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DEVELOPING A WOMEN'S BIBLICAL COUNSELING COURSE
AT THE MASTER'S UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN SANTA CLARITA, CALIFORNIA

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PREFACE

This project was completed in large part due to the love and support of many influential people in my life. First, I am thankful that God in His kindness and mercy saved me. It is amazing to look back and see God's faithfulness at every stage in my life. I am grateful He has been preparing me and set me apart for the ministry of biblical counseling.

Second, the Lord blessed me with thirty-one years of marriage to a wonderful man, Sean. His commitment to me and our children is extraordinary. Because of him I stayed encouraged as I went through this process, and because of his sacrifices I was able to pursue my education at Southern Seminary. I praise God for Sean's unconditional love and godly example.

Third, the Lord allowed me to learn from one of the best supervisors, Dr. Stuart Scott. His many years of experience and devotion in biblical counseling is priceless as it has shaped me into the biblical counselor and professor I am today. Much of this project is an expression of his many years of investment in my biblical counseling education.

Fourth, I am indebted to the many professors from whom I had the privilege to learn from and serve with at The Master's University: men like Wayne Mack, Stuart Scott, John Street, Ernie Baker, and Bob Somerville. Their love and enthusiasm for biblical counseling is truly inspiring, and their care and sacrifice toward me as a student was invaluable. To these dear men I owe a lifetime of appreciation. I pray that as I get opportunities to teach others, their example to me will shine through.

Finally, I am thankful to the Lord for the privilege of attending The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary these past four years. Especially to the men and women in

the professional doctoral office who came alongside me and helped me to finish well!

Thank you for your dedication to the Lord and to the students of SBTS.

My hope and prayer is that this project helps the many women with whom I have opportunity to counsel, mentor, and teach and the many women they will counsel. I also pray that God would be glorified as we participate in the ministry of women counseling women.

Shelbi Cullen

Burbank, California

December 2017

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Many women in the church today possess the God-given potential for ministering to other women, but that does not necessarily make them effective biblical counselors. There may also be women in the church today who possess a great knowledge of Scripture, but that too does not automatically mean that they are proficient biblical counselors. To be a skilled biblical counselor requires training. The Women Counseling Women (BC572) course at the Master's University equips and trains women in the basic concepts and distinctive features of woman-to-woman biblical counseling. Students become effective and competent biblical counselors for their local churches and for the glory of God.

Ministry Context

This ministry project took place in the context of The Master's University Graduate Studies Program, which is located in Santa Clarita, California. The Master's University (TMU) has a strong graduate program with an emphasis in biblical counseling that focuses on equipping men and women for excellence in biblical counseling. Graduates of this program receive a Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling (M.A.B.C.). The content of each course hopes to draw attention to the practical skills of counseling without neglecting the solid biblical foundation on which these skills are built. The intended goals are to prepare the student to accurately interpret the Scripture for understanding the thoughts and intentions of the heart, to grasp the complexity and practicality of theology, and to discern how to appropriately apply the Scripture in truth and grace in evangelism, counseling, and discipleship. Upon completion of the M.A.B.C. program, the student

meets the requirements for certification with The Association of Certified Biblical Counselors (ACBC).¹

There are four distinguishing factors of the M.A.B.C. program at The Master's University.² First, the program is focused on Christ-centered counseling. That is to say true biblical counseling is centered around what Christ has done for the believer in His life, death, resurrection, in sending the Holy Spirit, and what He is doing for the believer presently. Second, the program is focused on salvation-centered counseling. In other words, true biblical counseling can only be accomplished by a counselor and counselee who have come to saving faith in Jesus Christ and has a desire to live in obedience to Him. Another distinguishing feature of the M.A.B.C. program is its focus on Bible-centered counseling. Specifically, true biblical counseling comes from a commitment to the sufficiency of the Word of God for understanding and resolving non-physical personal and interpersonal sin-related difficulties of man and suffering due to trials that come their way. The fourth trait of the M.A.B.C. program is its focus on church-centered counseling. Because the church is God's household and the pillar and support of the truth (1 Tim 3:15), it is the instrument He chooses to use in helping His people to put off the old manner of life and to put on the new self (Eph 4:1-32). Therefore, The Master's University prioritizes the local church as the community where lasting change occurs and where pastors and lay leaders are equipped to be skilled biblical counselors.

In the past, the M.A.B.C. program offered a Women Counseling Women (BC572) elective course. The syllabus described the course as one that sought to outline the basic concepts and distinctive features of a woman-to-woman biblical counseling relationship. It focused on the theological foundations of biblical counseling and key

¹Joshua Clutterham, "Graduate Programs," accessed May 25, 2015, <http://www.masters.edu/academics/graduate>.

²The Master's University, "The Master's University 2013-2014 Catalog," accessed May 25, 2015, <http://www.masters.edu/media/580495/Academic%20Catalog%202013-2014.pdf>.

aspects of sanctification. The majority of students who enrolled in this course were women at the end of their M.A.B.C. program and are actively counseling in their local churches.

Regrettably, that course had lost its uniqueness and effectiveness. For example, as stated, the intention of that course was to outline the basic concepts and distinctive features of a woman-to-woman biblical counseling. Instead of addressing issues specific to woman-to-woman counseling, that course incorporated repeated material from other M.A.B.C. courses. This repetition frustrated past students at the end of their programs; it had given the course a remedial atmosphere.

Another example of how that course has lost its effectiveness appears in the required reading. The two textbooks listed on the syllabus do not assist in the student's discernment relating to specific counseling problems or the process of one Christian woman coming alongside another woman for biblical counsel. As a result, students left not as prepared as they ought with regard to future biblical counseling opportunities.

Graduates expressed disappointments with regard to this course such as “not enough content,” “remedial books,” “small-group format,” “too slow to cover material,” and “busy work.” Additionally, some recommendations made by graduates included, “keep the cooperative and collaborative format for part of it,” “improve it by stretching the students in different areas,” and “don't just make it a regurgitation of homework.” Also, “be sure there is a balance in learning the biblical counseling systems as well as counseling out of the riches of Scripture.”³

In summary, many of these disappointments and apparent weaknesses convinced the Department Chair and Director of the Graduate Program that the Women Counseling Women (BC572) course needed to be redeveloped. It was evident that this course struggled to focus on specific counseling problems common to women. Thus, in Spring

³These comments were collected from an evaluation form sent to students via email who attend The Master's University Graduate course, Women Counseling Women—BC572 , in Spring 2014.

of 2017, the M.A.B.C. program offered a redeveloped Women Counseling Women (BC572) course, it proved to be effective, unique, and emblematic of its stated description.

Rationale

The above-mentioned elements indicated that The Master's University Graduate Program was ready to redevelop the Women Counseling Women (BC572) course. First, former students indicated disappointment and had hoped for a class that equipped them better with regard to counseling problems common to women. Therefore, this project met the necessity of equipping future students to biblically counsel others.

Second, because the women who would potentially take this course are at the end of their M.A.B.C. program and are actively counseling, this redeveloped course provided them with the necessary preparation to benefit and have greater impact not only in their biblical counseling relationships, but also in the churches they serve. Through the training of these women, this project sought to partner and support the local church.

Third, because of intentional effort by the Director of Graduate Studies and Department Chair to assure that courses reflect their descriptions, this project sought to address the significant insufficiencies of the Women Counseling Women (BC572) course.

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to redevelop the course known as Women Counseling Women (BC572) for the students enrolled in The Master of Arts Program at The Master's University in Santa Clarita, California.

Goals

The development of the Women's Counseling Women course was guided by four goals:

1. The first goal was to assess the satisfaction of past graduate students who completed this course.

2. The second goal was to develop curricula and ten lectures focused on the specific dynamics of counseling women.
3. The third goal was to increase the skill and knowledge of the students enrolled in the M.A.B.C. program by teaching the revised thirteen-week Women Counseling Women (BC572) course
4. The fourth goal was to revise the curriculum.

Research Methodology

The research for this project included a pre-course survey, a post-course survey, an evaluation rubric, and a post-assessment tool. Four goals determined the effectiveness and uniqueness of this project.

The first goal of this project was to assess the satisfaction of past graduate students who completed this course. It was measured by administering a web-based survey to 20 female students who took this course between 2009 and 2015.⁴ An email was sent to each student with a request to complete the web survey.⁵ A request to complete the survey was sent once a month over a three-month period. The survey evaluated the strengths and weaknesses of the current course and whether or not the participants felt equipped to counsel other women. This goal was considered successfully met when at least 50 percent of the 20 students who took this course between 2009 and 2015 completed the surveys and the data has been analyzed giving a more accurate representation of the level of satisfaction of past students.⁶

The second goal of this project was to develop curricula and ten 60-minute lectures focused on the specific dynamics of counseling women in issues such as ecclesiology, team counseling in marriage and family cases, counseling alongside the pastor, and counseling particular sin issues common to women, and training other women

⁴See appendix 1.

⁵I used Google Forms, which is an online program that helps to make easy-to-create surveys. Google Forms, accessed July 15, 2017, <https://docs.google.com/forms/u/0/?tgif=d>.

⁶I received back 8 surveys out of 20 sent, giving me a 40 percent return.

counselors. This goal was measured by an expert panel, which included the Academic Dean, the Director of Graduate Studies, and the Director of Christian Counseling at Reformed Theological Seminary using a rubric to evaluate biblical faithfulness, teaching methodology, scope, and applicability of the curriculum.⁷ This goal was successfully met as a minimum of 90 percent of the indicators on the rubric were at or above the satisfactory levels.

The third goal of this project was to increase the knowledge of the women enrolled in the M.A.B.C. program by teaching the newly designed Women Counseling Women (BC572) course. This goal was measured by administering a pre and post-survey that measured the change in course knowledge.⁸ This goal was successfully met because the t-test for dependent samples demonstrated a positive statistically significant difference in the pre and post-survey scores. The t-test for dependent samples used compared pre-session scores and post-session scores of the same individual. This measurement indicated whether or not there was any difference after redeveloping the course and whether or not the enrolled students who completed the course came away with satisfaction and increased knowledge.

The fourth goal was to revise the curriculum. This goal was measured by the Student Learning Outcomes designed by the biblical counseling faculty to assess the knowledge, spiritual growth, and skill of the students at the end of her course. Using this assessment tool, an evaluation was made of the students' confidence in the sufficiency and authority of Scripture for handling personal and interpersonal problems of life, the students' knowledge in looking at women and their problems in a distinctly biblical way, the students' integration of counseling practices and solid biblical theology, and the students' understanding of counseling and its necessity in the local church. The goal was

⁷See appendix 2.

⁸See appendix 3.

successfully met because the course evaluations were completed and the curriculum was revised to address the weaknesses identified by the evaluation.⁹

Definitions and Delimitations

Biblical counseling. This term refers to the process where the Word of God is related individually to those struggling with personal sin or those suffering due to some difficulties they are currently facing.¹⁰ In essence, biblical counseling is a theological task. However, biblical counseling is also a personal ministerial task because one is helping others find biblical solutions to their problems.¹¹

Student learning outcomes. This term refers to particular program statements that describe what learners know and are able to do when they graduate from their program. The program standards are set by the educational institution.

Women. This term refers to female students enrolled in the M.A.B.C. course Women Counseling Women (BC572) at The Master's University. These women may be married or single. Their ages may range from 22 to 70 years old.

Church. This term refers to an assembly of people who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ and are immediately placed by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual Body, the church (1 Cor 12:12-13), often referred to as born-again believers (Eph 2:11-3:6). Jesus Christ would be acknowledged as the Supreme Authority of the church. (1 Cor 11:3). However, there would be men within a local church body who would meet biblical qualifications as laid out in 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; and 1 Peter 5:1-5. These men would be set apart to serve under Christ and over the assembly and given

⁹See appendix 4.

¹⁰Faith Ministries, "What Is Biblical Counseling," accessed July 8, 2015 2015, www.faithlafayette.org/counseling.

¹¹Heath Lambert, *The Biblical Counseling Movement after Adams* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012).

biblical titles such as elder, bishop, pastor, and deacon. The local church gathers regularly to worship God, be instructed from the Word of God (2 Tim 2:2, 15; 3:16-117), to fellowship with one another (Acts 2:47), to keeping the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper (Luke 22:19; Acts 2:38-42), to employ their gifts for the mutual edification of the body (Rom 12:6-8), to advance the Great Commission (Matt 28:19-20), and to church discipline for those who are habitual sinning members (Matt 18:15-22).¹²

Three delimitations were placed on the project. First, the project was primarily focused on women who come alongside and biblically counsel other women within their local church context, but this project could also be helpful for those working in para-church ministries such as crisis pregnancy centers and women's shelters. The project included the equipping and training of women to biblically counsel other women struggling with particular sin issues, but it did not address every issue common to women. Second, the project was confined to a thirty-week time frame, which gave adequate time to prepare and teach ten lectures and conduct the post-course survey after the course is completed. Finally, this project was limited to equipping and training women in The Master's University M.A.B.C. program to enrich their role as biblical counselors and not the men of the M.A.B.C. program.

In conclusion, the research for this project included a pre-course survey, a post-course survey, an evaluation rubric, and a post-assessment tool. In addition, four stated goals determined the effectiveness and uniqueness of this project. In the following chapter, I include the biblical foundation for women counseling women and a brief description and definition of these particular areas of struggle: (1) bitterness, (2) anxiety, (3) depression, (4) homosexuality, (5) sexual and verbal abuse, (6) perfectionism, (7) self-image/self esteem, (8) people-pleasing, and (10) counseling and ecclesiology such as

¹²Grace Community Church, "What We Teach," accessed October 23, 2015, <https://www.gracechurch.org/About/Distinctives/What%20We%20Teach>.

teaching the roles of female counselors in a church context and how they relate well to church leadership.¹³

¹³All aforementioned research instruments were performed in compliance with and approved by the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Research Ethics Committee prior to use in the ministry project.

CHAPTER 2

THE BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR WOMEN COUNSELING WOMEN

Christian women should be taught and equipped to counsel other women who are struggling with sin or who are suffering from the effects of sin with truth from God's Word.

Teach and Train

In his letter to Titus, the apostle Paul had a two-fold reason for leaving his friend and partner in the ministry on the Island of Crete. First, Titus was appointed to straighten out the things that remained to be done in the work of organizing the various churches. Second, Titus was to appoint qualified men to the office of elder (1:5, 11, 13; 2:1).

As part of putting in order what remained, Titus was exhorted to teach what is appropriate for sound doctrine to five groups of people within the church; the second group included the older women (Titus 2:3). There is no age specified for the older women but the word Paul uses in the original Greek means aged or elderly (*presbytis*).¹ So it can be assumed that the older women he is referring to have at least been married long enough to have insight into marriage or old enough to have passed through the season of raising children, or are getting close to it. In New Testament times, older women served in the church in numerous ways. In Titus, Paul mentions that one of their responsibilities was to teach and encourage younger women in the things of the Lord. However, they also

¹James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, 1997), s.v. "πρεσβυτις."

ministered to each other and to women in the church of any age, single, married, or widowed.²

These older women in the Cretan churches were “to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers, or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good and so train the younger women in the church” (2:3-4). As spiritually mature women who modeled godliness, their primary goal would be to come alongside younger women and commit to teaching them what they themselves had been taught in an effort to help the younger women grow spiritually, so that the Word of God would not be reviled (2:4).

A woman will be exposed to many “teachers” in her life time that give her advice on many things, but the idea Paul has is for older seasoned women in the church to “teach what is good” to the younger women. The Greek work Paul uses is *kalodidaskalos*. In the context of Titus 2:3-4, the older women should teach the younger women what is holy and godly.³

According to Titus 2:4-5, part of teaching what was holy and godly was training young women to love their husbands, love their children, be sensible, pure, workers at home, and submissive to their husbands. That teaching was to be one of the primary ministries of the older women in the church at Crete: to train a generation of young women to love and fear the Lord through modeling and through the teaching of sound doctrine, rather than giving out worldly advice.

Given the culture at the time, the teaching and training of these younger women more than likely took place in the private ministry of each woman’s home. However, in the church today, this type of teaching and training can be applied in a private ministry, such as discipleship, or formal discipleship, such as biblical counseling. In addition, it has adapted away from the home to be a public ministry, such as formal teaching to a

²John MacArthur, *Titus, MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody, 1996), 75.

³Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), s.v. “καλοδιδασκάλους.”

group of women who desire to learn the Scriptures in a deeper way and apply it practically in their lives.

In each case, the Word of God is related individually for those women wanting to grow spiritually, women struggling with personal sin, or women suffering due to some trials they are currently facing.

Women Counseling Women Struggling with Bitterness: Ephesians 4:31-32, Acts 8:9-23

One particular struggle that may be evident in a woman's life is the sin of bitterness. The Greek word Paul uses for bitterness is *pikria*. The biblical definition means to have a state of sharp, intense resentment.⁴

It is important to note that the Ephesian letter is meant for Christians (Eph 1:1). The apostle Paul spent nearly three years in Ephesus, where he planted a strong church dedicated to equipping the believers in the area as well as evangelizing the residents of Asia (Acts 18:10). His intention was that this letter would be circulated to the believers in Ephesus and in other churches in Asia Minor. Thus, its message is for the church everywhere.⁵

In the first three chapters of this letter, Paul focuses on doctrine. He transitions from his doctrinal teaching to the application of that teaching in chapters 4-6. This application is marked by the transition word "therefore" in Ephesians 4:1. The apostle Paul gives believers a command in light of their great salvation. The command is to walk in a manner worthy of their calling. This walk should reflect certain attitudes of newness of life such as humility, gentleness, patience, love, unity, holiness, purity, and forgiveness (Eph 4:2; 3; 32; 5:1).

⁴Louw and Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon*, s.v. "πικρία."

⁵R. C. Sproul, *The Purpose of God: An Exposition of Ephesians* (Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus, 1994), 11.

By the time the female reader reaches Ephesians 4:17, she will observe Paul contrasting the old life before Christ with the new life in Christ. Paul argues that because of the believer's new found faith in Christ, she is no longer to live a life connected with her old pagan lifestyle (Eph 4:17-19). Rather she is to live her life as an imitator of Christ (Eph 4:20-21). She is to put off the old self connected to the first Adam and to put on the new self, which is connected to the new Adam, Christ, whose nature was imparted to the believer when she became born-again (Eph 4:22-24). For example, Paul writes that the believer is to "let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice" (Eph 4:31). Paul is pointing out that bitterness is part of the old self and is not reflective of one who has committed her life to Christ (Eph 4:21). Instead, they are to "be becoming kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other even as and just as God in Christ forgave you."⁶

The same word for bitterness is also used in Acts 8:9-23. In this section of Acts 8, Simon the Magician has just observed apostles Peter and John laying hands on new believers so that they would receive the Holy Spirit. In his pride, Simon offered the apostles money because he wanted to have the same privilege as they had (Acts 8:18-19). However, Peter rebuked him and called him to repentance because his heart was not right before the Lord. Peter told Simon that he perceived in him "a gall of *bitterness*" (8:23).

Although the word Peter uses for bitterness is the same word Paul used in Ephesians 4:32, in this context it is referring to extreme wickedness. There is no reason to believe that Simon was a believer at this point. Peter explained to Simon that if he would repent, God may forgive the intent of his heart. If not, he would remain as one filled with the gall of bitterness and held captive to the bonds of sin (8:23).

In the Old Testament, bitterness was evident among many based on their adverse personal circumstances or their external circumstances. For example, after Job complained

⁶Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), s.v. "Eph 4:31."

to his friends and readers throughout chapter 9, he turned to God and addressed his complaint to Him by saying, “I loathe my life, I will give free utterance to my complaint; I will speak in *bitterness* of my soul” (Job 10:1). From the beginning, Job was described as a blameless and upright man who loved the Lord. He had seven sons and three daughters, seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, and a large number of servants—he was considered one of the greatest men of all the people of the east. However, the Lord allowed Satan to test Job (Job 1:1-8). By chapter 10, Job lost just about everything—from material possessions to his health. These were the personal adverse circumstances Job found himself in, and according to his words, he loathed his life.

The Hebrew word for *bitterness* in Job 10:1 is *mār*. It translates as intense distress or a feeling of anger and resentment, which is caused particularly by a perceived unfairness in suffering or by an adverse circumstances.⁷ This same Hebrew word is used by the widow Naomi, who was forced to return to Bethlehem from Moab because her husband and sons have all died. When she arrived, she told those who greeted her to call her *Mara* because she believed the Lord had dealt *bitterly* with her (Ruth 1:20).

It is important to emphasize to the women who come alongside other women struggling with bitterness that bitterness is considered a serious sin against God. Thus, it will be important to call them to repentance. This can be done lovingly as they are pointed back to Jesus and His Word and reminded that because they have been chosen, adopted, and redeemed by God (Eph 1:5), they now have the capacity to abandon the sin of bitterness and live a life set apart for Christ. They are no longer enslaved to walking as they once walked in the futility of their mind and in hardness of heart. Rather they can put off bitterness, which is connected to the old self and belongs to her former life, be

⁷James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Hebrew (Old Testament)* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, 1997), s.v. “מָר.”

renewed in the spirit of their minds with the Word of God and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness” (Eph 4:22-24).

