace the evil he was doing? (Rom 12:21, "Evil is overcome by good.")