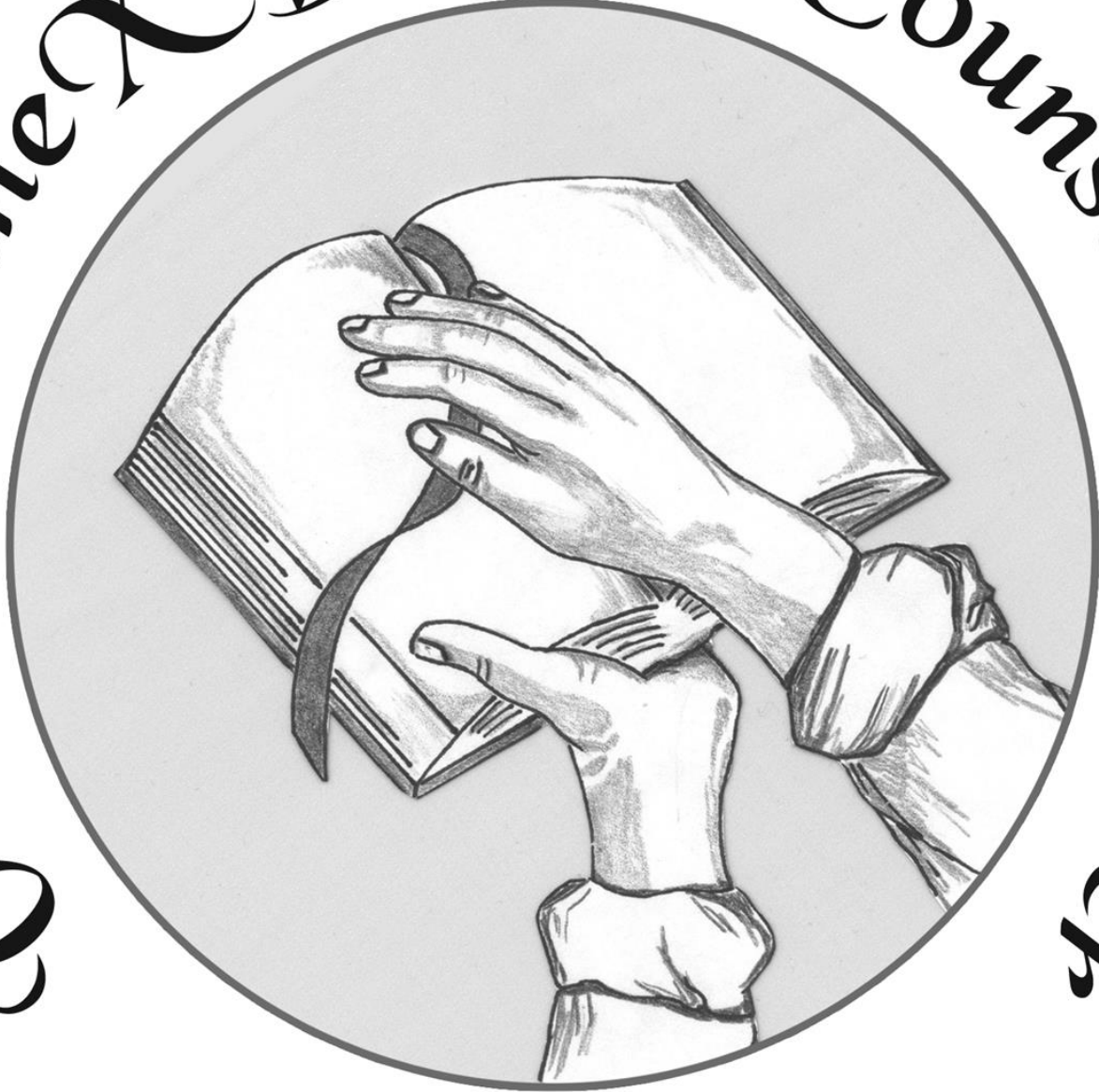


Valley Connect Biblical Counseling Center



Care for the Counselor:
Character of the Counselor

“It is not possible to provide godly counsel without spiritual self-awareness and an obedient lifestyle. Work in the counseling ministry requires an intimate knowledge of God’s Word, sensitivity to the Holy Spirit, a submitted obedience to His prompting, and love for those we are called to serve. To access the supernatural power that we need to be effective, we must be diligent regarding our own conduct, clearing barriers between God and ourselves, and always addressing the sin in our own lives.”