**Women Counseling Women Struggling with Anxiety:
Luke 10:38-42, Luke 12:22-34, and Philippians 4:6-9**

Another struggle that may come up in a woman’s life is the sin of *anxiety*.

Teaching what is good can include a woman coming alongside another woman struggling with anxiety and helping her in a theological and practical sense to understand how a Christian is commanded to “put off anxiety while choosing the good part, which will not be taken away from her” (Phil 4:6; Luke 10:42). Ultimately, she will need to learn how to have a heart of belief and trust that expresses itself through gratitude, right biblical thinking, and right actions (Phil 4:6-9).

Martha, a close friend to Jesus, found herself struggling with anxiety. Luke writes,

Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet and listened to his teaching. But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, “Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me.” But the Lord answered her, “Martha, Martha, you are *anxious* and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her. (Luke 10:38-42, emphasis added)

Two sisters, Martha and Mary, lived with their brother, Lazarus, in Bethany, a city about one and a half miles east of Jerusalem. On this particular day, Jesus was passing through and came to Martha’s house at her invitation. This invitation would not have been unusual because the relationship that Jesus had with this family was one of love and closeness (John 11:5). Most commentators believe that Jesus’ disciples most likely accompanied him on this visit. Therefore, Martha probably had to get food together for Jesus and the twelve disciples. Thus, she had considerable preparation to make.⁸

⁸Jack Hughes, “The One Thing Necessary,” *Calvary Bible Church*, September 9, 2007, accessed March 26, 2016, https://www.calvarybiblechurch.org/site/cpage.asp?sec_id=180007650&cpage_id=180020121&secure=&dlyear=0&dlicat=The+Gospel+of+Luke&index=120.

Martha and her siblings loved and believed in the Lord (John 11:27). In this setting, Martha desired to serve others and be a blessing. Her servant's heart and her desire to practice hospitality is evident and is commendable. However, at some point, she went from joyfully serving others to being burdened and anxious over the situation. Verse 40 gives insight as to why; she was "distracted" with much serving.⁹ Although Martha was the one that welcomed Christ to her home for a meal, somewhere in the process of preparing and serving, she was pulled away with the task at hand, which set the stage for temptation toward anxiety. Every day, believers face similar concerns that can be dealt with righteously or unrighteously. In the midst of those concerns, the believer, by faith, turns to follow God's Word and deal with them rightly or becomes anxious in unbelief.

In Martha's case, she succumbed to the pressure of the culture, the number of people, and the approaching deadline of mealtime and Jesus warns that she is *anxious* and troubled about it.¹⁰ However, Jesus had not imposed these things on her—Martha imposed this pressure on herself. She was intently concerned about the future dinner, and in the process of her care and concern, she lost concern for Christ.

The same word for *anxious* appears in Luke 12:22 when Jesus said to his disciples, "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat, nor about your body, what you will put on." Instead, they were to seek His kingdom, and all those things in life that they were so intently concerned about, like food and clothing, would be added unto them (v. 31). The future was not in their hands, and becoming *anxious* over it could not add even one cubit to their life. The right course was to seek first the kingdom, and God would see that all temporal needs would be met.

In Luke 10:42, Jesus communicates the same truth to Martha: "But one thing is necessary, Mary has chosen the good portion, which shall not be taken away from her."

⁹Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, The New American Commentary, vol. 24 (Nashville: Broadman & Holmes, 1992), 321.

¹⁰Hughes, "The One Thing Necessary."

During that same dinner, Mary was seated at the Lord's feet, listening to His Word. She was not distracted, but well content to sit at His feet, taking on the posture of a disciple. Mary's heart at that moment was actually in the right place. She was focusing all of her attention on Christ and He was ministering to her.

On the other hand, Martha was *anxious* and troubled. Her anxiousness over the situation was further complicated when she burst into the room and interrupted Jesus's teaching, humiliating Mary in front of everyone, and accusing Jesus of not caring (Luke 10:40). There is every reason to believe Martha had great intentions. She loved the Lord, but the text implies that the moment she stopped listening to Jesus and made something other than Him the focus of her heart and attention, she became *anxious*.

The apostle Paul uses the same word for *anxiety* in Philippians 4:8. Paul commands the Philippians, "do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your prayer requests be made known to God."

One such circumstance that the Philippians may have been tempted to be *anxious* about was the fact that at the writing of this letter, Paul was imprisoned in Rome. This church and Paul were very close, they had a mutual love for one another, so it would make sense that they would have great concern over his welfare—so much so that they sent one of their own congregants, Epaphroditus to minister to his needs. However, even this circumstance may have tempted the church to become *anxious* because Epaphroditus fell ill, almost to the point of death during his visit (2:24-28).

Another area of concern that may have tempted the church to become *anxious* comes in the near context of verse 4:6. Apparently, two prominent Christian women of the church were being exhorted by Paul to resolve a dispute between them (4:2). This problem was so significant that Paul had to instill the help of others in the church (4:3). In light of these circumstances, the believers were encouraged toward peace by rejoicing in their salvation in Christ (4:4), letting their gentleness be known to all men as God was near (4:5), and not being anxious about anything (4:6). Although Paul clearly exhorts the

church not to be *anxious*, he does not leave them there. Instead he directs the church at Philippi, and ultimately all believers, to pray with a heart of gratitude (4:5), to have right biblical thinking (4:8), and to have the right actions (4:9).

Women who are struggling with anxiety need to be lovingly admonished to put off their anxiety by casting their cares upon the Lord, just as Martha was directed by Christ Himself, and to pray, think, and do, as Paul points out in Philippians 4, for the glory of God.

**Women Counseling Women Struggling with Depression:
Psalm 38; 1 Samuel 1; 2 Corinthians 1:8-9a;
4:8-10a; Romans 5:2-5**

Another struggle that may come up in a woman's life is depression. Most women experience depression at some point in their lives, which can be attributed to several causes. Jay Adams states,

Almost anything can be at the root of the counselee's depression: a recent illness in which he gets behind in his work, hormonal changes, a reversal of his fortunes, the consequences of simple negligence, guilt over a particular sin, self-pity arising from jealousy or a disadvantageous turn of events, bad feeling resulting from resentment, and worry. The important fact to remember is that depression does not result directly from any one of these factors, but rather comes from a cyclical process in which the initial problem is mishandled in such a way that it is enlarged in downward helical spirals that eventually plunge one into despair. The downward cycle of sin moves from a problem to a faulty, sinful response, thereby causing an additional complicating problem which is met by an additional sinful response.¹¹

Teaching what is good can include one woman coming alongside another woman struggling with depression and helping her in a theological and practical sense what is at the root of her depression.

For example, her depression might be attributed to the covering up of sin. Covering up of sin seemed to be the root cause of David's depression as described in Psalm 38. He likens himself as one who staggered around with arrows sunk deep in his body as God's hand was continually pressing upon him (v. 2). He states, "There is no

¹¹Jay Adams, *The Christian Counselor's Manual: The Practice of Nouthetic Counseling* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973), 375.

health in my bones because of sin. For my iniquities have gone over my head; they are like a heavy burden, they are too heavy for me” (vv. 3-4). As a result, David was “utterly bowed down and prostrate; all the day I go about mourning. For my sides are filled with burning, and there is no soundness in my flesh. I am feeble and crushed; I groan because of the tumult of my heart” (vv. 6–8).

The word David uses for “mourn” is the Hebrew word *qadar*. The definition means to feel sadness and grief.¹² In addition, he says he has “tumult of heart,” which is a synonym for depression. It means sorrow and affliction.”¹³

David’s denial of his sin, a refusal to confess it and make it right with God, plummeted him into a state of depression. He brings this up again in Psalm 32 when he covered up his sin of lust, adultery, and murder (2 Sam 11:1-27). He said that when he kept silent and did not confess his sin, he was weakened physically and was grieved inwardly (v.3). As a consequence he experienced depression until he confessed his sin and experienced God’s forgiveness (v. 4-5).

Depression not only manifests due to unconfessed sin, it can also be the result of great personal suffering, similar to what Hannah experienced in 1 Samuel 1. She lived during the time of the Judges, one of the darkest times of Israel—often described as the backslidden era. Nevertheless, Hannah and her husband Elkanah faithfully traveled to the temple of the Lord every year to worship and offer sacrifices. Scripture portrays them as a devout family living in a difficult dismal time in Israel’s history (1 Sam 1:3-7).

In addition to Hannah’s difficult circumstances within her community, her home life was extremely troubled and trying. First, Hannah’s husband Elkanah was a polygamist; he had two wives, Hannah and Peninah (1 Sam 1:2). Second, the narrative explains that the second wife, Peninah, had children, but Hannah had none (v. 2). Elkanah was likely an example in the Old Testament of one who took a second wife out of a lack

¹²Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages: Hebrew*, s.v. “קָדַר.”

¹³*Ibid.*, s.v. “תְּהִימוֹת.”

of faith because his first wife was not able to bear him children (cf. Gen. 16:2-3; 30:3-4, 9). The relationship between Hannah and Penninah was not good. Verse 6 reports, “And her rival used to provoke her grievously to irritate her, because the Lord had closed her womb.”

This adverse situation gives the reader great insight into Hannah’s suffering. First, she lived in a society where a woman’s identity is found in bearing children to her husband; thus, her sterility made her extremely vulnerable to ridicule. Second, the other wife whom Hannah had to live with made life extremely difficult for her reminding her each day of her failure to live out her purpose. Scripture gives a glimpse into how she responded: “As often as she went up to the house of the Lord, she used to provoke her. Therefore Hannah wept and would not eat . . . she was deeply *distressed* and prayed to the LORD and wept bitterly” (1 Sam 1:7, 10, emphasis added). The Hebrew word used for “distressed” is *marnepes*, which means to be unhappy, or to have distress because of great personal suffering.¹⁴ Despite this, wisely, Hannah sought the Lord for help.

David and Hannah are not the only people in the Bible who experienced depression, the apostle Paul did as well. In the book of Acts and the Epistles, there were many times when Paul experienced pain and suffering. For example, he writes to the Church in Corinth:

For we do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. . . . We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus. (2 Cor 1:8-9a; 4:8-10a).

According to R. Kent Hughes,

Paul had had multiple life-threatening experiences: the stoning, the five beatings that each took him to within an inch of his life, multiplied dangers and shipwrecks. But this affliction in Asia was the most damaging and debilitating. An inexorable, paralyzing weight had fallen on him in Asia, and there was no exit.¹⁵

¹⁴Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages: Hebrew*, “מַרְנֶפֶס.”

¹⁵R. Kent Hughes, *2 Corinthians: Power in Weakness* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2006), 31.

Paul faced a personal adverse circumstance, and he felt the weight of it, just as many women do facing their own extreme challenges in life—they often “feel” as if they have no hope. Nevertheless, Paul, despite his many trials, was an example of one who kept his eyes on Jesus. In Romans 5:2-5 he writes,

We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us. (Rom 5:2-5)

The suffering and pain that Paul suffered throughout his ministry did not seem to weigh him down. Rather, he became an example of one who fixed his eyes on Christ and always knew that God had a bigger plan for his life, even in the midst of his suffering (Rom 8:28-29).

When there is an opportunity to come alongside women who are struggling with depression, whether it be the result of sin or personal suffering—it is important to point them back to the Lord, and to teach them how to act on what God says in his Word, not to act on their feelings. David, Hannah, and Paul did not model depression throughout their lives, rather, they became models of trust and faith in the Lord.

If a woman is covering up sin, it will be important to help her recognize this by taking her to the Scriptures and to have her read Psalm 38, confess her sin to the Lord as David did, and begin to live by faith each day for the glory of God (Prov 28:13; 1 Cor 10:31).

If she is facing personal suffering, it will be important to help her to follow Hannah’s example of seeking God’s help through prayer and to cast her anxieties upon Him. Then she can look to Paul’s example. Although he faced great adversity at times, God continued to give him the right amount of grace to face his challenges. God was conforming Paul into the image of Christ, which is something God does for every believer as they keep their eyes fixed on Jesus and walk in faith and obedience each day (Phil 4:13,

2 Cor 12:8-10, Rom 8:28-29, Phil 1:6). Each case exemplifies for the depressed believer that when they seek God, what follows is a new sense of hope and trust in God.

**Women Counseling Women Struggling with
Homosexuality: Genesis 19:1-29, Leviticus
18:22, and Romans 1:24-27**

Another struggle that may be evident in a woman's life is the sin of homosexuality or same-sex attraction. Teaching what is good can include coming alongside another woman and helping her to understand biblically how God views homosexuality through the lens of his Word. The Bible is clear that homosexuality is a sin, thus hope can be offered to her because God forgives sin and she can be forgiven of her sin (1 Cor 6:11).

Reading about homosexual behavior in the Bible, one will find that it is always a negative reference. In Genesis 19:1-29, when the men of Sodom desired to have sex with the men visiting Lot and his family, God viewed it as an abomination. As a result, He destroyed the people and the city. Only Lot, his wife, and daughters survived (cf. Ezek 16:50). In Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, God also prohibited men to lie with other men. This too was viewed as an abomination to the Lord.

In the New Testament, the apostle Paul gives even more insight into this sin showing the heart of homosexuality. He writes in Romans 1:25-27:

For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever, Amen. For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

Paul singles out homosexuality as a “dishonorable passion” and connects it to a suppression of the truth of God (v. 25), idolatry (v. 25), a misuse of the created design for sexual functioning (v. 26), results from a passionate lust (v. 27), and will result in a due penalty

(v. 27).¹⁶ Furthermore, homosexuality is a violation of God’s law (1 Tim 1:10), and those who continue to practice it will not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor 6:9).

After biblically defining homosexuality as a sin, it is important to inspire hope by pointing out that any sin can be overcome through the power of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:9-11). The woman who struggles with homosexuality and has repented may also need to understand the concept of total restructuring. Restructuring is the practice of overcoming a life dominating sin by taking stock of many areas in one’s life and seeking to conform each area to the glory of God. Otherwise, frustration and failure may follow. Over time, by God’s grace and mercy, this woman can be rescued through repentance, and faith using the process of biblical change (2 Tim 3:16-17, 1 Cor 6:11, Eph 5:1-2).

**Women Counseling Women Struggling with
Perfectionism: Galatians 3:3,
Matthew 23:27-28**

Teaching what is good can also include a woman coming alongside another woman struggling with perfectionism and helping her to understand, in a theological and practical sense, how to “put off” a heart that leans toward human self-effort, and to “put-on” a heart that places her confidence and dependence upon the Holy Spirit to sanctify.

Paul wrote a letter to the Galatian church addressing a very similar struggle. In it he rebukes them by saying, “Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?” (Gal 3:3). Paul meant this as a harsh reproof because the Galatians were acting thoughtlessly! The Galatians had begun so well with their life in the Spirit, but now it appeared they were influenced by false teaching that sought out spiritual maturity through adding practices to their standing in Christ or their own self-

¹⁶Tom Maxham, *Coming Out: Compassion and Truth for Freedom from Homosexuality* (Escondido, CA: IBCD, 2015), 25.

effort.¹⁷ Consequently, because the Galatian believers were not well-grounded in their faith, they were being led astray by undisciplined thinking and a careless theology.

The word *flesh* in verse 3 refers to confidence in one's autonomy and self-serving nature versus a spirit of dependence upon and submission to God's rule.¹⁸ Paul uses the same word in Philippians when he talks about having every reason to have confidence in the flesh (Phil 3:3-6). Having confidence in the flesh was apparent in the life of the Galatians, so Paul admonished them for leaning toward human self-effort and abandoning their dependence upon the Holy Spirit for spiritual growth instead.

Jesus addressed a similar issue in Matthew 23:27-28. He said to the religious leaders of his day,

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness. So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

Jesus called the teachers of the Law and the Pharisees whitewashed tombs because they appeared beautiful to the people around them on the outside as they held to a type of religious conformity; however, on the inside they were corrupt and decaying—they were actually full of hypocrisy and wickedness. Again, like the Galatians, they were trying to earn favor with God through their good works. This practice was detestable to God, so Jesus denounces it.

In like manner, believers who struggle with perfectionism are falling into the same trap. They start well, believing by faith in the finished work of Christ for salvation, but end up adding their own works. This attitude can manifest in their life in many ways. For example, they may struggle at wanting to be the best at everything, having very high expectations of themselves or others being overly upset when they make a mistake, or a fear of failure. They also struggle with not looking to God as the standard.

¹⁷Timothy George, *Galatians*, The New American Commentary, vol. 30 (Nashville: Broadman and Holmes, 1994), 212.

¹⁸Ibid.

When there is an opportunity to come alongside a woman who is struggling with perfectionism, it is important to point her back to the Lord and his Word and to help her develop a dependence upon the Lord. David gives an important example of what this attitude looks like in Psalm 25 and 34. In it, he describes putting his sole trust and boast in God alone (Ps 25:2, 34:2). David also looks to God alone to save him out of trouble and desires to know God's truth and his ways (Ps 27:5, 34:4). Both Psalms call the saints to find their refuge in God and to fear him alone.

**Women Counseling Women Struggling with
Pleasing People: 1 Thessalonians 2:4,
Galatians 1:10, Colossians 3:22**

Teaching what is good will at times include coming alongside another woman struggling with pleasing-people and helping her to understand, in a theological and practical sense, how to “put off a heart that seeks to be seen and approved by man and to put-on a heart that has as its fondest ambition to please the Lord.” The apostle Paul is a great example of one who desired to please the Lord above all.

After Paul left Philippi, he, along with Silas and Timothy, came to the city of Thessalonica. Paul immediately visited the local synagogue and began to reason with the Jews from the Scriptures. Many Jews, Gentiles, and leading women came to Christ that day through their evangelistic effort (Acts 17:2, 5). Many Jews were jealous and did not appreciate what Paul was doing, so they created an uproar and caused Paul and his team to have to leave by night (Acts 17:10). Later, when Paul wrote the letter to the Thessalonians, he recalls that event and said that although it came with persecution, his coming to them was not in vain; rather, God had provided him the boldness to continue to share the gospel with others even though he had been shamefully treated: “But just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts” (1 Thess 2:4). According to Paul, his motivation for declaring the gospel amidst much conflict and persecution was a desire to please God, and not man.

Unfortunately, many Christians' hearts are more inclined toward pleasing man than pleasing and fearing the Lord. Paul addresses this issue in his letter to the Colossians and the Ephesians. He admonishes slaves who struggle with people pleasing: "Bondservants, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye-service, as people pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord" (Col 3:22, cf. Eph 6:5-6).

Paul was pointing out emphatically that the conduct of the slave was to be one of obedience in everything, but not just when they were being watched, or for the sole purpose of pleasing earthly masters. Their first duty as a Christian was to wholeheartedly please and fear the Lord. The Greek word Paul uses in Colossians is *anthropareskos*. In essence, this adjective in the Greek language means to "fawn over man."¹⁹

A Christian woman struggling with people pleasing may be evidenced through an overly judgmental spirit, a sarcastic attitude, frustration, impatience, and being easily offended. She may spend a lot of time comparing herself to others, wondering what others think of her, and being scared of conflict or confrontation.²⁰ Women who struggle with people-pleasing place people much higher than God, gain value and acceptance from other people, and run to people instead of Christ. Thus, people-pleasing is not a Christian virtue, rather it is connected to the flesh and can become an idol.

Consequently, when there is an opportunity to come alongside a woman who struggles with people pleasing, it will be important to get at the root of the issue and help her understand that essentially she is looking to other people to be her rock, stronghold, and refuge, rather than the Lord. This attitude is contrary to the Christians' calling, which is to strive toward pleasing the Lord as their fondest ambition (2 Cor. 5:9).

¹⁹Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages: Greek*, s.v. "ἀνθρωπάρεσκος."

²⁰"A Testimonial: How Biblical Counseling Helped a Person Struggling with Low 'Self-Esteem'-the Idol of People-Pleasing," July 12, 2012, accessed March 16, 2016, <http://biblicalcounselingcoalition.org/2012/07/30/how-biblical-counseling-helped-a-person-struggling-with-low-self-esteem/>.

One way to help her put off a heart of people-pleasing and put-on a heart of fearing God is to have her read and study Psalm 18:1-3. David, who expresses gratitude toward the Lord for deliverance from his enemy writes,

I love you, O LORD, my strength. The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies. (Ps 18:1-3)

David's example exhibits a high view of God and teaches about dependence upon the Lord, even in great times of trial. First, David proclaims that he loves the Lord; he recognizes that it is God's mercy who rescued him from danger (v. 1). Second, David acknowledges that God is like a Rock and Fortress, which points to God's stability and being like a high place of refuge where David finds deliverance (v. 2). Finally, when David is in trouble, he cries out to the Lord for help (v. 3).

Having the woman who struggles with people-pleasing read through this passage, and then examining her heart and asking herself important questions, like what her fortresses and refuges are in various situations, will help to draw her out and to recognize how enslaved she is to people-pleasing. The next step will be confession of sin, and turning away from that idol toward learning how to fear and bring glory to the Lord in her life day by day.

Women Counseling Women Struggling with a Sexual Abuse Background: 2 Samuel 13:1-22

Teaching what is good can also include coming alongside another woman suffering with the effects of *sexual abuse*. In the Bible, sin and suffering, like sexual abuse, are the results of the fall. Because of the fall, all experience pain, suffering, corruption, and death. According to RAINN, it is documented that 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 5 boys will endure sexual abuse of some kind by the time they reach the age of 18.²¹ Sadly, someone the person knows commits 4 out of 5 assaults. This crime takes place in all communities

²¹RAINN, "Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network," 2009, accessed March 16, 2016, <https://www.rainn.org/statistics>.

and crosses all socio-economic barriers. It is estimated 60 million survivors of sexual assault live in the United States and many are sitting in churches still suffering from its effects.²²

This type of violence is not just isolated to contemporary society, it has been going on for centuries. Even God records in the pages of Scripture a very violent instance of rape against a young girl by the name of Tamar who was sexually assaulted by her brother. Her story is recorded in 2 Samuel 13 and is seen through her eyes. Tamar was King David's daughter, Absalom's full-blood sister, beautiful, and a virgin (vv. 1-2). Chances are she was also very young.

The other brother listed in Tamar's story is Amnon. He is her half-brother and is King David's oldest son (v. 13:2). The text reveals that Amnon sexually desired Tamar so much so that he made himself ill because of her. However, he was frustrated because Tamar was a virgin, implying that Amnon was aware that the law required unmarried women to keep their virginity and it was forbidden to lie with your father's wife's daughter (Deut 22:13-21; Lev 18:11).

Despite these issues, Amnon allowed his desire to overtake him and he hatched a wicked plan with his friend Jonadab to rape his sister. The plan was premeditated, and included manipulation and lying to King David and saying that he was ill in an effort to request he send Tamar to bring him food and care for him while he "lay sick" in bed (vv. 5-6). David, not realizing he was being manipulated, allowed Tamar to go to Amnon's aide and to prepare food for him (v. 7). Tamar went innocently, baked bread for her brother, and brought food near to him upon Amnon's request. Without warning, Amnon grabbed her and raped her even though Tamar begged him to stop (v. 12).

Tragically, after Amnon sexually violated her, Scripture says, "He hated her with great hatred, so that the hatred which he hated her was greater than the love with which he had loved her. And Amnon said, 'Get up, go!'" (v. 15). Tamar's devastation is

²²RAINN, "Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network."

similar to any woman who has experienced sexual abuse and portrays how one feels when they are violated. After the assault, the text says that Tamar tore her ornate robe (v. 19). It implies that she felt she no longer had the “right” to wear this robe because she was no longer a virgin. The text also mentions that after Tamar told her brother Absalom about the attack, he basically told her to ignore and dismiss what had happened. In fact, he called her rape a “thing” and told her not to take it to heart. Even King David, her father, listened to her but was unwilling to confront and deal with the situation. This situation gives a vivid picture of how one feels when they are violated. There is a sense of profound shame, filthiness, worthlessness, helplessness, and in many cases, a sense of ruin.

According to Justin and Lindsey Holcomb,

Her experience includes manipulation, force violence, negation of her will, emotional trauma, debilitation loss of sense of self, display of grief and mourning, crushing shame, degradation, forced silence and prolonged social isolation with desolation. Tamar’s social and personal boundaries are clearly violated.²³

Many women who have not biblically dealt with this type of trauma often complicate their lives in other ways with sinful responses spiraling them down further in to despair.

Some behaviors that might be recognized in women who have been sexually assaulted are depression, bitterness, fear, anger, and intense feelings of shame. They may even experience chronic pain, sickness, and sexual problems with their spouse. Other common occurrences can include nightmares, sleep problems, and a desire to control others or their environment. Not every woman who seeks counsel with this background will have these issues, but many will exhibit these typical struggles or patterns that manifest in their life.

If given the opportunity to come alongside another woman who is struggling with the aftermath of sexual abuse, it is important to be a compassionate listener and not to judge or blame the woman who has been victimized for the assault. Rather, one should be quick to hear and to listen with sincerity, love, and care and be slow to speak. It is

²³Justin Holcomb and Lindsey Holcomb, *Rid of My Disgrace: Hope and Healing for Victims of Sexual Abuse* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011), 19.

also crucial to reiterate to the woman who has been victimized that the assault was not her fault. Most who have been sexually abused blame themselves in some way and spend hours rehearsing what has happened to them in their mind. Because of this, it will be important to educate her on how a perpetrator operates.

For example, in Tamar's story, Amnon gained her and David's trust in an effort to gain access to Tamar, which is common with perpetrators. They pick their victims carefully, knowing their vulnerabilities, and use that as a way to build trust and gain access to them. Sexual assault is also about power, violence, and manipulation, which was certainly evident in Tamar's story, as well as how Amnon manipulated his way into the situation and then overpowered and sexually abused her when the time was right. The text does not seem to indicate that Tamar was suspicious of Amnon. The same goes for many who are sexually assaulted today, they are shocked and confused when it happens to them, especially if it is at the hands of someone they know and trust.

It is also important to point out that sexual acts which are nonconsensual or where someone is forced against their will, are not always a completed sex act like what happened to Tamar. Justin and Lindsey Holcomb, biblical counselors who counsel victims of sexual assault and domestic violence, write, "Sexual Assault is any type of sexual behavior or contact where consent is not freely given or obtained and is accomplished through force, intimidation, violence, coercion, manipulation, threat, deception, or abuse of authority."²⁴ Sexual assault can include intentional touching of areas on a person's body that is inappropriate, voyeurism, exhibitionism, exposure to pornography, verbal sexual harassments, or taking nude pictures of another without their consent. The Holcomb's further expand on "consent" in their book. They write that consent is a big issue to discuss with those that have been victimized because to consent to something means they are also freely able to make a choice, and thereby are free to change their

²⁴Holcomb and Holcomb, *Rid of My Disgrace*, 28.

mind. True consent requires a person to communicate “yes” but when a person says “no,” consent is not given.²⁵ In Tamar’s case, she clearly did not give consent to Amnon. In fact when he said to her, “Come sister, lie with me.” Tamar unmistakably answered “No, my brother do not violate me for such a thing is not done in Israel; do not do this outrageous thing” (vv. 11-12). However, he did not care and raped her anyway.

If a woman coming for counsel has not been taught what sexual assault actually is, she will typically fall into the trap of blaming herself for the attack or growing bitter. It would be important to educate her and then to instill hope by reminding her that God will never leave her nor forsake her; so she can confidently say that he is her Helper (Heb 13:5). Sadly, the text does not say Tamar went to God for help or for comfort; she left feeling desolate. She did go to her other brother Absalom who listened to her and tried to provide some comfort. Regrettably, he ended up paying evil for evil two years later when he killed Amnon as a way to avenge his sister. To avoid this, it is important to point out that God’s Word says one is never to avenge evil, but to leave it to the wrath of God, and continue to place confidence and trust in God alone by doing good, remaining faithful, delighting in Him, committing our ways to Him, and refraining from anger (Rom 12:19; Ps 37:1-8).

**Women Counseling Women Struggling with Self Image:
Philippians 4:10-13, 1 Peter 3:1-5**

Teaching what is good may include coming alongside another woman struggling with *self-image*. It will be important to help the woman put off a heart of self-focus and to put on a heart that fears and loves the Lord.

Many women who come for counsel concerning self-image may state they are struggling with low self-esteem, which typically means they do not “feel good” about themselves due to some difficult circumstance they have just experienced or a particular

²⁵Holcomb and Holcomb, *Rid of My Disgrace*, 29.

perception they have about their childhood. Alternatively, they may come in because they are struggling with what society calls body image issues—meaning they are unhappy with their physical appearance so they look for ways to be thinner or prettier. If left unchecked, body image issues will manifest into what psychology labels Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD), in which a person cannot stop thinking about flaws in their appearance. Other issues may include Anorexia Nervosa, when a person is caught up in an endless cycle of restrictive eating, often refusing to maintain a normal minimal body weight, and a fear of gaining weight,²⁶ or Bulimia Nervosa, which is another life-threatening behavior that has as its objective to be thin. With bulimics, you will see episodic binge eating of large amounts of food followed by purging of that food through self-induced vomiting, the abuse of laxatives, and enemas.²⁷ The common factors in all three of these outer man behaviors is a pre-occupation with self, whether that concern the face, body, or weight. There is also a strict and harsh judgment for any perceived flaws.

Lou Priolo contends, “Self-image can be best classified as a judgment one makes about himself in a variety of areas. These judgements form our evaluation. The internal evaluation is what is commonly referred to as self-image.”²⁸ In other words, self-image begins with how one thinks about themselves. God’s Word teaches that the effects of sin hinder people from interpreting life from God’s point of view, which can lead to inaccurate perceptions followed by ungodly behavior. The prophet Jeremiah points this out when he says, “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it” (Jer 17:9). Biblically speaking, the inner-man (or the heart) has a capacity for wickedness and deceit that can only be remedied through faith and trust in the finished

²⁶Roxanne Dryden-Edwards, “Anorexia Nervosa,” accessed March 26, 2016, http://www.medicinenet.com/anorexia_nervosa/article.htm.

²⁷Maria Notchiva, “Understanding the Monster Within,” *Grace and Truth*, May 4, 2015, accessed March 16, 2015, <http://biblicalcounselingcoalition.org/blogs/2015/05/04/understanding-the-monster-within-eating-disorders-part-1/>.

²⁸Lou Priolo, *Self-Image: How to Overcome Inferiority Judgements* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2007), 7.

work of Christ (2 Cor 5:17). However, even after spiritual rebirth, Christians still struggle with sin, so it becomes imperative that they renew their mind with God's Word regularly in order to grow with the Spirit's help in an accurate biblical perception of self.

One of the challenges with women who struggle with self-image is seeking to understand what might be at the heart of the issue. For example, one of the heart issues may stem from discontentment because she spends a lot of time comparing and focusing on human standards rather than on Christ. She seeks after happiness and satisfaction in her circumstances, in what other people think about her, or in the perfect body. Thankfully, the Holy Spirit through the apostle Paul addresses contentment in God's Word:

I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me. (Phil 4:1-13)

Women who struggle with self-image need to learn that true contentment is not controlled by one's circumstance and should never dictate their happiness. Rather, Paul states that he is content with "whatever situation" or "any and every circumstance" so that contentment is possible even in the worst of times.

Paul speaks to the Christian from first-hand experience. At the writing of his letter, he was under house arrest in Rome and had lost freedom from ministering to his beloved churches. All the while he was awaiting trial and possible execution. He had little or nothing of what one would consider benefits from a worldly standpoint, yet Paul says he was able to learn how to be content. It did not matter that he lived with little food, in an isolated place, chained to a Roman soldier, or with the bare necessities, he was content with even a miserable existence. For Paul, true contentment was about discarding security in exchange for Christ. Thus, he did not allow people or events to have power over him, to determine his misery or joy, or to even hinder his ministry. He was satisfied at all times, in all places, and in all ways in Christ.

Women struggling with self-image long for contentment in their lives but they look to the world to define that for them rather than to Christ and His Word. In essence, she would also struggle with unbelief, because she is not *believing* that her identity in Christ is enough!²⁹

A woman who struggles with self-image in all its manifestations also struggles with a heart of vanity, which is a love of one's own beauty or an inflated pride in one's appearance.³⁰ Vanity is evident in a constant self-focus and comparison to others. However, this is antithetical to what is most important to God. The apostle Peter enlightens the reader to what is precious in his sight:

Your beauty should not consist of outward things like elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold ornaments, or fine clothes. Instead, it should consist of what is inside the heart with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very valuable in God's eyes. (1 Pet 3:3-4)

As far as God is concerned, the adornment that He desires is internal versus external. In this context, Peter is exhorting unequally yoked wives not to place their primary focus on things like hairstyle, gold jewelry, or expensive clothing. Rather, the emphasis needs to be on the inward man or literally the "hidden person" of the heart. That is what matters to God, godly character. Specifically in this passage, Peter points to a woman's gentle and quiet spirit, which is considered of great worth from God's perspective.

God addresses this issue with Samuel as well when He warns, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart" (1 Sam 16:6-7). Samuel apparently was impressed by Eliab's (David's brother's) stature, but what Samuel saw on the outside was only Eliab's appearance. Christian

²⁹Identity in Christ is a hot topic in counseling circles today and needs to be taught with a biblical balance and perspective. Stuart Scott teaches a balanced view in "Our Identity: Should It Be a Focus in Our Counseling Today?" accessed March 26, 2016, <http://biblicalcounselingcoalition.org/2014/02/26/our-identityshould-it-be-a-focus-in-counseling/>.

³⁰Martha Peace, "Ashley and Anorexia," in *Counseling the Hard Cases*, ed. Stuart Scott and Heath Lambert (Nashville: B & H, 2012), 163.

women who struggle with self-image are often enamored with what impresses the world but God looks at the heart. Jesus warns of the same thing: “And He said to them, “You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God” (Luke 16:15).

Finally, women who struggle with self-image also struggles with a heart that fears man, not God. This attitude is evident when one is preoccupied with what other people think. This type of fear can be a two-sided coin. On one side of the coin they care too much with what people think, and on the other side of the coin they fear rejection of people. Proverbs 29:25 says that trying to impress people and wanting to be admired by others becomes a snare to them. This drive to impress and be admired dictates their actions and when they fail to impress and be admired, they can spiral into despair.

When given the opportunity to meet with a woman who struggles with self-image it will be important to help them to renew their mind with biblical thinking so that they can learn to have a proper assessment about themselves and about God. Paul admonishes,

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you. (Phil 4:8-9)

From this passage, the woman struggling with self-image can begin by learning what is honorable, just, lovely, commendable, excellent, and worthy thoughts through journaling Bible verses, quotes from books, or specific thoughts that the counselee should be thinking. She can also journal sinful, obsessive thoughts and look to God’s Word to help her replace them with God-honoring thoughts.³¹ This spiritual growth work will help her to hold unbiblical thoughts and inaccurate assessments captive and to renew with biblical truth and to walk in a manner that pleases God.

³¹Peace, “Ashley and Anorexia,” 170.

**Women Counseling Women and Ecclesiology:
Proverbs 11:14, Hebrews 13:17;
Ecclesiastes 4:9-12**

In the Spirit's wise words through Solomon, "where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety" (Prov 11:14). It can be a great blessing to work collaboratively with pastors and elders in the church on counseling cases. For instance, within the context of marriage counseling, where the typical practice would be the wife meeting weekly with her counselor and the husband meeting weekly with his counselor. In a partnership approach, the counselors, the counselees, and the pastor would also meet once or twice a month to work as a team in addition to the one on one meetings.

One of the benefits to this approach is to give lay leaders an opportunity to work closely with an elder or pastor. Hebrews 13:17 reminds believers that they are to "obey their leaders and submit to them . . . to let them do this with joy and not with grief." Within a church body, God facilitates His earthly rule through Spirit-controlled men such as elders and pastors. They determine the direction of the church, and are called to shepherd the flock of God.³² If one gets the rare privilege of counseling alongside them, that person sees this first hand, but it is not always easy. For example, there may be times when it can be extremely challenging to counsel with another person because you may come to an impasse. However, it also gives an opportunity to put aside one's own opinion and choose to submit to a decision that a pastor or elder would make regarding some aspect of the counseling direction. It also gives an opportunity to pray and ask God often to help the parishioner to submit to the leader with great joy and respect.

The opportunity to work in partnership with pastors helps the counselor to be cognizant that the pastor or elder has an awesome responsibility within the church because they are called to watch over the souls of their parishioners and give an account for those

³²John MacArthur, *Hebrews, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody, 1983), 444-45.

they are watching (Heb 13:17). In a partnership setting, it is awesome to experience firsthand the joy that the pastor or elder has when someone repents and begins to walk in a manner worthy of their calling. Therefore, the opportunity to work alongside an elder or pastor will grow the counselor in appreciation of them and recognize more fully their diligent labor over the body of Christ (1 Thess 5:12). A partnership approach in biblical counseling makes this truth come alive.

Solomon exclaims to the reader,

Two are better than one because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another one to lift him up! Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand—a threefold cord is not quickly broken.” (Eccl 4:9-12)

Although in this passage Solomon is referring to the need for man to share the good things in life with another such as a friend (cf. Gen 2:18), a biblical principle can also be gleaned when it comes to partnering in biblical counseling. For one, Solomon says that where there is more than one, you have a good reward (v. 9). The idea is that Solomon was rooted in the wisdom and value of two working together. In other words, as they worked *together*, great was their profit! The reward of toiling will consist of growing in wisdom, and spiritual things. It will also motivate and challenge the counselor to live a life that honors and pleases the Lord in every way (Col 1:9-10).

Solomon also comments that when two work together, they are able to keep each other warm (v. 11) meaning they give emotional comfort to each other. The warmth of lying beside each other does not refer to sexual activity, nor are the two necessarily husband and wife. It is an image derived from that of travelers who must lie beside each other to stay warm on cold desert nights. However, the usage here is metaphorical for emotional comfort against the coldness of the world.”³³ This word picture speaks to the weariness believers often experience in life because of the fallen world in which they

³³Duane A. Garrett, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*, The New American Commentary, vol. 14 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1993), 308.

live. It also speaks of the comfort found with those who bear burdens together. However, more importantly, it reminds believers of Christ, the Great High Priest, who able to understand weaknesses and is the ultimate Comforter (Heb 4:14-16). The counselor and pastor can remind each other of these things for encouragement, especially if the counseling cases are difficult.

Finally, Solomon says in Ecclesiastes 4:12 that two who labor together can provide protection for one another. At the end of this verse he exclaims that a third friend is even better! This truth fleshes out in a couple of ways when it comes to a partnership approach in biblical counseling. First, when one is actively listening to another counselor's teaching, if it is inaccurate teaching during the collaborative times, one can take the time to correct it. However, it would not appropriate to correct during the counseling session.

Second, one is able to provide protection by being a witness to what has been said in the counseling room. For example, if things are heating up and the counselee is refusing to repent of sin, in his anger and pride he might begin to tell others untruths in an effort to slander the pastor. However, because there is a partnership, the counselor becomes a witness to many of these admonitions and is able to protect the pastor and refute any slander.

Third, a partnership in biblical counseling can provide protection in cases where the counselor might be inclined to take advantage of the counselee in some way. Mark Shaw, in *Strength in Numbers*, writes, "A counselee is protected from counselors who may be "predatory" in nature . . . (who) may seek to take advantage of the counselee either financially, sexually, or emotionally."³⁴

In conclusion, God uses biblical counseling within the local church as a means to build up the body of Christ—it is not an optional ministry. Rather, it is essentially a "one-another" ministry that involves helping others who are caught in sin by using the

³⁴Mark E. Shaw, *Strength in Numbers: The Team Approach to Biblical Counseling* (Bemidji, MN: Focus, 2009), 59.

Word of God to bear upon and address the sin issues of the heart. All Christians are called to speak the truth in love to those who are hurting. Consequently, Christian women should be taught and equipped how to biblically counsel other women who are struggling with sin or who are suffering from the effects of sin with words of truth from God's Word.

CHAPTER 3
THE THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL ISSUES
RELATED TO WOMEN COUNSELING WOMEN

Because God uses biblical counseling within the body of Christ as a means to build up the body of Christ, the Women Counseling Women (BC572) course will become a helpful resource to the local church or other parachurch ministries. Four topics are explored in this chapter in an effort to show the theoretical and societal aspects of this project: mentoring, anxiety, depression, and the effects of sexual abuse.

Mentoring

Women and young girls seek out a variety of mentors for encouragement, training, and teaching on issues they face at home, at school, and in the workplace. For example, a Christian woman may seek out a professional mentor because of her experience, skill, and knowledge in an effort to help her “rise to the top in faith and life” in the workplace.¹ The purpose of this type of mentoring relationship would be to encourage the woman toward professional, personal, and spiritual goals. In most instances, the mentee discusses things with her mentor that include launching her career, wisdom and insight from the mentor’s own experience in the workforce, and how God can use her fullest potential while in the workplace.²

¹Diane Paddison, “5 Qualities That Make a Great Mentor,” *Today’s Christian Woman*, July 2015, accessed September 10, 2016, <http://www.todaychristianwoman.com/articles/2015/july/5-qualities-that-make-great-mentor.html>.

²4Word Women, “4word Mentor Program,” accessed September 10, 2016, <https://4wordwomen.org/mentor/>

Another example of mentoring can be found in non-profit organizations, such as the Big Brothers, Big Sisters of America (BBSA).³ These kind of mentoring programs are designed for at-risk youth, who spend a few hours a month with a mentor they have been paired with. They often do enjoyable things together, like go on a museum outing, play a sport, or enjoy a meal together. Many BBSA organizations are school-based, so mentoring can also revolve around helping with homework. In essence, BBSA's purpose is for the mentor to help the mentee shape her future by empowering her to achieve her fullest potential thus rising above her adversity.

In addition, a woman or girl may seek out another woman to simply gain help and insight into things such as budgeting, managing time, learning how to sew, or preparing healthy meals. These important skills are passed down from one seasoned woman to an inexperienced woman or girl. This type of mentoring occurs all the time and has been going on for years between Christians and non-Christians alike.

However, there is a big difference between mentoring relationships as pointed out with BBSA and the Titus 2 discipleship relationship mentioned in chapter 2. In a mentoring relationship, the purpose is to give advice, and train, thereby empower the mentee to succeed concerning life skills. In a Titus 2 discipleship relationship, there is advice and training, but more importantly, there is an active commitment to teach and observe all that Jesus has commanded in His Word (Matt 28:20). In large part, that is what Paul means by the older women teaching the younger woman "what is good."