Abercrombie, Ab and Skinner, Kerry. *Wonderful Counselor: A Return to the Truth*. Biblical Counseling Institute. 2007. p.62

¹³ Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. ¹⁴ But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. ¹⁵ This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. ¹⁶ For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. ¹⁷ But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. ¹⁸ And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace. James 3:13-18 (ESV)

The life of sin and condition of disorder which brings most people to us for counseling must be met with wisdom and insight.

Worldly wisdom has been tried and found wanting. Something greater is needed.

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¹⁵ This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. ¹⁶ For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice.

The biblical counselor practices wisdom and insight that comes from God.

⁷ The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction. Proverbs 1:7 (ESV)

¹⁰ The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight. Proverbs 9:10 (ESV)

The biblical counselor practices wisdom and insight that comes from above.

⁶ For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding; ⁷ he stores up sound wisdom for the upright; he is a shield to those who walk in integrity, ⁸ guarding the paths of justice and watching over the way of his saints. Proverbs 2:6-8 (ESV)

The effective counselor is one who expresses in the counseling setting what he or she regularly practices in his or her walk with God.

¹⁷ But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. ¹⁸ And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace. James 3:17-18 (ESV)

Pure

This wisdom recognizes no greater source of counsel to the issues of life than the Word of God revealed and energized through the Spirit of God. Therefore, we resist the temptation to mix in the flawed wisdom of man as we seek to address these life issues.

As counselors we must constantly listen to the Holy Spirit as He checks our heart for impure or unholy thoughts or motives and bring these before the Lord for cleansing.

Peaceable

The counselor has a non-combative demeanor. You resist the temptation to get caught up in the ranting or belligerent spirit of a counselee.

We need to constantly remember that we are engaged in warfare but the people around us, more specifically the counselee in a counseling setting, are not the enemy.

Ephesians 6:12

Gentle

We know serious and sometimes painful steps must be taken to bring about remedy. We see the person in front of us as injured, often frightened, and this many times from “self inflicted” wounds. The remedy is firmly applied yet gently.

²⁸ Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” Matthew 11:28-30 (ESV)

Open to reason

The counselor maintains a teachable spirit. We realize that our preconceived ideas may be wrong. We are open to what God's Spirit reveals to us. We are never swayed away from the truth of God's Word but open to understanding that our biases sometime skew our understanding. This trait helps us be better and more active listeners. This helps us not project our emotions on to another person.

Full of Mercy

Recognize God as the only righteous and rightful Judge. Understand that both you and the person before you deserve condemnation but God desires to extend mercy. Resist the temptation to feel that somehow you are deserving of God's grace since you have not stooped to the depths of sins represented in the life of the counselee.

Full of Mercy

Consider the stance of God who has both the power and authority to condemn yet tirelessly reaches out to His people with mercy.

¹⁷ They refused to obey and were not mindful of the wonders that you performed among them, but they stiffened their neck and appointed a leader to return to their slavery in Egypt. But you are a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and did not forsake them.
Nehemiah 9:17 (ESV) (see Nehemiah 9:16-31)

Full of Good Fruits

The biblical counselor cannot be one who simply proscribes the Word of God as a remedy. We must be examples of what we proscribe. The Word of God must be lived out in our lives in such a way that the fruit of obedience is evident to those who observe our lives. (see Psalm 1; Proverbs 14:14; Matthew 7:15-23; John 15:1-17; Romans 7:4-5; Galatians 5:22-23; Philippians 1:9-11)

Impartial

Our preconceived notions about a person or their sin must not sway our availability to receive an assignment God gives to us nor must it dictate in any way our approach to the counselee. There are different sins that strike each of us as particularly heinous or unimaginable yet we must remember that all people are made in the image of God and loved by Him.

Sincere

As biblical counselors we have a luxury secular counselors do not have. We can and should connect with our counselees on a personal level. There are times, with discernment, it is appropriate to share how we have struggled with some of the same issues our counselee reveals. Many times God brings people to us with similar issues to ours. One part of the discernment here is to be careful not to make this a counseling session about you.

18 And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace. James 3:18 (ESV)

Recognize the amazing opportunity God gives us to take the Word of God and sow it into the lives of people in such a way that a harvest of righteousness springs up and God's peace is established in their hearts.