Moreover, the exhortation in Titus 2:3-5 implies that the seasoned Christian woman knows what is good. Not only must she possess the character qualities mentioned in Titus 2:3-4, she should also be well instructed in the Word of God and sound in faith so that she can pass on biblical encouragement to younger women.⁴

³Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, "Our Proven Impact," accessed September 10, 2016, <http://www.bbbs.org/site/c.9iILI3NGKhK6F/b.5962335/k.BE16/Home.htm>.

⁴Jack Hughes, "Titus: Grace Fueled Obedience, God's Will for Older Women," *Crossing Church*, July 17, 2016, accessed September 29, 2016, <http://crossinglouisville.com/media/>.

A Titus 2 discipleship relationship best exemplifies what Christ commissions all Christians to with regard to making disciples (Matt 28:19). Underneath the training of good things and the learning of new skills is the goal of discipling the Christian to glorify God in every endeavor she sets her mind to, such as being a wife, a mother, a worker at home, a student, or an employee (Titus 2:3-4; Col 3:23; 1 Cor 10:31).

A Titus 2 discipleship relationship is also an opportunity for Christian women to practice the “one-anothers,” such as being devoted to one another, showing kindness, extending encouragement, and by serving, etc. (Rom 12:10; Eph 4:32; Gal. 5:13; 1 Thess 5:11).

Finally, a Titus 2 discipleship relationship is more reflective of discipleship because it has as a goal of helping the woman grow in Christ-likeness, such as being self-controlled, pure, kind, and submissive so that the Word of God will not be reviled (Titus 2:5; Rom 8:28-30; 12:1-2; Col 1:28).

Christian Integrative Counselor, Secular Psychologist, or Biblical Counselor?

When a Christian woman is struggling with anxiety, depression, or suffering from the effects of sexual abuse, she may seek out “mentors” for help.

For example, she may seek out a Christian integrative counselor. This type of counselor may endorse a Christian worldview and rely upon biblical principles for life, but this counselor also integrates what she has learned from psychology, sociology, and anthropology into her counseling methodology.⁵ As a whole, the desire of a Christian integrative counselor is to determine how scriptural truths and psychological data enable her to better understand and help her counselee.⁶ Furthermore, the Christian integrative

⁵Sarah Rainer, “The Integration of Christianity and Psychology,” *Christianity Today*, September 25, 2014, accessed September 29, 2016, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2014/sepember/concerning-psychology-and-christianity-guest-post-by-sarah-.html>.

⁶Gary R. Collins, *Can You Trust Psychology?* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1988), 127.

counselor justifies her position by believing that “all truth is God’s truth.” Meaning there can be theological truth as well as scientific truth. This conviction is largely influenced by the Christian integrative counselor’s training, which historically instructs students to rely upon “General Revelation” versus “Special Revelation.” Many well-known Christian integrative counselors would say that truth is truth—it can be scientific or theological truth.⁷

If a Christian woman seeks help from a Christian integrative counselor, she should be aware that she may be taught a man-centered approach to sin and suffering. This type of counseling approach, as evidenced in their practice, does not embrace the Bible as sufficient or practical for everyday life. They would instead prefer to rely on either their own human reasoning or varying secular philosophies.

On the other hand, a Christian woman struggling with anxiety, depression, or the effects of sexual abuse may think that the best “mentor” choice is a secular psychologist. Most secular psychologists are mental health professionals and many are members of the American Psychological Association.⁸ The label “secular” essentially means that this type of doctor holds to a naturalistic worldview and does not identify as religious.⁹ Rather, they are trained to believe that people are a product of their biology and their environment. The Christian woman will find out quickly that this type of counselor holds to a biopsychosocial model of human development and behavior that believes humans develop and function according to their biological, psychological, and social influences.¹⁰

⁷Lawrence J. Crabb, *Understanding People* (Winona Lake, IN: BHM, 1987), 40.

⁸David Biebel and Harold G. Koenig, *New Light on Depression* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 122.

⁹Phil Zuckerman, “What Does ‘Secular’ Mean?” *Psychology Today*, July 28, 2014, accessed September 29, 2016, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-secular-life/201407/what-does-secular-mean>.

¹⁰Rainer, “The Integration of Christianity and Psychology.”

Christian women seeking help from a secular psychologist should understand and be warned that a secular psychologist will be at odds with God’s view of her problem and the solution to it (Luke 6:45). In fact, the secular psychologist will be quick to point out that the counselee’s struggles are due to either her environment, upbringing, low self-esteem, or circumstances.¹¹ In addition, her counseling methodologies will be diametrically opposed to God’s standard and steeped in human wisdom. The gospel, biblical anthropology, and the sufficiency of the Scripture would be denied and opposed (1 Cor 1:17-18, 2:12-14; Rom 3:23; 2 Pet 1:3-4; 2 Tim 3:15-17).

It would be ideal for a Christian woman needing help with anxiety, depression, or effects from sexual abuse to seek out a trained biblical counselor in her church.¹² This type of counselor is more than a “mentor” because this relationship is more reflective of the Titus 2 discipleship relationship. Biblical counseling is an opportunity for one Christian woman to come alongside another Christian woman struggling with sin or difficulties due to suffering to speak words of truth from God’s Word so that she might experience change in her inner person and live a life that has as its fondest ambition to please God.¹³ These shared words of truth are grounded in the saving work of Christ and presented to the counselee in the context of relationship. The biblical counselor also has a strong conviction that the Bible is given by God and His Word is sufficient to address spiritual issues, such as anxiety, depression, and the effects of sexual abuse. It is also sufficient to help a Christian live a God-glorifying life in light of the difficult issues they face. Biblical counselors also rely upon the Holy Spirit to produce real heart change as the counselee seeks to step out in faith and obey God’s Word. The goal in biblical counseling is to

¹¹Robert Somerville, *ACBC Exam Teaching Sample* (Santa Clarita, CA: The Master’s University, 2010), 40.

¹²For example, she may seek out a trained biblical counselor from an organization such as the Association of Biblical Counselors (ACBC).

¹³Faith Bible Church, “What Is Biblical Counseling,” accessed October 1, 2016, http://www.faithlafayette.org/counseling/about/what_is_biblical_counseling.

bring broken and hurting people to the love of Christ and His sufficient Word so they might find help, hope, and lasting change for their souls.

Anxiety

If a Christian woman came to counseling with a presentation problem of anxiety, the Christian integrative counselor, secular psychologist, and biblical counselor would treat her problem differently. For example, the Christian integrative counselor would most commonly use a therapy known as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT).¹⁴ CBT is a form of talk therapy that focuses on helping a counselee identify, understand, and change negative thinking and behavior patterns. CBT is also a secular counseling therapy designed to help the counselee struggling with anxiety to view her challenging situation clearly and to train her to respond in a more positive way.¹⁵

One of the techniques of CBT Therapy is using a ABCDE Disputing Thoughts Record.¹⁶ The premise of this tool is to push negative thoughts out of the counselee's mind, causing her anxiety to be replaced by positive thoughts, which the counselor believes will cure the counselee's anxiety.

In the ABCDE acronym, each letter stands for a word. "A" stands for *adversity*—something has happened to the counselee, like teaching a workshop at a conference that did not go well because she ran out of time. "B" stands for *beliefs*—in light of the teaching workshop that did not go well, the counselee automatically defaulted to certain beliefs like, "they made a mistake by asking me to speak at this conference, I am not a good teacher." "C" stands for *consequences*—consequences ensue when a counselee believes her negative thoughts. For example, the counselee may turn down

¹⁴GoodTherapy.org, "Anxiety," accessed May 17, 2017, <http://www.goodtherapy.org/learn-about-therapy/issues/anxiety>.

¹⁵Kendra Cherry, "What Is Cognitive Therapy," June 14, 2016, accessed September 17, 2016, <https://www.verywell.com/what-is-cognitive-behavior-therapy-2795747>.

¹⁶Alice Boyes, *The Anxiety Tool Kit* (New York: Penguin Group, 2015).

future teaching opportunities or if she does accept a speaking engagement; she has a lot of fear and apprehension. “D” stands for *disputation*—the counselee is taught by the Christian integrative counselor to work at disputing negative beliefs by using facts and logic. For example, she would tell herself, “I haven’t had much experience as a conference speaker, I’m sure I’ll get better over time with practice.” “E” stands for *energization*—should the counselee dispute negative thoughts and replace them with positive ones, then many positive effects will come out of it, including the reduction of anxiety and shame.¹⁷

Conversely, if a Christian woman chooses to consult with a secular psychologist for her anxiety, she will discover quickly that their methodology flows from their understanding or belief of what anxiety is. For one, the secular psychologist believes that anxiety is a mental disorder.¹⁸ They commonly accept as true that most of the symptoms of a counselee’s anxiety originate from the brain, specifically the neurotransmitters, which are the chemicals that send messages and translate information.¹⁹ According to their research, when people are anxious, it changes the chemicals (neurotransmitters) in the brain that alter a person’s thoughts, which is why they prescribe medication for the treatment of anxiety. The hope is that the medication will manipulate the neurotransmitters.

The secular psychologist could also believe that a counselee’s anxiety is caused from a hormonal balance.²⁰ In their data gathering, they would explore seasons in a person’s life, such as their menstrual cycle, puberty, or menopause. They also look at physiological factors, such as diet, exercise regime, and stress level. Although there is no

¹⁷Martin Seligman, “ABCDE Model (Learning to be Optimistic),” accessed June 19, 2007, <http://www.centreforconfidence.co.uk/pp/techniques.php?p=c2lkPTQmdGlkPTMmaWQ9NjY=>.

¹⁸James Morrison, *DSM-V Made Easy: The Clinician's Guide to Diagnosis* (New York: Guilford, 2014).

¹⁹Calm Clinic, “Is Anxiety All in Your Head?,” accessed September 29, 2016, <http://www.calmclinic.com/anxiety/is-it-all-in-your-head>.

²⁰Marcelle Pick, “Anxiety and Worry in Women: Causes, Symptoms, and Natural Relief,” accessed June, 19, 2017, <https://www.womentowomen.com/emotions-anxiety-mood/anxiety-and-worry-in-women-causes-symptoms-and-natural-relief/>.

proof that these factors “cause” anxiety, the secular psychologist would say that improper hormones can lead to anxiety.²¹

The secular psychologist also breaks down anxiety into conditions based on the behaviors they observe. For example, people who experience panic attacks can be diagnosed as having a panic disorder. Someone who is experiencing panic attacks experiences episodes of intense fear over something. This terror-like experience is classified as happening suddenly and is followed by irregular heartbeat, shortness of breath, excessive perspiration, or other similar factors.²² The secular psychologist believes that panic attacks are rooted in fear of something, substance abuse, or the result of a myocardial infraction.²³ Another common condition of anxiety is social anxiety disorder, which is an intense embarrassment at speaking in public, eating in public, or even using a public urinal.²⁴ If these conditions are evident, then the secular psychologist will diagnose anxiety disorder with one or more of the conditions mentioned.

In treatment for anxiety, many secular psychologists will recommend medication. However, many also prefer Cognitive Behavioral Therapies (CBT). One very popular therapy that flows out of CBT is Exposure Therapy.²⁵ This form of therapy seeks to “expose” a counselee gradually to situations or objects that she fears most. Some Cognitive Behavioral Therapist believe that if they can expose the counselee repeatedly and in steps to “fearful” situations, she will begin to feel like she has gained control over time, thus diminishing her anxiety. In essence, the goal is to systematically desensitize

²¹Pick, “Anxiety and Worry in Women.”

²²Morrison, *DSM-V Made Easy*, 174.

²³Myocardial infarction is the medical term for a heart attack, accessed October 30, 2017, <https://www.medicinenet.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=26016>.

²⁴Morrison, *DSM-V Made Easy*, 185.

²⁵Seth J. Gillihan, “Thinking and Doing in Exposure/Response Prevention Therapy,” *Psychology Today*, February 12, 2015, accessed September 29, 2016, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/think-act-be/201502/thinking-and-doing-in-exposureresponse-prevention-therapy>.

her so that she gradually works up to facing bigger fears as she masters the smaller—all the while learning relaxation techniques. The most common relaxation technique that works in tandem to the Exposure Therapy is deep breathing, which is meant to reduce physical anxiety response and encourage relaxation.²⁶

Another therapy that a secular psychologist might prescribe for anxiety is Biofeedback. David Kiefer, a board-certified family physician suggests that this therapy is designed to help the counselee “harness the power of her mind and become aware of what is going on inside her body so that she can gain more control over her health.”²⁷ The therapist will use sensors to measure a person’s specific physiological functions, such as heart rate, breathing, and muscle tension. Biofeedback is meant to teach a counselee to recognize her body’s anxiety responses and learn how to control them with relaxation techniques.

By first observation, all of the therapies prescribed by the Christian integrative counselor and the secular psychologist seem like good choices for someone experiencing anxiety. However, there are serious problems with their approaches, namely these therapies are completely devoid of God’s Word and the gospel.

However, if she were to seek out a biblical counselor, the meetings would begin by giving the counselee hope and instruction from the Word of God. For example, the biblical counselor would remind the counselee that when she became a Christian, God “renewed” her mind (Rom 12:2), and as a believer, she is presently in union with Christ: her “old self” no longer exists (2 Cor 5:17). Her mind, which is part of her inner man, is where their thoughts, understanding, beliefs, motives, and actions flow.²⁸ Thus, in her

²⁶Johanna S. Kaplan, “Exposure Therapy for Anxiety Disorders,” *Psychiatric Times*, September 6, 2011, accessed September 29, 2016, <http://www.psychiatrictimes.com/anxiety/exposure-therapy-anxiety-disorders>.

²⁷David Kiefer, “Overview of Biofeedback,” *WebMD*, August 1, 2016, accessed September 29, 2016, <http://www.webmd.com/a-to-z-guides/biofeedback-therapy-uses-benefits#1>.

²⁸John MacArthur, *Ephesians, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody, 1986), 177.

renewed state, she has the capacity to understand and obey God's truth out of love for Him (John 15:10; Col 3:10).

The biblical counselor would teach the counselee that this "renewal" continues throughout her lifetime as she treasures God's Word in her renewed mind (heart) and the Holy Spirit does His work in her life. Therefore, if she is to grow in having the mind of Christ, the counselor cannot focus on helping the counselee simply replace a negative thought with a positive thought, manipulating neurotransmitters through medication, or desensitizing her fears through exposure and relaxation techniques. Rather, the counselee must be taught how to replace ungodly thoughts with godly thoughts by memorizing and meditating upon God's Word, which is the means God uses to truly renew the mind.

As a wonderful consequence, this "renewed" spirit of the believer's mind will induce her toward putting on the new self, which is created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness (Eph 4:24). Jesus says, it is out of the abundance of the heart (mind), that the believers' thoughts, words, and actions will flow" (Luke 6:45). Thus, if there is to be true lasting change in the counselee's life, God's Word, which the Lord uses as the means to renew her mind, must be the main emphasis of any homework assignment for counselees struggling with sin, such as anxiety.

The second reason why secular therapies are problematic for Christians is that they fail to point out anxiety as a sin. In most cases, the Bible defines anxiety as ungodly concern (Phil 4:6; Matt 6:25). However, to further help the counselee understand this, it is necessary that she be encouraged to dig deeper in the Word to help discern what is at the heart of her anxiety. As she examines the Scriptures, which are living and active and the discerners of such things, she will find out several important truths (Heb 4:12). First, she will find that her anxiety is the fruit of one who has become so worried about life or some future event that she has ceased to "seek the kingdom of God" (Matt 6:33). Second, she will find that her anxiety is the fruit of one who has forgotten the one thing necessary, which is to sit at the Lord's feet and listen to his teaching (Luke 10:39, 42). Third, she will

find that anxiety has distracted her from the Lord, so she has ceased to depend upon Him through a right attitude, right praying, right thinking, and right actions (Phil. 4:6-8). Fourth, she will find that her anxiety is coming from a heart of pride because she is not turning toward the Lord and “casting” her burdens upon Him (1 Pet 5:6-7). Ultimately, at the heart of anxiety is the sin of unbelief because she is not believing and trusting that God is completely sovereign, infinite in wisdom, and perfect in His love for her.²⁹ If she truly desires to change from the heart, she will need to recognize and repent of her unbelief and walk in a manner worthy of her calling—one who is humble and trusts in the one true God.

Depression

Depression is another common presentation problem that many bring to their first counseling session. It is estimated that 25 percent of the US population will carry the label of depression at any given time.³⁰ However, the cause of one’s depression largely depends upon the type of counselor the Christian woman ends up meeting.

If she meets with a Christian integrative counselor, the counselee will learn that the integrative counselor leans on two reasons for depression: (1) negative external factors such as the end of a relationship, financial hardship, or terminal illness or (2) a chemical imbalance.³¹ The chemical imbalance theory is based on the integrative counselor’s observable facts such as—good relationships, good finances, and good health. Thus, there is “no reason” for the depression, so there must be a chemical imbalance. In light of this, a Christian integrative counselor would have no problem sending them to a doctor who would prescribe medication.³² The Christian integrative counselor justifies her position

²⁹Jerry Bridges, *Trusting God Even When Life Hurts* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1988), 18.

³⁰National Institute of Mental Health, “Depression,” accessed September 29, 2015, <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/depression/index.shtml>.

³¹Gary Collins, *Christian Counseling: A Comprehensive Guide*, 3rd ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2007), 120-22.

³²Bielbel and Koenig, *New Light on Depression*, 117-20.

by believing that the medication gives the Christian woman quiet in her mind so that she can receive insight and understanding that God has given her through counseling sessions.³³

As mentioned, Christian integrative counselors do hold to a Christian worldview so they will try to give hope and help from the Scriptures, but often times, because of a lack of training in theology, their biblical instruction can be out of context.³⁴ For example, they may choose to remind the counselee of God's promises, such as He will not give her more than she can bear and will help the counselee find a way of escape. This promise comes from God's Word, where Paul, through the Spirit, reminds the Christian that "no temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man, God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it" (1 Cor 10:13). This verse may inspire hope in the counselee who seeks help for depression. Unfortunately, too often Christian integrative counselors take verses out of context (mostly due to lack of theological training). For example, they may tell the counselee that the way of "escape" to which Paul speaks has to do more with a change in her environment. Patricia Jones, founder of Dove Christian Counseling Pastoral Counseling Center writes,

Many times people do not realize that they can escape from whatever is negative in their lives. But we do not always recognize the "escape" that God has provided. It could be something as simple as changing jobs, or removing toxic people from our lives, or moving to a better climate, or ending an abusive relationship.³⁵

When looking at 1 Corinthians 10:13 in context, Paul does not mean a change in environment. Instead, the believers in Corinth were struggling with self-confidence and were not depending upon God as they ought (1 Cor 10:12). Paul was trying to encourage

³³Bielbel and Koenig, *New Light on Depression*, 119.

³⁴Mark McMinn, *Psychology, Theology, and Spirituality* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale 1996), 97-124.

³⁵Patricia Jones, "Depression," accessed September 28, 2016, <http://www.dovechristiancounseling.com/Depression.html>.

them to seek God for help in their temptation to sin. The temptation was craving evil things as Israel did. For a depressed person, the temptation could be sorrowing without hope. However, the way of escape is not waiting for God to change the environment. Paul has in mind the passing through of those temptations by depending fully upon the Lord through obedience to His Word and through prayer. The believer is reminded in 1 Corinthians 10:13 that God, who is faithful, will be the one to help him resist the temptation as He finds refuge and strength in the Lord. Jesus modeled this for all believers when He was tempted in the wilderness by Satan. Jesus did not give into temptation; rather, he combatted it by pointing to the obedience of the Scriptures (Matt 4:1-11).

Like the Christian integrative counselor, a secular psychologist holds to a psychiatric definition of depression. The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* of the American Psychiatric Association, now in its fifth edition (*DSM-V*), uses the label “Depressive Disorder.”³⁶ Psychology leans on five major requirements for depression: (1) loss of interest or pleasure, (2) the depressed mood has existed for a period of time (2 weeks or more), (3) there are other symptoms associated with the depressed mood (loss of appetite and sleep), (4) the depressed mood has resulted in distress or disability, and (5) it does not violate the listed exclusions (i.e., substance abuse).³⁷

Although medication is frequently prescribed for people carrying the label “depressive disorder,” secular psychologists will also prescribe various therapies. For one, they may prescribe *psychoanalysis*. This often comes in the form of talk therapy, where the secular psychologist uses questions to draw the counselee out in an effort to understand her thought patterns, responses, and feelings. The secular psychologist desires for the

³⁶American Psychiatric Association, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 5th ed. (Washington DC: American Psychiatric, 2013), 155.

³⁷Morrison, *DSM-5 Made Easy*, 112.

counselee to have a better awareness and understanding of her thought patterns so she will have better control over them.³⁸

Cognitive therapy may also be prescribed to help with depression. In this case, the counselee would be told that her depression stems from false self-beliefs or distorted thoughts. The false self-beliefs and distorted thoughts are what has led to her depressed mood.³⁹ The cognitive therapist might also believe that her depression is due to the loss of role status, prestige, power, and identity. For example, perhaps the Christian woman is a stay-at-home mom and somehow that makes her feel like she is “less of a person.” Therefore, this “loss” is somehow contributing to her depressed mood.

Secular psychologists may also believe that the counselee’s depression is caused by genetics. They would wonder about issues like whether or not she had a family member, such as a parent, who was depressed making her predisposed to depression as well.⁴⁰ According to medical professional and biblical counselor, Charles Hodges, the United States has spent billions of dollars to try to diagnose and cure depression. Despite the money spent, research has found that the medication prescribed does not work as well as it did in the past.⁴¹

Most woman who come for biblical counseling who have a presentation problem of depression are more than likely just in a state of discouragement and sadness for one reason or another. It is probable that her depressed mood could be caused by a physiological component, so part of her counseling would include her seeking out a

³⁸Kimberly Holland, “Psychoanalysis,” December 10, 2013, accessed October 1, 2016, <http://www.healthline.com/health/depression/psychoanalysis#2>.

³⁹Stuart J. Rupek, David Blecke, and Marjoire Renfrow, “Cognitive Therapy for Depression,” *American Family Physician*, January 1, 2006, accessed October 1, 2016, <http://www.aafp.org/afp/2006/0101/p83.html>.

⁴⁰Allaboutdepression.com, “Genetic Causes of Depression,” accessed October 1, 2016, http://www.allaboutdepression.com/cau_03.html.

⁴¹Charles Hodges, *Good Mood, Bad Mood* (Wapwallopen, PA: Shepherd, 2013), 20-29.

medical doctor so that she can obtain a physical to rule out organic causes. If there are no organic issues, then a biblical reorientation through compassionate Christ-like counsel is what is needed. A big part of the counsel would be making sure she understands that her inner man (not her brain) is the source for her thoughts, intentions, choices, and emotions such as sadness (Heb 4:12; Matt 15:18; Rom 9:2).⁴² In as much as there may be an organic cause contributing to her sad feelings—more than likely something is going on in her inner man that is contributing to the sad feelings. Jesus writes, “The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good . . . for his mouth speaks from that which fills his heart” (Luke 6:45).

The Christian woman who comes for counsel for depression can also learn from women like Hannah in 1 Samuel, who reversed the spiral of depression by having right desires, right thinking, and right doing, despite how she felt. She, like Hannah, can go to the Lord in prayer and worship Him, cast her burdens and anxieties upon Him, and grow in her view of God.

Past Sexual Abuse

Statistics show that one in five girls, one in six women, one in twenty boys, and one in thirty-three American men endure sexual abuse of some kind each year. These statistics also show that nine of every ten victims of sexual assault are female.⁴³ Sexual abuse takes place in all communities and crosses all socio-economic barriers. Typically, victims of sexual abuse who have not worked through their trauma biblically will struggle with behaviors such as anxiety, anger, shame, and a lack of trust in others. Because the statistics are so high, it would be common for a Christian woman to come forward needing help from the effects of sexual abuse.

⁴²Elyse Fitzpatrick and Laura Hendrickson, *Will Medicine Stop the Pain?* (Chicago: Moody, 2006), 97.

⁴³Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network, “Scope of the Problem: Statistics,” accessed October 1, 2016, <https://www.rainn.org/statistics/scope-problem>.

If she were to seek help from a Christian integrative counselor, she would become aware quickly that the focus in their methodology is solely focused more on the emotional healing of the sufferer with little or no concern for biblical doctrine.⁴⁴ In addition, many Christian integrative counselors place a high importance on the concept of being one's "true self" more than being conformed into the image of Christ. This view influences their counseling methodology. For example, speaking in reference to healing of past sexual abuse, popular Christian psychologist Henry Cloud writes, "The lonely child, the hurting child, the untrained child, and whoever else we 'were,' is still alive; he or she is eternal and lives within us."⁴⁵ He and many Christian integrative counselors focus on a concept known as the "inner child." They see the "inner child" as an entity and believe that people who come out of sexual abuse trauma need to spend time dealing with their difficult memories by essentially "parenting" their inner child in a way they could not before. For example, in therapy the counselee is invited to nurture their inner child by talking about and valuing the difficult feelings they had when they were hurt and then validating them. In practice, the Christian integrative counselor will have the counselee express the love they have for this inner child by holding a pillow or something similar and displaying comfort to it as if it is the actual child. The goal is to practice loving oneself. As a result, the more they practice parenting their inner child with love, the more the inner child gradually learns to trust.⁴⁶

If the Christian woman were to seek help within secular psychology, she will be exposed to a vast array of therapies. One such therapy is narrative therapy, in which the victims of sexual abuse are taught to be separate from their problem. In practice, the

⁴⁴Biblical counselors are also concerned with how a counselee suffering from the effects of sexual abuse is doing, but it is not the sole focus.

⁴⁵Henry Cloud, *Changes That Heal* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 37.

⁴⁶Jane Rowan, "Being a Caring Parent to Your Inner Child," April 11, 2016, accessed October 1, 2016, <http://healing.about.com/od/innerchild/a/soothinnerchild.htm>.

counselee is instructed to first tell the story of the problem. Then, as counseling progresses, the psychologist and counselee take time together to write a new story line that exists beyond the problem. This form of therapy is designed to help the counselee think through what is really important and valuable beyond her past problem which will in turn give her relief from the pain and assist her in finding lasting change.⁴⁷

Another therapy that is common for those struggling from the effects of sexual abuse is cognitive processing therapy (CPT).⁴⁸ This therapy is typically reserved for those struggling with posttraumatic stress disorder, but it has also become popular for those who have experienced trauma due to sexual abuse. Primarily, this therapy focuses on how the traumatic event is interpreted and dealt with by the person affected.

One of the techniques of CPT is identifying faulty thoughts associated with the trauma that hinder the counselee's recovery. The psychologist who facilitates this therapy invites the counselee to write out and read her account of the traumatic event. By exposing her once again to the trauma, the hope is that the fear associated with the trauma will give her an opportunity to deal with the emotions. Basically, CPT is a cognitive restructuring process that focuses on five particular areas that are common "stuck points" for those who have been victims of sexual abuse (or PTSD)—trust, safety, power and control, self-esteem, and intimacy. Toward the end of the therapy, the goal is to encourage the counselee to take control of the counseling session thereby empowering her.⁴⁹

The issue of past sexual abuse is very delicate and it can be extremely embarrassing for any Christian woman to come forward and talk about—it shows great courage on her part to seek out help. Biblical counselors possess the Good News and the

⁴⁷Alice Morgan, "What Is Narrative Therapy?" December 7, 2015, accessed October 1, 2016, <http://www.dulwichcentre.com.au/what-is-narrative-therapy.html>.

⁴⁸US Department of Veteran Affairs, *Cognitive Processing Therapy for PTSD*, March, 8, 2017, accessed May 17, 2017, https://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/treatment/therapy-med/cognitive_processing_therapy.asp.

⁴⁹Patricia Resick and Monica Schnicke, "Cognitive Processing Therapy for Sexual Assault Victims," *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* 60, no. 5 (1992):49-55.

hope for those dealing with the effects of sexual abuse. When a Christian woman does come forward, she will find that the biblical counselor will lovingly and compassionately look for ways to inspire hope.

Inspiring hope begins by insuring that the counselee has an intimate and reconciled relationship with Jesus Christ. The biblical counselor knows that without Christ, the counselee will not find true peace and joy in her inner most being. Nor will she be able to spiritually grow by God's grace if she has not believed by faith alone, through grace alone, in the finished work of Christ alone (1 Cor 15:1-3). It is only by God's grace that she will be taught by God to say "no" to ungodliness, worldly passions, and live a self-controlled, upright and a godly life (Titus 2:12).

If the counselee is a believer, inspiring hope continues by helping her strengthen her relationship with Christ through developing good spiritual discipline habits, such as reading, studying, memorizing, and meditating upon the Word of God, as well as prayer (Pss 1:2; 119:11; Dan 11:32). These spiritual disciplines are of tremendous help to those who have past sexual abuse because they have been in the habit of dwelling on the past hurt and viewing themselves in a particular way. Thus, part of biblical counseling includes helping them to think biblically. The letter to the Ephesians is essential because it focuses on her positional sanctification (who she is in Christ), progressive sanctification (her responsibility as a believer), and future sanctification (her eternal future) (Eph 1:7-13, 4:1-6). In addition, time also needs to be spent helping her grow in a lofty view of God by spending time correcting erroneous views or concepts of God she may have.

The biblical counselor can also inspire hope by reminding the counselee about the many spiritual blessings that are hers in Christ (Rom 8:37; Phil 4:13; 2 Pet 1:3). For example, Romans 8:37 reminds that she is more than a conqueror through Christ who loves her. Second, 1 Peter 1:3 reminds her in His Word that God has granted to her all things that pertain to life and for godliness through the knowledge of Him who called her to His glory. Finally, she should be encouraged that God, who has begun a good work in

her (her position in Christ), will complete it at the day of Christ Jesus (Phil. 1:6). When a counselee is reminded that her position is secure in Christ, and as time goes on as she submits to God and His Word, she will see great growth in Christ, which will reach completion when she is glorified. Nurturing an eternal mindset is key to healing from the effects of sexual abuse.

Because the problems she is experiencing are spiritual and linked to sin or the effects of sin, there is always great hope for change because of Christ (John 1:29; Rom 6:1-23; 1 Tim 1:15; Matt 1:21; Titus 2:4; 2 Pet 1:3-8). Although a woman can be traumatized by her past, it does not have to be a determining factor in who she is presently. Spiritually, she has a renewed heart, so she has the capacity to renew her unbiblical thinking and come out of the mire of shame. Knowing this, the biblical counselor will inspire hope by instructing her, not only to think biblically but to speak biblically about her problem by using biblical terms. Language is extremely important in biblical counseling. For instance, many times women who come in for help with regard to past sexual abuse will always see themselves as a “victim.” The world gives this label to them, forever a victim, so they filter everything through that label and it becomes their identity. Biblical counselors help them to see that yes, they were victimized by someone who has sinned against them in a real and horrible way, but they do not have to carry that around as an identity. Rather, as believers, their identity is rooted in their position in Christ—who God has declared them to be based on their belief in the finished work of Christ.

Finally, biblical counselors inspire hope by taking the counselee to specific examples in Scripture of Christians who endured similar trials. Tamar’s story in 2 Samuel is a very key narrative because it can be used as a way to help educate women to understand the mindset of a sexual predator.

As stated, the Christian woman struggling with spiritual issues such as anxiety, depression, or the effects of sexual abuse has many options when looking to others for help. She may seek out a Christian integrative counselor or a secular psychologist whose

goals and methodologies only deal with the outer man, or her behavior. Most of the therapies they prescribe are centered-around behavior modification, which may bring relief in the short term, but it does not bring lasting change in the believer's life.

Seeking help from a Christian integrative counselor or secular psychologist is similar to seeking out a mentor because they are experienced, skilled, and knowledgeable. Overall, they do care about hurting people and want to encourage and help the counselee toward personal growth; however, as a state licensed counselor, they are not allowed to share the gospel.

Equally, the biblical counselor is experienced, skilled, knowledgeable, and cares about people. In addition, the biblical counselor brings important beliefs into the counseling relationship. For one, the biblical counselor believes that the Bible is the Word of God and is sufficient for life. God's sufficient Word is what reveals to the counselee her need for a Savior. God's Word also reveals how to live a life that pleases and honors the Lord. The biblical counselor desires to relate God's Word individually to the woman who struggles with personal sin, like anxiety or depression or the difficulties with suffering like the effects of sexual abuse. Taking the counselee to God's Word with the help of the Holy Spirit will help her to experience genuine change in her inner person and be pleasing to God. The biblical counselor also believes that the Bible is the authoritative source for life. Any counseling theories that use methodologies that are inconsistent with the proper interpretation of the Bible should be rejected.

The counseling practice of women counseling women should include methodologies that exemplify dependence upon God, His Word, prayer, and modeling holy living, and the church. This is "teaching what is good" (Titus 2:3-4).

CHAPTER 4

DEVELOPING A CURRICULUM TO EQUIP WOMEN WHO COUNSEL WOMEN

The first three chapters laid the foundation for the Women Counseling Women (BC572) curriculum. This chapter discloses the content of the curriculum and details associated with the course.

Background of the Women Counseling Women Course

At The Master's University MABC program, Women Counseling Women (BC572) is offered as a weekly elective course offered in the spring to female students on Tuesday evenings, 5:30 p.m. to 7:20 p.m. The maximum amount of instruction was 110 minutes each week.¹

Demography of Class

The Women Counseling Women (BC572) course was implemented in spring 2017. Eleven women enrolled in the course.² There were three women in their 50s, one woman in her 40s, three women in their 30s, and four women in their 20s. The women had differing cultural backgrounds. Seven women were Caucasian, 3 were African-American, and 1 was Hispanic. Five students were considered distance learning students; thus, they were web-conferences into the live course each Tuesday evening. Each lecture was recorded and archived.

¹See appendix 4.

²Seven women were enrolled in the course as current MABC students for credit. Four women in the course were considered audit students.

Class Materials

Part of equipping and training the students in the basic concepts and distinctive features of women to women counseling came through the reading assignments. Students were assigned reading from specific chapters of *The Biblical Counseling Guide for Women* by John and Janie Street,³ *Picture Perfect: When Life Does Not Line Up* by Amy Baker, *Pleasing People: How Not To Be An Approval Junkie* and *Self-Image: How to Overcome Inferiority Judgments* by Lou Priola, and *Strength in Numbers: The Team Approach to Biblical Counseling* by Mark Shaw.⁴ Homework was required for each reading assignment.⁵

Another aspect of equipping and training the students in the basic concepts and distinctive features of women to women counseling came through individual projects. Each student selected one counseling problem or issue common to women and researched it thoroughly.⁶ Once the student completed the research section of their project, they wrote a paper that included a biblical analysis of the chosen issue, personal application, and change for the woman struggling. In addition, they presented their project to their peers and professor in class for a thirty-minute overview and a ten-minute question and answer time. All of the project presentations took place toward the end of the semester.

³The students read the chapters pertaining to the particular topics for the lectures (i.e., bitterness, anxiety, depression, transgenderism, and victims of abuse).

⁴John Street and Janie Street, *The Biblical Counseling Guide for Women* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2016); Lou Priola, *Self-Image: How to Overcome Inferiority Judgements* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2007); Amy Baker, *Picture Perfect: When Life Doesn't Line Up* (Greensboro, NC: New Growth, 2012); Mark E. Shaw, *Strength in Numbers: The Team Approach to Biblical Counseling* (Bemidji, MN: Focus, 2009)

⁵The students were instructed to answer the five questions at the end of each chapter in Street and Street, *The Biblical Counseling Guide for Women*, to be discussed in class. For other reading assignments, the students were asked to give a reading response report that included four questions: (1) did you read all of the assignment; (2) what key principles did you see in the assignment; (3) what were the most significant challenges or lessons you learned for your own life from the reading assignment?; and 4) was there anything you had questions about?

⁶Some examples of topics were (1) counseling women with infertility issues, (2) counseling women on parenting skills, (3) counseling women who choose adoption, and (4) counseling women who struggle with the idolization of motherhood.

Class Lectures

Each student had a PowerPoint presentation during class to assist her with engaging and listening to the lecture each week. In addition, the students had a chance toward the end of each lecture to participate in class discussion regarding the homework assignments and lecture.

Structure of Each Lecture

According to The Master's University MABC schedule, each course is divided into a sixteen-week semester. For the Women Counseling Woman course, there were ten weeks of direct instruction, one week for Spring break, one week off for Spring Reading Days, three weeks of presentation projects, and one final week that included a final exam.

Each lecture within the course began with prayer and a group recitation of the memory verse for the week. The prayer time was part of modeling the necessity of having prayer before a counseling session to demonstrate the importance of dependence upon the Lord.

Following the prayer time and group recitation of the weekly memory verse, the lecture time began and concluded after approximately 60 to 90 minutes. After a ten-minute break, the women in the course reviewed and discussed any assigned homework, which ranged from reading chapters and answering study questions, to having guided discussions about certain topics that women face within the counseling context. The homework review time provided the students an opportunity to share what they learned and applied.

The Content of the Women Counseling Women Curriculum

Ten lectures, one per week, focused on ten distinct topics—the mandate to train and equip women, the topics of bitterness, anxiety, depression, homosexuality, victim of abuse, perfectionism, self-image, people pleasing, and working with pastor/elders in the church with regard to counseling women. The additional course time

was devoted to group presentations of the various topics the students chose to present on. Each student was given feedback after their presentation from their peers as well as the professor. The following sections outline the goals and teaching content for each course lecture.

Lecture 1: Introduction to Women Counseling Women—The Mandate to Teach and Train

The main goals for the first lecture were to introduce the course, expectations, review the plan for the sixteen-week semester, and to introduce the curriculum by laying a biblical foundation for the women counseling women. After the students registered their attendance and I collected their invitations to participate in the research study, a lecture was given regarding the mandate to teach and train women.

To begin, the Great Commission was used as a foundational passage for teaching and training women to disciple other women. The Great Commission was divided into two sections: (1) proclaiming the truth about Jesus and (2) teaching others to observe what you have been taught and learn life on life (Matt 28:18-20). The emphasis of this lesson was on teaching others what the discipler has been taught. This lesson was further fleshed out by examining Colossians 1:28 in two-parts: (1) the importance of admonishment and (2) teaching centered on the Word of God until Christ is fully formed.

The lecture transitioned from the Great Commission and the general call for discipleship to a specific mandate for older women to teach and train younger women in the church. This lecture was taught using Titus 2:3-5 as the main text.⁷ This passage was divided into five sections: (1) context for the letter to Titus, (2) season of life for the Titus 2 woman, (3) the character of the Titus 2 woman, (4) the mandate to the Titus 2 woman, and (5) teaching and training of the Titus 2 woman today.

⁷Titus 2:3-5 is explained in more depth in chap. 2.

Toward the end, the lecture shifted into practical training for biblical counseling. This lecture was taught using 1 Thessalonians 5:14 as the main text. The passage focused on four sections: (1) admonishing the unruly counselee, (2) encouraging the fainthearted counselee, (3) helping the weak counselee, and (4) the mandate to be patient with all men (women).

Homework for the following week was to read chapter 4 of *The Biblical Counseling Guide for Women*,⁸ answer questions 1-5,⁹ do “Discovering Wonderful Things Worksheet” on Ephesians 4:31-32,¹⁰ and memorize Ephesians 4:31-32.

Lecture 2: Women Counseling Women Who Struggle with Bitterness

The goal of the second lecture helped the biblical counselor in training understand *bitterness* by (1) defining bitterness from extra-biblical resources and Scripture, (2) examining evidences of bitterness, (3) understanding the ruling motives in the heart, and (4) assisting with biblical and practical steps to root out bitterness for the glory of God.

As an introduction, the lecture began with a case study of a woman struggling with bitterness who came to counseling because she was having difficulty living with her unbelieving husband. Her story was woven throughout the lecture. Following the introduction, the student was exposed to three definitions of bitterness from three authors in the biblical counseling community that were reflective in the life of the case study.

The definitions were followed up by a biblical definition of bitterness in context provided in Ephesians 4:31. God reiterates that believer’s in Christ are to lay aside bitterness (Eph 4:31).

⁸Street and Street, “Bitterness,” in *The Biblical Counseling Guide for Women*, 67-81.

⁹Ibid., 80-81.

¹⁰Robert Somerville, “Discovering Wonderful Things Worksheet,” The Master’s University, 2013. See appendix 5.

Having provided a biblical definition of bitterness, the student was given five evidences that expose bitterness in a person's life: (1) withdrawal—a bitter person deprives the offender of their presence and avoids them all together; (2) criticizing, complaining, or slander—a bitter person's attitude and speech toward the offender is harsh, and meant to tear them down in some way; (3) difficulty resolving conflict—a bitter person will often reject the idea that they have contributed to the problem; (4) distrust—a bitter person who has dwelt too long on a hurt, even if the offender has asked for forgiveness, still has an ongoing distrust; and (5) acts of vengeance or repaying evil for evil—a bitter person who has been deeply hurt by others looks for ways to take vengeance out on their offender.¹¹

After taking time to explore a definition of bitterness, the mandate to lay aside bitterness, and some evidences that point to bitterness, the students were exposed to what drives bitterness in the heart by unpacking James 4:1-3. From this text, the student learned that every person has desires (v. 1). However, even good desires can become idolatrous if they rule the person's thoughts and actions (vv. 1-2). When a desire becomes idolatrous, it can easily manifest into a demand tempting the person to engage in sinful attitudes, such as frustration, anger, and bitterness.

At the end, the lecture became practical by giving the student steps toward laying aside bitterness. The first step is *repentance*. Once the woman recognizes her sin of bitterness, the counselor should encourage or induce the woman to repent, meaning to turn back or return to the Lord. There are six practical ingredients of repentance: (1) sight of sin, (2) sorrow for sin, (3) confession of sin, (4) shame for sin, (5) hatred for sin, and (6) turning from sin.¹² These ingredients can be gleaned from Psalm 51, which is one of the best examples of true repentance. In Psalm 51, David confesses his sin to God voluntarily, with sincerity, and resolve (vv. 1-3); is ashamed of his sin (v. 4); has a hatred for sin and a longing to reconcile with God (vv. 1-2, 11, 14-17).

¹¹Lou Priolo, *Bitterness: The Root That Pollutes* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2008), 8-12.

¹²Thomas Watson, *The Doctrine of Repentance* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1988), 7.

The second practical step for working out bitterness is to *renew*. One of the great graces that God gives the believer to help identify sin and ungodly desires and then deliver her from those things is His Word (Heb 4:12). The key areas of focus for the counselee struggling with bitterness are (1) to renew her mind with gospel truths (Eph 1-2; Col. 1-3), (2) examine her heart and discern if she has any responsibility in the situation she has grown bitter over (Matt 7:3-5), and (3) consider her body as dead to sin (Rom 6; Col 3:5-9; Gal. 2:20).

The third practical step for working out bitterness is to pursue righteousness. Although God exhorts believers to lay aside their bitterness (Eph 4:31), they are to step out in faith and walk in a manner worthy of their calling and to be kind (Col 3:12; Eph 4:32), tenderhearted (1 Pet 3:8-9; Col 3:12; Eph 4:32) and forgiving (Col 3:13; Eph 4:32).¹³

The last thirty to forty minutes of class were devoted to discussion of the homework. The following questions were discussed.¹⁴

1. Why do you think Bethany was so resistant to forgive Joel? How do you think Colossians 3:12-13 would help someone who was using the weapon of unforgiveness?
2. According to Ephesians 4:32 and Colossian 2:13-14, how has God forgiven you in Christ? What is it that makes God's forgiveness so remarkable?
3. Some bitter women will say this when they are faced with the biblical requirement to forgive, "I'll forgive him or her someday, but it will take me a really long time." What does this reveal about her heart? Can she really say she is forgiving as God in Christ forgave her?
4. Sometimes Christians will offer forgiveness because they believe doing so will make them feel better. Is that a legitimate reason for showing forgiveness?
5. Read Acts 8:14-24. What perceived right was Simon bitter about?

¹³Eph 4:31-32 is explained in more depth in chap. 2.

¹⁴The questions that follow are taken from Street and Street, *The Biblical Counseling Guide for Women*, 80. Some of the questions referred to "Joel" and "Bethany," who were part of the case study for this section.

Homework for the following week was to read chapter 2 of *The Biblical Counseling Guide for Women*,¹⁵ answer questions 1-5,¹⁶ do “Discovering Wonderful Things Worksheet,” on Philippians 4:6-8,¹⁷ and memorize Philippians 4:6-8.

Lecture 3: Women Counseling Women Who Struggle with Anxiety

The goal of the third lesson was to help the biblical counselor in training understand *anxiety* by (1) defining it from Scripture (Matt 6:25; Phil 4:6), (2) observing a biblical example who struggled with anxiety (Luke 10:38-42), and (3) practical application (Phil 4:4-9).

By way of introduction, the women in the course were given a case study of a woman suffering from anxiety. Her story led into the first point of the lecture, which was a biblical definition. There are two types of anxiety taught in Scripture, (1) godly concern—having the same care for one another (1 Cor 12:25) and (2) ungodly concern—caring for or being concerned about some future event (Matt 6:25; Phil 4:6).

Once the biblical definition was established with the class, the lecture focused on the manifestation of anxiety in everyday life from a day in the life of another woman in the Bible—Martha (Luke 10:38-42). Martha is characterized in Scripture as being drawn away, overly occupied, or too busy (v. 40). On the other hand, Mary was characterized as being focused as she sat at Christ’s feet (v. 39). Ungodly behaviors manifested from Martha’s ungodly concern (anxiety). She burst into the room and interrupted Jesus, humiliates Mary, and accuses Jesus of failing to care (vv. 38-39). As a result, Martha was exhorted by Christ to cease from anxiety and choose the good part (vv. 41-42). For further emphasis, it was pointed out that Jesus views ungodly concern

¹⁵Street and Street, “Anxiety,” in *The Biblical Counseling Guide for Women*, 35-51.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 51.

¹⁷Somerville, “Discovering Wonderful Things Worksheet.”

(anxiousness) as foolish (Matt 6:25-34), unproductive (Matt 27, 34), and unnecessary (Matt 6:28-30).

After spending a great deal of time discussing how anxiety is defined in the Bible, looking at ungodly concern by examining Martha's life and Jesus's response toward her, the students were given practical application from Philippians 4:4-9. Believers are exhorted not to be anxious but to rejoice because they have a (1) right response and awareness of God (vv. 4-5), (2) right praying (vv. 6-7), (3) right dwelling (v. 8), and (4) a right practice (v. 9).¹⁸

The last 30 to 40 minutes of class were devoted to discussion of the homework. The following questions were the topic of discussion.¹⁹

1. Many people make excuses for ongoing sin, saying that some sins cannot be overcome, that they are just a part of who they are. Read Philippians 4:4-9 and 2 Timothy 3:16-17. Write down the reasons why these excuses cannot be true.
2. What aspects of God's character are under attack when we fail to put off sinful anxiety?
3. Read Samuel 30:1-6. When David found out his wives and children had been captured by the enemy, he could have become anxious. Instead, how did he respond (verse 6)?
4. Read Psalm 37 aloud. What specific declarations does the psalm writer make about His God?
5. Read Psalm 73. Write out a description of the psalm writer in his despair, and then write what happened after he went into the sanctuary of God.

Homework for the following week was to read chapter 7 of *The Biblical Counseling Guide for Women*,²⁰ answer: questions 1-5,²¹ do "Discovering Wonderful Things Worksheet," Psalm 42:5-6,²² and memorize Psalm 42:5.

¹⁸One Eighty Counseling and Education, "Resources," accessed August 29, 2017, <http://oneeightycounseling.com/resources/>.

¹⁹Street and Street, *The Biblical Counseling Guide for Women*, 51.

²⁰Street and Street, "Depression," in *The Biblical Counseling Guide for Women*, 117-34.

²¹*Ibid.*, 132-33.

²²Somerville, "Discovering Wonderful Things Worksheet."

Lecture 4: Women Counseling Women Who Struggle with Depression

The goal of the third lesson was to help the biblical counselor in training understand *depression* by (1) providing a working definition, (2) instruction on data gathering, (3) discussion on depression in others, and (4) discussion on why people become depressed from differing perspectives.

To begin, a well-known biblical counseling definition was shared with the class on depression. Robert Smith writes, “Depression is that debilitating (weakening) mood, feeling, or air of hopelessness which becomes a person’s reason for not handling the most important issues of life.”²³

The students were then given direct instruction on the importance of gathering data for counselees who come to counseling with a presentation of depression (Jas 1:19; Prov 18:13, 17). Data gathering categories included (1) physical data, (2) resource data, (3) emotional data, (4) actions data, (5) personal convictions data, (6) historical data, and (7) halo data.²⁴

Once a definition for depression and the issue of data gathering was established. The lecture transitioned to focusing on depression in others. It was pointed out that depression is a significant problem in America—statistics were given from the National Institute of Mental Health.²⁵ Second, the students learned that depression is an effect, not the cause.²⁶ Thus, it is important to ask questions that look toward the counselee’s thinking

²³Robert Smith, *The Christian Counselor’s Medical Desk Reference* (Stanley, NC: Timeless Texts, 2000), 205.

²⁴Wayne Mack, *Introduction to Biblical Counseling* (Dallas: Word, 1994), 210.

²⁵National Institute of Medical Health, accessed May 28, 2017, <https://search.usa.gov/search?affiliate=hip&query=depression>.

²⁶A counselee’s understanding of depression typically stems from thinking that because they are tired most of the time, or cry a lot, or never get anything done—those factors are the “cause” of their depression problem. However, depression is typically an effect. For example, looking to the case study, it would be important to ask questions to understand what Sarah has stopped doing. Has she ceased to get her responsibilities done at home, like the normal chores one would expect? Is she trying to homeschool all

and actions that lead to “feelings.” It would also be key to listen to what the counselee says her wants, needs, expectations, desires, and rights are.

Next, the lecture flowed to why people get depressed? The students were introduced to a case study of depression (Sarah), and a secular perspective on depression that included (1) the psychologist’s view—depression is anger and resentment turned inward, (2) the behaviorist’s view—depression stems from a learned helplessness and hopelessness due to a lack of proper positive reinforcement in life, and (3) the biologist—depression is caused by genetics, chemical imbalance, neurotransmitter malfunction, or physical illness.

Once the secular perspective was understood, the students were given a biblical counselor’s view of depression. To begin, depression was described as a byproduct of living in a fallen world (Gen 3; Rom 5:12-21). Second, for the unbeliever, depression is possible because it is an effect of living without or being in a reconciled relationship with God (Eph 2:11, 12; Titus 1:2; 1 Tim 1:12; Rom 15:4, 13). An unbeliever, however, could be greatly helped with their depression should they repent and believe in the finished work of Jesus Christ (Ps 32).

It was further explained that depression does not only impact unbelievers. It is possible for a believer to struggle with depression as well because they too live in a fallen world, are struggling with their indwelling sin (Rom 7:15-20), and have not been able to put off the old man and put on the new man perfectly (Col 3:5-14). This side of heaven, a Christian’s walk with the Lord will have a cycle of struggling with sin, confession of sin, repentance of sin, extending forgiveness, renewal, and growth in faith that will only be completed into a perfect walk when they meet the Lord (Rom 7; Phil 1:6; 1 Cor 10:13). The believer will also continue to struggle with three enemies; the world, the flesh, and the devil (Rom 12:2; Eph 6:10, 18; Gal 5:16; 1 Pet 2:12).

three of her children? Part of the depressed feelings is that the counselee’s performance has ceased to be right; consequently, the feelings that follow are despairing.

To expand on the topic of depression further, the students learned about research done by medical professional and biblical counselor, Charles Hodges. According to Hodges, depression is often over diagnosed because there is no distinction being made between true depression and sadness.²⁷ In other words, a truly depressed person stops functioning, but most “depressed” people are just in a state of deep discouragement.²⁸ Biblical examples were used to compare and contrast an ungodly response leading to depression (Gen 4) and a godly response leading to trust in God (1 Sam 1-2).

The last 40 minutes of class were devoted to discussion of the homework.²⁹

1. Read Psalm 32:3-4. How do the soul and the body affect each other in the problem of depression?
2. What is the difference between discouragement and depression?
3. If the depression Donna experienced is brought on by discouraging circumstances, then why is repentance part of the solution?³⁰
4. How is depression an expression of “practical atheism?”
5. Read Jonah 4:1-11. What was the source of Jonah’s depression that led him to say, “It is better for me to die than to live?”

Homework for the following week was to read chapter 16 of *The Biblical Counseling Guide for Women*,³¹ answer questions 1-5,³² do “Discovering Wonderful Things Worksheet,” Ephesians 5:1-3,³³ and memorize Ephesians 5:1-2.

²⁷Charles D. Hodges, *Good Mood Bad Mood* (Wapwallopen, PA: Shepherd, 2012).

²⁸From personal observation, counselees with true depression do not leave their homes and cease to function normally for well over six months. They have weight loss, trouble concentrating, suicidal thoughts and feelings, restlessness, and sleeplessness. In contrast, a person struggling with deep discouragement or sadness keeps going.

²⁹Street and Street, *The Biblical Counseling Guide for Women*, 132-33.

³⁰“Donna” was part of the case study for this section.

³¹Street and Street, “Transgenderism,” in *The Biblical Counseling Guide for Women*, 289-327.

³²*Ibid.*, 326-27.

³³Somerville, “Discovering Wonderful Things Worksheet.”

Lecture 5: Women Counseling Women Who Struggle with Homosexuality

The goal of the fifth lesson was to help the biblical counselor in training understand women who struggle with *homosexuality* by (1) discussion of the four views in Christian circles, (2) discussion of key biblical passages, (3) practical help for the woman struggling with homosexuality, and (4) concluding with a case study.

Direct instruction began by exposing the students to four conversations concerning homosexuality in Christian circles today: (1) the Liberal Conversation, (2) the Biblical Revisionist Conversation, (3) the Neo-Traditional Conversation, and (4) the Biblical (or Traditional) Conversation.³⁴ The lecture focused on key passages in the Bible about homosexuality, including Genesis 19:1-22, Leviticus 18:22, 20:13, Romans 1:25-27, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, 1 Timothy 1:8-11, 2 Peter 2:4-10, and Jude 6, 7.³⁵ These passages supported the fourth view, which is the biblical conversation.

Once a biblical understanding of homosexuality was established, the lecture centered on the practical application of helping women who struggle with homosexuality. First, in an effort to promote change as a lifestyle, the counselor in training was taught how to help the counselee identify factors that may be hindering biblical change and then to help her take steps to eliminate hindrances. Second, the counselor was taught how to help the woman struggling with homosexuality to cultivate godly thinking, desires, and behavior by walking through the gospel to be sure she understands and has truly embraced it. Then as the counseling progresses, the counselor should help her identify heart lusts. Once her lusts are recognized, the counselor can help with the repentance process.

Part of the homework outside of studying Scripture could be keeping a temptation journal to help identify idols, encouraging the counselee to have an accountability partner in addition to the counselor, instituting a temptation and recovery

³⁴Denny Burk and Heath Lambert, *Transforming Homosexuality* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2015), 19-21.

³⁵See chap. 2 for a more in depth exegetical explanation.

plan, establishing a daily discipline of confession and repentance, and putting biblical change into action.

The lecture concluded with a case study of one who struggled with the sin of homosexuality most of their life. This story helped the counselor in training understand better heart desires and behavior of one who is in Christ but still struggles with the sin of homosexuality.

The last 40 minutes of class were devoted to discussion of the homework. The following questions were the topic of discussion:³⁶

1. Read through the first two chapters of Genesis. In your own words, write a description of God's creation of male and female—what the world calls binary gender.
2. Read Psalm 18:30-31, Deuteronomy 32:3-4, Isaiah 45:5-6. Think about the perfections of the Most High God, both in what He created (male and female) and in His essence and character. How would you answer Patricia's objection, "Then why did God give me the desires and feelings of a boy and put me into a girl's body?"
3. Read Colossians 3:12-17. Write down three ways in which you can befriend a Christian struggling with transgender or homosexual tendencies. Include ways in which your thinking needs to change.
4. Going back to Colossians 2:12-17, how might you encourage a woman whose child is struggling with transgenderism?
5. How might you encourage a Christian mom to influence her daughter toward a godly view of femininity?

Homework for the following week was to read chapter 17 of *The Biblical Counseling Guide for Women*,³⁷ answer questions 1-5,³⁸ and do journal observation notes for 2 Samuel 13:1-22.

³⁶Street and Street, *The Biblical Counseling Guide for Women*, 327.

³⁷*Ibid.*, 329-47.

³⁸*Ibid.*, 346-47.

Lecture 6: Women Counseling Women Who Struggle with Effects from Sexual Abuse

The goal of the sixth lesson was to help the biblical counselor in training understand women who struggle with the effects of *sexual abuse* by (1) providing statistics on sexual abuse, (2) examining Tamar's story, (3) providing a case study, and (4) helping the sexually abused.

By way of introduction, the lecture began with statistics and their impact.³⁹ The lecture then transitioned into Tamar's story from 2 Samuel 13. After discussing the student's own observations from the homework, there was a lecture on Tamar's story. In brief, Tamar, a virgin, was raped by her half-brother Amnon (v. 13). After she was violated by her brother, Scripture says he treated her with hatred (v. 15). After the assault, she left a desolate woman (v. 19).

This narrative is useful in three ways when counseling a woman struggling from the effects of sexual abuse: (1) to educate her, (2) to reinforce truth, and (3) to inspire compassion, care, and hope. First, it is important to educate the counselee and point out that, like Amnon, sexual predators often pick their victims carefully, know their vulnerabilities, and use that as a way to build trust and gain access to them. Second, it is important to reinforce that avenging evil is never an option for the believer. Tamar's other brother Absalom did so when he killed Amnon, but believers are clearly commanded by God never to avenge evil but leave it to the wrath of God (Rom 12:19; Ps 37:1-8). Third, this narrative could be used as a way to inspire compassion, care, and hope. Although Tamar left distraught and without hope, that should never be the case with these counselees. The counselor needs to show sincere care for these women thereby modeling Jesus's compassionate care for all men and women. The counselor can

³⁹This information was taken from Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network, "Statistics, 2009, accessed March 16, 2016, <https://www.rainn.org/statistics>. One in four girls and one in five boys endure sexual abuse of some kind by the time they reach the age of 18. This issue was expanded on in chap. 2.

also point this woman to Christ where she will find grace and mercy in her time of need—Jesus is her Sympathetic High Priest (Heb 4:14-16).

To conclude, the class was introduced to a case study of a woman who was sexually assaulted by her youth pastor eight years before she came to see her biblical counselor. Despite the years, she continued to struggle and carry intense shame. Her story closely parallels Tamar. A few things were pointed out that may help the counselor understand a common pattern of thinking in women who struggle with effects of sexual abuse. For one, this counselee was greatly *confused*. She was close to the youth pastor and his family—she said she felt like part of the family. Second, this counselee was *stunned*. She was in shock that a person she greatly trusted and looked up to would do such a terrible thing. Third, this counselee felt *intense shame*. She thought she had caused the sexual abuse in some way and felt that she was ruined for her future marriage.

After sharing this case study, the lecture concluded with help and hope for the sexually abused.

1. Insure that the counselee has an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ by teaching them the nature of true salvation (John 3:3, 36).
2. Help the counselee strengthen her relationship with Christ by assisting her in developing good spiritual discipline habits, such as reading, studying, memorizing, and meditating upon the Word of God, as well as prayer (Dan 11:32).
3. Help the counselee understand that the Bible speaks specifically about her problem (2 Tim 3:16-17).
4. Help the counselee grow in a lofty view of God and spend time correcting erroneous views or concepts of God she might have.
5. Help the counselee to see the potential for good in every situation (Rom 8:28; Jas 1:2-4).
6. It is hopeful when the counselor takes the time to share the resources they have in Christ (Rom 8:37; 2 Cor 9:8; Phil, 4:13; 2 Pet 1:3).
7. Help her not only to think biblically but also to speak biblically about her by instructing them in biblical terms.
8. Model hope for the counselee by sharing times in life when God exceeded expectations (Eph 3:20).
9. Commend the counselee for her willingness to seek counsel.

10. Encourage her frequently with Philippians 1:6.
11. Take her to specific examples in Scripture of others who endured similar trials and use that as a way to teach important truths (2 Sam 13).
12. Help the counselee to report the abuse to the authorities if it applies (Rom. 13).

The last 40 minutes of class were devoted to discussion of the homework. The following questions were the topic of discussion.⁴⁰

1. When Amanda was questioning God and accusing Him of forsaking her, this revealed in her that she did not God or His promises to her. In what specific ways did this kind of heart lead her to despair?
2. Read Isaiah 40:27-27-31. How might these truths bring hope to Amanda in her situation?
3. While it would be our hope that an abuser would repent of his abuse and begin to love the one he afflicts, this is not promised. What does God promise the afflicted one? As you answer, consider Psalm 22:24; 34:21; 119:50; 92; Isaiah 30:20; 63:9.
4. Read Lamentations 3:1-33. What is the hope of every child of God who suffers affliction?

Homework for the following week was to read the entire book, *Picture Perfect: When Life Does Not Line Up*,⁴¹ answer questions from a reading response form, do “Discovering Wonderful Things Worksheet,” Galatians 3:3,⁴² and memorize Galatians 3:3.

Lecture 7: Women Counseling Women Who Struggle with Perfectionism

The goal of the lesson 7 was to help the biblical counselor in training understand a woman who struggles with *perfectionism* by (1) discussing the five elements of change and (2) using a case study to filter through The Big Picture Chart.⁴³

⁴⁰Street and Street, *The Biblical Counseling Guide for Women*, 346-47. “Amanda” was the case study for the chapter reading.

⁴¹Baker, *Picture Perfect*.

⁴²Somerville, “Discovering Wonderful Things Worksheet.”

⁴³Timothy Lane and Paul Tripp, *How People Change* (Greensboro, NC: New Growth, 2008), 84.

By way of introduction, the students took a quiz to see if they might lean toward perfectionism. They were asked to answer “yes” or “no” to the following statements: (1) you have cried or been very upset about getting a B+ or ended up in second place, (2) you want to be the best at everything you do and you become upset at making a mistake, (3) you are characterized as someone who is eager to please and go to great lengths to avoid being mediocre or average, and (4) you are a procrastinator.⁴⁴ If they answered “yes” to all or most, then typically they may *struggle* with perfectionism. The class then transitioned with a case study about Taylor, a woman who struggles with perfectionism.

In an effort to help Taylor, the class was introduced to a counseling tool known as The Big Picture Chart. This chart presents the “five change” elements that the Bible repeatedly includes in the change process that God institutes in life. To begin, as a biblical basis for The Big Picture Chart, the students read Psalm 1:1-3. According to the Psalmist, people are likened to a tree. Like a tree, they either produce good fruit or bad fruit. The Psalmist also points out that the blessed man avoids sin and focuses upon the Word of God which guides his walk and rejoices the heart (vv. 1-2). In summary, if one has a reliance upon and a delight in God and His Word, then the person will have deep roots beside the river of God’s grace and will bear good fruit in its season. This tree does not wither when the heat comes; rather, it continues to prosper or produce fruit that is righteous. The same principle is taught in Jeremiah 17:5-10. In that case, the fruitful tree is a man who trusts in the Lord.

With a biblical basis in mind, the student’s attention is directed to the first element of biblical change on The Big Picture Chart, which is *The Heat*. When a counselee comes for counsel, they are reacting to something. With respect to the case study, the class discerned that Taylor was trying to live up to a standard she has created for herself,

⁴⁴Baker, *Picture Perfect*, 8-9.

and she wants everyone else to live up to that same standard whether it be her co-workers or her family.⁴⁵

The next element of change on the The Big Picture Chart is *The Bad Fruit*, or the ungodly responses in light of the counselee's heat. In Taylor's case, she was not remaining green and prosperous while under trial; instead, she was withering under the heat—very much like the person Jeremiah talks about in Jeremiah 17:5-6, who is trusting in man and making his flesh his strength. To understand better what some of the bad fruit might be, the counselor needs to ask questions such as, “How is she acting, reacting, and responding to her heat?” “What does she feel?” “What did she do?” “What words expressed her actions?” “What did she think?” “What was her attitude about the whole thing?”

The students discerned that Taylor's bad fruit or ungodly responses were (1) critical demands of others, (2) unwillingness to show grace, (3) high expectations on self and others, and (4) the scourging of others and self if a mistake is made. The bad fruit, or ungodly responses, are what is referred to as outer man behavior in the Bible. Taylor's bad fruit gives insight into what might be going on in the heart of the counselee (Luke 6:45). Once the counselee understands her ungodly responses, it is important to bring to her attention the “reaping-sowing principle,” or the consequences of her outer man behavior (Gal 6:7-9). In Taylor's case, she had a string of broken relationships, people do not enjoy being around her, her kids tried to avoid her, and her husband secretly could not stand to be around her. Her bad fruit represents the symptomatic feelings. However, God sees the inner person, which is where the problematic heart issues reside, bringing the student to the next element of change on the The Big Picture Chart,” which is *The Heart*. Stuart Scott once said in class, “So many try to divide the heart and head. But

⁴⁵The case study provided good information to help answer the following questions: What is the situation? What is she responding to that is coming down on her? What does she want that she is not getting? The students also asked me questions in case something was not clear.

when the Bible speaks about the mind or the heart of a person, it is referring to a person's inner self."⁴⁶ The heart is where a person's cognition, affections, volition, purposes, desires, doubts, reasoning, plans and motivations reside (Prov 4:23; 23:7; Ezek 14:3).

To discern what might be going on in Taylor's heart, questions can be asked, such as, "What do you want, desire, crave, lust, and wish for?" "What desires do you serve and obey?" "How would you fill this in, I must have _____ in order to happy, fulfilled, and satisfied." "What do you seek, aim for, and pursue?" "What are your goals and expectations?" "Where do you bank your hopes?" "What do you fear?" "What do you not want?" "What do you tend to worry about?" The goal is to discern as best as the counselor can the idols Taylor has taken into her heart that are motivating or driving the behavior (Mark 7:14-15).⁴⁷

Ultimately, at the heart level, it was discerned that Taylor has created a standard that she is ultimately worshipping. In her mind, this standard is what brings her safety, comfort, and superiority. However, this standard does not drive Taylor to love God or others. In the end, Taylor's desire for perfection springs from a heart that longs to be satisfied and sufficient in herself. Consequently, she has turned her heart away from God because she is trusting in her own flesh and worshiping self. She is miserable because she is using the wrong standard of perfection.

Thankfully, there is always hope for the counselee bringing her to the next element on The Big Picture Chart, which is *Redeemer (The Gospel)*. Once Taylor recognizes her sin, she can turn toward the Lord and repent of the idols that are ruling her heart (1 John 1:9). She can also begin the process of learning how to replace ungodly attitudes with a desire to please God (Eph 4:17-24). Part of the conversation involves the gospel because it is the counselor's responsibility to make sure she has a right

⁴⁶Stuart Scott, 2015, lecture, 80551—*Introduction to Biblical Counseling*, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, July 15, 2015.

⁴⁷David Powlison, "X-Ray Questions: Drawing Out the Whys and Wherefores of Human Behavior," *The Journal of Biblical Counseling* 18, no. 1 (Fall 1999): 2-9

understanding of it. Thus, the gospel can be rehearsed with her to be sure she understands it, and trusts in Christ and His finished work for her salvation. If she is truly saved, she has the capacity to bear good fruit for the glory of God as she abides in him (John 15).

At the end of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, he says, "Every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit" (Matt 7:17). The only way to have good fruit is to be a tree that is stable, and healthy from the root up. This is reflective of what is taught in the last element of the The Big Picture Chart, which is *The Good Fruit*.

As the students had already learned, Taylor was settling for a perfectionistic standard that was merely external. Some in her life may have respected her because of her high standards at work and her rising to the top. However, something was terribly wrong as evidenced by her critical demands, broken relationships, and her lack of grace shown to others. At the root or heart level, she was living for self—which is the opposite of how Christ lived. If Taylor recognizes her heart problem, repents by turning from her idolatrous lusts, and sees herself as broken without any possibility of living the "perfect life" on her own, she will begin to bear good fruit for the glory of God. Part of the job of the counselor is to help the counselee learn how to respond with the help of the Holy Spirit and begin to live in a new way according to what God teaches in His Word. The class spent time walking through *The Big Picture Chart* in this lecture, which took up the entire time.

Homework for the following week was to read *Self Image: How to Overcome Inferiority Judgements*,⁴⁸ do "Discovering Wonderful Things Worksheet," 1 Samuel 16:7,⁴⁹ and memorize 1 Samuel 16:7.

⁴⁸Priolo, *Self-Image*.

⁴⁹Somerville, "Discovering Wonderful Things Worksheet."

Lecture 8: Women Counseling Women Who Struggle with Self-Image/Self-Esteem

The goal of the lesson 7 was to help the biblical counselor in training understand women who struggle with *self-image and/or self-esteem* by introducing them to (1) a secular perspective, (2) a historical background of the self-esteem movement, 3) a background on how the self-esteem movement infiltrated the church, 4) a case study, and 3) a biblical perspective on whether or not self-esteem is a biblical concept.

To begin, the students were introduced to the concept of self-image from a secular perspective. According to the secular community, all people have a certain image of self. This image is based on their own assessment of their abilities, how they look, how smart they are, whether they are popular, and other personal qualities. This concept is broken down into three categories: (1) how you *view* yourself, (2) how others *view* you, and (3) how you think others *view* you.⁵⁰ Although self-image is not a biblical concept, biblically speaking, people do make judgments about self (1 Cor 2:15). In 1 Corinthians 2:15, the apostle Paul uses the word “judge” as a means to examine or evaluate. The spiritual person should examine and then form a self-evaluation. As a result of self-examination, she may end up feeling good or bad about herself because “feelings” flow out of thinking (Luke 6:45).⁵¹ Unfortunately, because hearts are deceitful above all things, the judgments people make about themselves can often be inaccurate and distorted (Jer 17:9).⁵² A person’s self-oriented judgements are the root of what the world calls self-esteem.

Following the introduction, the class transitioned into a historical background of the self-esteem movement, from the 1960s to the present. The first focus was on

⁵⁰Karl Perera, “What Is Self Image?,” 2013, accessed May 26, 2017, <http://www.more-selfesteem.com/selfimage.htm>.

⁵¹Priolo, *Self-Image*, 6.

⁵²*Ibid.*, 7.

Abraham Maslow, a well-known American psychologist who had a huge impact in America due to his pyramid known as the “Hierarchy of Needs.”⁵³ Maslow believed that a person must satisfy lower level deficit needs on the pyramid before progressing on to meet higher-level growth needs. At the lowest level, the first deficit need is *physiological* or the *physical needs* of a human being. According to Maslow, until the most basic needs are met, like food, clothing, and shelter, a person will not be motivated toward the next need, which is *safety* or *security*. This level has to do with a person’s personal and financial safety as well as a safety net against accidents. Once those needs are met, a person will concern herself with the next need, which is *love* and *belonging*, which is a person’s need for interpersonal involvement with others and the need to belong to a community of others. Once this need is taken care, then focus becomes *self-esteem*. From Maslow’s point of view, self-esteem is the need to feel respected, including the need to respect self or to have a good self-esteem. He believed that until people accepted who they were internally, they would not be successful or self-actualized in their life. However, if the need was met, then a person would become *self-actualized*, or be all that a man can be. According to Maslow, Self-actualization represents a person’s full potential, and the fulfilling of that potential.⁵⁴

Transitioning from the humanistic teaching of Maslow, the students were introduced to a few Christian psychologists influenced by Maslow. These men often integrated Maslow’s model into their Christian counseling and writing. Two of the advocates of the self-esteem movement include James Dobson and Bruce Narramore.⁵⁵

⁵³Saul McLeod, ed., “Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs,” 2016, accessed May 24, 2017, <https://simplypsychology.org/maslow.html>.

⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵James Dobson, *What Wives Wish Their Husbands Knew about Women* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1975), 35. As an example, Dobson writes, “If I could write a prescription for the women of the world, I would provide each one of them with a healthy dose of self-esteem and personal worth...I have no doubt that this is their greatest need.”

In the 1970s and 1980s, the self-esteem movement crept into the church. Walter Trobisch, missionary to Cameroon and family counselor, states, “You cannot love God or your neighbor, unless you first love yourself.”⁵⁶ Overtime, this mindset was labeled the self-love gospel, which is still prevalent in many churches today.⁵⁷

After discussing the history of the self-image/self-esteem movement from a secular perspective and how it made its way into the church, the class was directed to a case study of a Christian woman influenced by the self-esteem movement.⁵⁸ As an overview, she claimed to have low self-esteem issues after her husband divorced her. She had feelings of inferiority. Her goal was to improve her self-image and she was hoping the counselor would help her.

From this case study, the students were instructed to compile data about this woman’s belief system. First, they discovered that she believes that her self-image is an entity. However, the concept of self-image is not taught in the Bible. Therefore, she is making a judgment about herself and forming a self-evaluation.⁵⁹ Second, this woman believed her low self-esteem was caused by her circumstance. Though, the students were quick to remember from their last lecture that her circumstances (the heat), does not have to rule her thoughts, thereby dictating her actions. Instead, a believer has the capacity to

⁵⁶Walter Trobisch, *Love Yourself* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity, 1976), 11. Trobisch had a big influence on the church with regard to the *self-love* gospel. Trobisch writes, “Self-love is the prerequisite and the criterion for our conduct towards our neighbor . . . without self-love there can be no love for others . . . you cannot love neighbor, you cannot love God unless you first love yourself.” He is essentially stating that one’s own self-esteem needs must be met first before being able to obey God’s first and second command, which is to love God and Neighbor.

⁵⁷J. W. Jepson, *Don’t Blame It on Adam* (Minneapolis: Bethany, 1984), 85. Jepson explains, “People who have poor self-image, who fail to realize their own self-worth, who are always belittling themselves, these people usually have difficulty in loving others properly. . . . So love yourself, Christian, as you should love others.”

⁵⁸The assumption was that she was a believer but had been influenced by what is taught in the self-esteem tenets.

⁵⁹Priolo, *Self-Image*, 6. Priolo teaches that “self-image is not an entity or an organ of the soul that can be squashed, flattened, punctured, inflated, deflated, damaged, or devastated. It can’t be isolated, fixed, or modified, at least not directly.”

take her eyes off of self and look to Christ and His Word for help and comfort (Heb 4:14-16). Third, this woman believed she would never change. This is not biblical thinking. God transforms the hearts of believers as they look to Him and His Word for help and refuse to live with a victim mentality (Eph 4:22-24). Fourth, she believed that until she felt “good” about herself, she could not get on with life. This idea is a violation of Jesus’ command to love God with all and love your neighbor as you love yourself (Matt 11:29). Finally, she believed that God’s ability to help others was dependent upon having a good self-image (Rom 8:28-29). This was a wrong view of positional sanctification. Positionally, God has *begun* a good work in her already (Phil 1:6). He has removed the guilt and penalty of her sin while at the same time declaring her righteous through Christ’s atoning sacrifice. Her heart has been regenerated so now there is a cooperation to *walk* in such a way that brings glory to God in her life (Eph 4:1-3).

She also had a wrong view of progressive sanctification, which is her freedom from the power of sin. Since she has been buried with Christ into His death, just as Christ was raised from the dead, she too might walk in newness of life (Rom 6:4). God will sanctify her whether she has a good self-evaluation or not. It is His choosing and His doing, despite her. At some point in the counseling it should be pointed out to her that God is causing all things to work together for her good, even in divorce. In the midst of her trial, God is conforming her into the image of Christ as she steps out in faith each day and chooses to obey Him out of love for Him (Rom 8:28-29).

In conclusion, the students were directed to God’s Word to discover whether the tenets of the self-esteem movement line up with the Bible. As stated, the self-esteem movement claims that certain *needs* must be met before one can move up the pyramid to success. So, what does the Bible say a person’s greatest need is? According to Jesus, one’s greatest *need* is to hear and believe in Him (Luke 10:42). When a believer dies, food and clothing will mean nothing. What will matter is whether they have spent time with Christ and have fed on His Words. The greatest “need” is not clothes, shelter, food,

security, belonging, or self-esteem. The believer's greatest need is Christ, for He is the Bread of Life.

Second, is the believer ever commanded to love self? The answer comes in Matthew 22:37-40 where Jesus clearly gives only two commands: (1) love God with all and 2) love neighbor as yourself. The second command is not a command to love self as many of the self-esteem advocates in Christian circles teach. Rather, Jay Adams states that the literal translation reads, "You must love your neighbor as you are 'already' loving yourself. Love in this context is a matter of giving, not receiving."⁶⁰

Finally, is the believer to be concerned with or to be seeking a better self-esteem? According to Jesus in Luke 12:31, the believer is to be seeking His kingdom, not a better self. Jesus is King of heaven and earth, and as his subjects through repentance and faith, He wants believers to seek to know Him better so that they can bear spiritual fruit that brings Him honor and glory.

In that same passage, Jesus also says when believers run after those basic things Maslow speaks of in his hierarchy of needs, such as food and clothing, they are succumbing to a pagan worldview (Luke 12:39-30). Those basic things are needed, but they are not to be the primary concern of life. The point Jesus is trying to make is that if the believer (disciple) seeks the higher, which is Him and His kingdom, then He will add the lower. Believers are always to put Christ and others first. All of those other needs are secondary.⁶¹

⁶⁰Jay Adams, *The Biblical View of Self-Esteem, Self-Love, and Self-Image* (Stanley, NC: Timeless Texts, 1986), 7. Commentating on Matt 22:37-40, Adams writes, "There is no need for concern about how to love one's self, for so long as one seeks first to love God and his neighbor in a biblical fashion, all proper self-concern will appear as a by-product." Ibid.

⁶¹Ibid., 7-10.

Lecture 9: Women Counseling Women Who Struggle with People-Pleasing

The goal of the lesson 9 was to help the biblical counselor in training understand women who struggle with *people pleasing* by (1) examining four characteristics of a people pleaser and (2) four characteristics of a God pleaser.

By way of introduction, the students were given a definition of “codependency.” Although a secular label, co-dependency is characterized as people-pleasing in God’s Word (John 12:43).⁶² As the lecture progressed, the students were directed toward God’s Word and given an opportunity to look at four characteristics of a people-pleaser. First, a people-pleaser has a *wrong affection* (John 12:42-43). Like the Pharisee of Jesus’ day, instead of setting their affection (deep love) upon God and His glory, a people-pleaser’s affections are set upon what they love more, which is the approval of men. People pleasing is a two-sided coin. Priolo states, “On the one side is a love or desire for approval. On the other side is a fear of losing something.”⁶³ People pleasing is illustrated well in John 12:42-43 where the “believing” rulers loved the approval of man more than God but they also feared losing their reputation and being kicked out of the synagogue should they stand up for truth.

When a believer’s attitude is centered upon the approval of man, many behaviors manifest in their life, such as a hesitancy to share the gospel for fear of being rejected. The believer would also lack desire in serving in ministry, nurturing close relationships, and avoiding conflict resolution.⁶⁴

⁶²Many in the secular community label co-dependency as a disease of “loss of self.” Meaning that because this person has an imbalance in her view of helping others, she becomes the rescuer, the supporter, or the confidante to an extreme degree so that she can fill up some emotional void in their own soul. However, biblically speaking, codependency is characterized as an excessive reliance upon others for approval rather than looking to God, which is “idolatry.” As one observes the behaviors or the outer man actions, the more specific biblical label would be “people pleaser.”

⁶³Lou Priolo, *People Pleasing: How Not to Be an Approval Junkie* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2007), 22.

⁶⁴These behaviors are some of the bad fruit I have observed in counselees who struggle with people-pleasing. If they have been hurt before, they cannot bear the thought of being hurt in that way again,

The second characteristic typically seen in a people-pleaser is a *wrong focus* (Matt 23:5-7). Like the Pharisee of Jesus day, people-pleasers are often characterized as those who do deeds to be noticed by men (v. 5) and love the place of honor or being honored (vv. 6-7). Some behaviors that might ensue with this kind of wrong focus are having superficial friendships, taking on ministry responsibilities to be noticed by others, and withdrawing from relationships because of dwelling on criticism too long—either their own self-evaluation or the criticism of others.⁶⁵

The third characteristic in a people-pleaser can be a *wrong motive* (Eph 6:5-7). For example, people-pleasers often do a good job just to be seen by their boss. They also try hard to make a good impression or are self-promoters. Some behaviors that could manifest could include lying to earn favor with the boss, telling on a person to make themselves look good, and over-committing to outside ministry or service to the neglect of family.⁶⁶

Another characteristic that might be displayed in a people-pleaser is a *wrong attitude* (Jas 2:1-4). James 2 is written and meant to show how to live out faith in relation to others within the church. As a group, the class worked through discussion questions to glean people-pleasing tendencies from the text that were evident with the original

so it hinders them from using their gifts and edifying the body of Christ. Another behavior is not nurturing close relationships, they do not want to be transparent with others for fear of being judged or “found out.” They might also avoid conflict resolution because if there is an issue in a relationships, they are so focused on the approval of others that they will not typically view that as an opportunity to work through an issue. Instead, they would rather avoid it all together. Consequently, they still have unresolved issues going on in their life.

⁶⁵A common observation of people-pleasers is that they do not want to go too deep with others, because they do not want others to know the *real* them—they fear being transparent. Alternatively, they might be willing to take on a ministry task because it has the potential to place them in a role of leadership thereby affording them the opportunity to receive the praises of men. They might also have strained relationships with others because they dwell too long on criticism they have received in the past so they despair over it.

⁶⁶A common observation of a people pleaser can be a desire to impress a boss at work, so they resort to telling lies in an effort to earn his favor. Another issue is telling on fellow co-workers in an effort to be put in a more favorable light (this has been observed in a work or ministry context). Also, if a person is focused on impressing others.

audience and also displayed in their current local church context. The questions included (1) what attitude is James warning the believer about?, (2) what does that attitude mean?, (3) according to verses 2 and 3, how did this attitude manifest itself in the churches in James day?, and 4) what might this wrong attitude look like in church today?

The students' attention were guided toward looking at the heart of a people-pleaser. In other words, what drives a people-pleaser? From God's Word, the student's observed that pride is at the root, but to be more specific, certain manifestations of pride include (1) being consumed with what people think (Gal 1:10), 2) seeing self as better than others (Luke 7:36-50), (3) no close relationships (Prov 18:1-2), (4) inflated view of importance, gifts, and abilities (1 Cor 4:7), (5) devastated or angered by criticism (Prov 13:1), (6) needing recognition in service (Gal 5:13), and (7) Blame-shifting (Gen 3:12).⁶⁷

Once the counselee recognizes their particular manifestation of pride associated with their people-pleasing, she needs to be encouraged to turn from sin through confession and repentance, and turn her attention toward God and strive toward being a God-pleaser while abiding in Christ. The heart that fuels the behavior of a people-pleaser is pride in all its particular manifestations; but a heart that strives to please God is fueled by humility.

A characteristic of a God-pleaser include a *right affection* (Eph 5:17; Col 3:1-4). A God-pleaser sets affection upon God and His Word. A right affection manifests good fruit, such as (1) serving others out of a heart that loves God and others, (2) putting others before herself, (3) sharing the gospel as God gives opportunity.

A second characteristic is a *right focus* (1 Sam 16:7; 1 Pet 3:4; Phil 4:13). A God-pleaser is more concerned with what is going on in the inner man because that is what is precious to the Lord. Some effects of a right focus include evaluating not as man does, but as God does, and making decisions based on what pleases God in His Word.

⁶⁷Stuart Scott, *From Pride to Humility* (Bemidji, MN: Focus, 2002), 6-10.

A third characteristic is a *right motive* (Eph 6:5-7; Matt 12:31; Phil 4:6). A God-pleaser seeks Christ's kingdom and trusts in Him. A God pleaser is also called to obey the Lord with fear and trembling and a sincere heart (Col 3:22). Her dependence is upon Christ who strengthens her. Some other manifestations of having a right motive include less of a struggle with worry, doubt, and anxiety.

A fourth characteristic of a God-pleaser is a *right attitude* (Rom 12:16). A God pleaser does not see herself as better than others. She understands that she is a sinner in need of grace every day. By faith, she reaches out to others as God gives opportunity. Some effects of having a right attitude include being grateful for God's forgiveness, reaching out to others without partiality, and being gentle and patient with others (Eph 4:32; Jas 2:8; 1 Thess 5:14).

Lecture 10: Partnership Approach with Women Counseling Women

The goal of lesson 10 was to help the biblical counselor in training understand the dynamics of *working together as a team* of biblical counselors in the local church context by (1) defining a team approach to biblical counseling, (2) discussing the benefits of a team approach to counseling, (3) exposing some concerns about a team approach, and (4) examining biblical examples of a team approach in ministry.

The lecture opened with Proverbs 11:14: "Where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety." Most biblical counselors experience the one-on-one biblical counseling encounter. However, a team approach can also be a great blessing to the church. The students were given a working definition of a partnership approach to biblical counseling: biblical counselors in a local church setting seeking to work collaboratively on particular counseling cases with the goal of mutually encouraging and exhorting the counselees to glorify God and grow in Christ-likeness during the one-on-one counseling encounters as well as the combined meeting times.

Benefits to a partnership include an opportunity to (1) maintain a balanced perspective (Prov 18:2), (2) be mutually encouraging of one another (Heb 10:24), (3) be a source of mutual accountability for all involved (Gal 6:1), (4) work with an elder or pastor in the church (Heb 13:17), and (5) mutually sharpen one another (Prov 27:17).

The lecture transitioned into biblical examples that illustrate a partnership approach in ministry. Some examples included Paul and Barnabas who exemplified a united front while on the mission's field (Acts 13:3, 5), and Jesus sending his disciples out two-by-two, which provided support for the disciples (Luke 10:1, Matt 18:16). The students were reminded of Ecclesiastes 4:12, which points out that two are better than one because they will have a good return for their labor, are able to help one another in time of need, provide emotional support, and provide protection. (v. 10-12).

Although there are a great many benefits, it was profitable to discuss concerns associated with a partnership approach, including (1) difficulty aligning everyone's schedule, (2) the sin of pride, and (3) no desire to be involved in a partnership approach. After explaining these concerns, the students were encouraged to press on because the benefits far outweigh the concerns.

After discussing the benefits, biblical examples, and concerns, the students were given a case study of a married couple where the pastor of the church and two biblical counselors were involved. The pastor met with the couple once a month for marriage counseling. The other two counselors met with the wife and husband individually for a one-on-one meeting to work on specific heart issues. In addition, the pastor and two biblical counselors met to brief one another and strategize toward a common goal for the couple. All of the benefits mentioned in the lecture flowed out of this case study.

In conclusion to this lecture, it was pointed out that God uses biblical counseling within the local church as a means to build up the body of Christ. One aspect of biblical counseling involves one-on-one encounters that involve giving admonition and

encouragement from the Scriptures. In addition, there is a time when biblical counselors ought to pull together as a team, which brings a completely new dynamic that is extremely rewarding and offers the counselor a plethora of benefits.

Conclusion

Over the ten weeks of instruction, the women in the class were encouraged by the curriculum that better equipped them for the ministry of biblical counseling in their local church.⁶⁸ Several students commented on how much they appreciated what they were learning each week and very much looked forward to their time together. God was gracious to better equip and train the women in this redesigned Women Counseling Women (BC572) course to come alongside others who struggle with sin or suffer from the effects of sin. In addition, by learning about these topics, as evidenced in the homework assignments, students were led to examine their own walks with the Lord.

⁶⁸Ten local churches were represented in this class.

CHAPTER 5

EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

The purpose of this chapter is to evaluate the sixteen-week course designed to equip women in the M.A.B.C. program toward effective and competent biblical counseling for their local churches and for the glory of God. The project was implemented from January through May 2017 at The Master’s University.¹ Eleven students enrolled in the *Women Counseling Women* course desirous of being better equipped to counsel other women from their local churches and thankfully, eager to grow in their own walk with the Lord. This course was able to accomplish both of their desires by the grace of God.

Although the main goal for the course was to help the students grow in their competency as a biblical counselor, it was personally encouraging to witness the student’s own spiritual growth as they applied what they were learning to their lives. Of particular note, three of the eleven students were experiencing great trial in their life during this course. All three testified through personal interviews that the coursework and lectures ministered to them and helped them work through their various trials biblically. Moreover, many of the students learned and grew in their walks with the Lord. One specific student was a stand-out as she claimed to be greatly impacted by the material associated with the topic of *self-image/self-esteem*. Here is an excerpt from what she learned from her course work and lecture, and how she applied it into her own life:

At the time, I had just had a frustrating situation with my daughter that had spiraled into a heated argument, accompanied with hurt feelings and a breakdown in communication. I felt this was the perfect opportunity to reach out to a sister in Christ who knew the areas of difficulty for me as a parent with teenagers. I followed the plan and asked her opinion of my category I, *inferiority judgements*—“I’m not a good mother” and “My children don’t love me.” Since she knows the history of my

¹See appendix 5 for syllabus.

divorce and the issues that sometimes flare up with my children, she reminded me that these statements existed because I allowed them to become the “objects” of my affection. At this time, I was convicted of my idol sin of putting my children first before God (Exodus 20:2). I repented of my sins and vowed to uphold consistent parental rebuke and discipline when my children failed to honor me as their mother. I also repented for “beating myself up” time and time again for associating my children’s disrespectful attitudes with not “being a good mother”, which was dishonoring to the Lord. . . . I desire to help others with their inaccurate and accurate perceptions too, especially knowing women who have similar struggles as a mother.²

Evaluation of the Project Purpose

The purpose of this project was to redevelop the course known as *Women Counseling Women* for the students enrolled in The Master of Arts Program at The Master’s University in Santa Clarita, California. In order to accomplish this purpose, past graduate students who took this course were surveyed, ten lectures specifically focused on the dynamics of women counseling women were developed, an expert panel evaluated the curriculum, and the project was implemented in spring 2017. To my surprise and delight, eleven women enrolled in the course, and they were excited and eager to participate, which exceeded my expectations. By the end of the course, all eleven women came away with a personal testimony of believing they were better equipped to counsel other woman in their respective local church context.³

Evaluation of the Project Goals

The first goal of this project was to assess the satisfaction of past graduate students who completed the *Women Counseling Women* course. The goal was measured effectively through a survey administered prior to the beginning of the course.⁴ The survey included questions about their background, satisfaction in course objectives, professor competency, course content, and just an overall satisfaction in the course. The questions

²This excerpt was obtained from a homework assignment turned in by a student in week 9.

³This information was obtained when I interviewed each student individually. See appendix 4.

⁴See appendix 1.

that were marked “disagree” were in the area of the course meeting its objectives and requirements, the instructional materials being well designed and useful in presenting the course content, the curriculum integrating biblical principles in a practical way in the subject being taught, the right amount of content, and the pace of the course being adequate. Here are some direct quotes from alumni who completed the survey:

I was thankful for what I learned from my professor and peers, it just was not a challenging course. At the end of the program, it seemed redundant. Also, I had been working with college-aged women for seven years at that point and I was hoping it would stretch me and advance my skill in ministry but instead it felt like a small group I was obligated to be a part of. Once again, I did learn a lot from the life of the professor and picked up tid-bits here and there, but I wish it had been more rigorous.

This statement is reflection based on the ministry work I'm involved with now, I would have wanted a focus on incorporating ways to minister and counsel woman from various backgrounds and ethnicities. There are several factors to consider when speaking to people from different socio-economic and different ethnic backgrounds.

These results helped in a better understanding of how the original course and curriculum had lost its effectiveness.

The second goal of this project was to develop curricula and ten, sixty-minute lectures focused on the specific dynamics of counseling women on issues such as bitterness, anxiety, depression, sexual abuse, homosexuality, perfectionism, people-pleasing, self-image, and team counseling. After developing the curricula, I asked an expert panel to evaluate the curriculum based on biblical accuracy, scope, logical order, methodology, and practicality. Members of the expert panel included the Academic Dean of The Master’s University, the Director of Graduate Studies of The Master’s University, and the Director of Christian Counseling at Reformed Theological Seminary.⁵ The expert panel evaluated 100 percent of the areas at a sufficient or better level.

The third goal of this project was to increase the knowledge of the women enrolled in the M.A.B.C. program by teaching the newly designed *Women Counseling Women* course. The course took place on Tuesday nights over a sixteen-week semester.

⁵See appendix 2.

To measure the effectiveness of the project, I employed a t-test for dependent samples between the pre-and post-survey scores for each topic taught. The results of the t-test indicate that the goal was successfully met because most or all of the t-test for dependent samples demonstrated a positive statistically significant difference in their learning growth.⁶ See table 1 for the results.

Table 1. T-test results for women counseling women

Measure	Pre-Course Mean	Post-Course Mean
Bitterness	2.727	3.909
Anxiety	4.000	4.727
Depression	3.818	4.454
Homosexuality	2.454	3.181
Sexual Abuse	2.181	2.363
Perfectionism	2.636	4.090
Self-Image	3.363	3.363
People-Pleasing	3.545	3.545
Team Counseling	3.000	3.363

The fourth goal of this project was to revise the curriculum. This goal was first measured by a Student Growth Survey to assess growth in spiritual formation and counseling practice at the end of the course.⁷ Using this assessment tool, an evaluation was made of the student’s growth in their relationship with God, their growth in respect to the Word of God, their prayer life, their relationships with family, friends, and fellow believers, and growth in their character. The goal was successfully met when the Student Growth Surveys were completed and the was data analyzed. The curriculum was revised to address the weaknesses identified by the evaluation for a future class in Spring 2018.

Strengths of the Project

The implementation of the *Women Counseling Women* course was met with anticipation and excitement both by the students and me, as the professor. Overall, the

⁶See appendix 7.

⁷See appendix 4.

students were eager to engage in the homework, showed great interest in the lectures, and welcomed the opportunity to be a part of an open-dialogue at the end of each class time.

One of the strengths of the course was the homework. Each week the students engaged in homework that correlated with the following lecture. For example, the first homework assignment was to read a chapter out of *The Biblical Counseling Guide for Women* on the topic of bitterness and answer the questions at the end of that chapter. The students were also expected to memorize and complete a DWT sheet on Ephesians 4:31-32 in preparation for that particular lecture.⁸ Because the homework assignments prepared the students' hearts for the following lectures, they gave numerous testimonies about increased content comprehension due to the immediate connectedness.

A second strength was the biblical teaching about the various topics covered in the course. As an example, below is a comment from a student who heard and applied the lecture on bitterness based on Ephesians 4:31-32:

Sadly, for as long as I can remember my dad and I have always been the ones in each-other's lives that can really push each-others buttons. At times I know that I am not as compassionate towards him in my speech as I should be, and I believe he would confess to the same towards me. In light of this truth I endeavor to remind myself of how much I have been forgiven by God through Christ the next time I may speak with him and he may not be as compassionate; also reminding myself how I truly have no right to receive any sort of compassion, but yet God has granted it to me. I pray that my response would only be one that expresses immediate forgiveness towards him knowing that I have been forgiven in Christ, and that my response would be nothing but kindness and compassion that comes from my mouth.⁹

A third strength of the project was having a gender specific class—all of the students were women. Although these students were primarily signed up for this course to be better equipped to counsel other women, I believe that because it was a gender specific group they were more open and transparent with one another about their own

⁸See appendix 6.

⁹This excerpt was from the student's DWT project. However, after interviewing her three months post-course, I learned that she has repented from any bitterness she may have been struggling with toward her dad and is now benefitting from a Christ-honoring relationship with her father. Her testimony is one of gratitude toward the Lord for this change of heart.

individual struggles. Another bonus was that these women were also in differing seasons in life. For example, of the eleven women present, at least three were already seasoned counselors and would be considered Titus 2 women in their own local church body. Therefore, the younger counselors' in training greatly benefitted from their insight on various topics and their experiences with counseling. Indeed, there was a lot of "iron sharpening iron" taking place each week.

The last strength of this project was the curriculum itself, which was evaluated by the students using a rubric.¹⁰ Upon completion of the course (project), over 90 percent of the students agreed that the curriculum was faithful to the Bible's teaching on the issues, relevant to the issues discussed, had the appropriate amount of reading and other course work, was sufficiently thorough on the topics it covered, and demonstrated an integration of biblical principles and practical application.

Weaknesses of the Project

While the course exceeded my expectations and was helpful as a whole, there were weaknesses to the project. First, the web-conferencing for six out of eleven women proved to be a bit challenging. For example, the *Women Counseling Women* course was set for Pacific Standard time, but most of the students being web-conferenced in were on Eastern Standard time—thus, for them the time for the course became 8:30-10:20 pm. As a result, the students were often weary due to fatigue and less likely to be at an optimum learning capacity. Additionally, not all of the web-conferenced students had the best internet connections in their locations. In many instances, the students could not connect into the web-conference or their audio feature failed to work. Having the audio feature fail was detrimental to at least one student who had to give her project presentation. This issue led to trouble-shooting, which took away from valuable class time. As the professor, I

¹⁰See appendix 8.

also found it difficult to stand in one place to lecture because of the web-cam technology. From my point of view, the latter was a weakness because it hindered my teaching style.

The second weakness of the project was that some of the students were new to biblical counseling. In other words, they were allowed to take this elective course even though they had not had most of their core biblical counseling courses, or any experience in counseling or discipleship. Although they learned a lot from the course, it may be better to advise students to attend this course when they are the end of their M.A.B.C. program, not at the beginning.

What I Would Do Differently

I was thankful to have been able to complete all four of the biblical counseling courses within my doctoral program prior to implementing my project, which proved to be beneficial for curriculum development. In addition, my supervisor was very involved with my project, so what I would do differently focuses mainly on logistics versus course content. To begin, in light of what has already been discussed, it would be wise to make sure ahead of time that the web-conferenced students had the proper technology before allowing them to go forward with the course. One student's Wi-Fi connection was so poor that she resorted to doing class at a nearby coffee shop. This location proved to be somewhat unfavorable because, being in a different time zone, the coffee shop closed before class concluded, so she missed the last twenty minutes of class.

Another aspect that could be done differently is simply offering the *Women Counseling Women* course earlier in the day for the distance-learning students who can only take this course if they are web-conferenced in. The benefit of offering the course this way is a live lecture and interaction with the other students.

Another way I would have changed the project would be to have the students take their post-surveys at the end of each class time. Although the surveys were easy to access on their course homepage, they would often forget, leaving me to send out constant reminders. Thus, in an effort to get the most optimum answers from each of the students

in a timely manner, it would have been helpful to allow at least three to five minutes at the end of class to give them an opportunity to complete them.

Theological Reflections

As I think through and reflect upon how God used the doctoral project, I am reminded of a few important doctoral truths. The first being that God's Word is sufficient for life and godliness through the knowledge of Christ as He is revealed in the Scriptures (2 Pet 1:3-21). It was such a blessing to see the impact that God's Word had on each of the students as they dove deep into His Word each week. This course became much more than an exercise of disseminating information. Rather, God used His Word to change and shape the students' spiritual lives. For the students I interviewed post-course, most commented on the fact that they had significant growth in the areas of confidence in God's active presence in their life, trust that God would help them in any crisis they face, help with replacing sinful thoughts with God's thoughts, and assistance in answering questions about life from a biblical perspective.

The second theological reflection is a reminder of the call to live out the Titus 2 calling even in this context. As a professor in the M.A.B.C program, although I am a seasoned biblical counselor, I am also ever mindful that I am an older woman who has been called by God to "teach what is good" to other women (Titus 2:3-5). Living this biblical mandate out ought to be just as important to the women in my local church as it is to the women in my classroom. Thus, I am more committed than ever to the training up of the next generation of women to love and fear the Lord through the modeling and teaching of sound doctrine, rather than just giving my own opinion about life. Some of my fondest memories during the implementation of the project were students who stayed after class to speak with me about a personal struggle, allowing me the privilege of giving biblical counsel and encouragement from His Word, and then to pray with them. I started out with eleven students but I ended with eleven friends and sisters in Christ for the rest of eternity.

Finally, as I reflect on this project, I recognize how God grew me tremendously as a Christian and a professor. The biggest impact was chapter 2, which helped me to build a more solid theological foundation for each of the topics on which I taught. Many of those truths gave me a more mature understanding of my call as a woman and counselor in the Body of Christ, the calling upon my life in light of who I am in Christ (Eph 4:1), and the unresolved commitment I have to counsel other woman who are in sin or suffering from the effects of sin.

Personal Reflections

Although I grew tremendously in my theology and calling as a woman in Christ, I also grew tremendously in my trust of God while developing this project. This growth in trust became evident in three ways. First, as a married woman, I was apprehensive about the many hours I would need to spend writing for this project. I spent a great deal of time trying to reconcile in my head how I could truly balance this responsibility and my primary ministry, which is my husband. Although my husband never complained that I was neglecting him, even that assurance did not relieve my anxious heart. My anxious response to this pressure helped me to recognize that I was not fully trusting God with my time. After I recognized this and repented of my ungodly concern, I began to pray and ask the Lord to help me to trust Him more. Upon reflection, I noticed that as I grew more in trust of Him for my time, God helped me to manage my time better and thankfully, by God's grace, I was able to complete my project on time.

A second way in which I grew in trust for the Lord was for my learning ability and physical endurance. It is not easy being a student at a doctoral level at my age. I often felt like I asked many questions, and would often get discouraged by my lack of understanding. I also had some physical challenges while writing this project which tempted me to despair. However, once again, as I prayed and depended upon God to give me the strength and the cognitive ability, He did answer my prayer. In fact, at the writing

of this reflection piece, I stand amazed and thankful at how intimately involved the Lord is in my life.

A third way in which I grew in trust was my dependence upon the Lord to bring enough women to the *Women Counseling Women* course so that I could actually implement the project. Historically, this course has been an elective course for the TMU graduate program. The course typically averages about four women each semester. Those numbers are quite low when trying to implement a project that is associated with statistics. So I prayed, and as the Lord would have it, He brought me eleven women. Upon personal reflection, I am so thankful that the Lord used this project to reveal to me my lack of trust in Him and to give me the great privilege of coming before His throne of grace in prayer, to confess and repent, and then to depend upon Him for my growth and maturity in this area of struggle. I come away praising the Lord as the Psalmist did in Psalm 28:7: “The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in Him, and I am helped; therefore my heart exults. With my song I shall thank Him.”

Conclusion

This project was a start in equipping the women of the M.A.B.C. program to be skilled biblical counselors. However, to my delight, so much more took place than simply equipping and training women in the basic concepts and distinctive features of women-to women biblical counseling. In addition, God used the project to influence the women spiritually at varying degrees. The women also bonded with one another and commented that the process of being together in this course made them feel as though they were a part of something unique and special. This course marks the beginning of a new precedent for the women in the M.A.B.C. program of The Master’s University. The hope is that the course will continue and expand to include more women each year. Indeed, the Graduate Studies program intends to have this course offered as part of their program every semester.

APPENDIX 1

WOMEN COUNSELING WOMEN COURSE SATISFACTION SURVEY

This survey was used with students who have taken the Women Counseling Women (BC572) course from 2009-2015.



THE MASTER'S
UNIVERSITY

WOMEN COUNSELING WOMEN COURSE
SATISFACTION SURVEY

Agreement to Participate

The survey in which you are about to participate in is designed to assess the current satisfaction level of past students who have taken the graduate course, *Women Counseling Course* at The Master's College. Shelbi L. Cullen is conducting this research for the purpose of collecting data for a ministry project. In this research, you will answer these questions before the project is finished. Any information you provide will be held strictly confidential, and at no time will your name be reported or identified with your responses. Participation is strictly voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time. By completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this project.

Section I

The first section of this survey will obtain information about whether or not you graduated from the MABC program and the semester and year you took the Women Counseling Women course.

Directions: Answer the following multiple-choice questions by placing a check next to the appropriate answer.

1. Are you a graduate of the MABC program?
 A. Yes
 B. No
2. What year did you graduate?
 A. N/A
 B. Year
3. Which semester and year did you take Women Counseling Women?
 A. Semester
 B. Year
4. Are you currently active in the ministry of biblical counseling?
 A. Yes
 B. No

Directions: Answer the following questions by giving your opinion using the following scale: SD = strongly disagree, D = disagree, DS = disagree somewhat, AS = agree somewhat, A = agree, SA = strongly agree.¹

Section II

The second section of this questionnaire deals with your satisfaction level of the course itself.²

- _____ 5. The course objectives and requirements were clearly communicated.
- _____ 6. The professor demonstrated a good command of the subject matter.
- _____ 7. The lectures complemented the required reading and were not just a repetition of it.
- _____ 8. The instructional materials (e.g., text(s)) were well designed and useful in presenting the course content.
- _____ 9. The curriculum integrated biblical principles in a practical way in the subject being taught.
- _____ 10. The required reading for the course assisted in discernment related to counseling problems specific to women.
- _____ 11. There was just the right amount of content in the course.
- _____ 12. The pace for the course was just right.
- _____ 13. The course provided a cooperative and collaborative environment amongst peers.
- _____ 14. Overall, I was satisfied with my experience in this course.

Please elaborate or make any additional comments to your answers above.

¹Adapted from William Andrew Dickerson, "Training Deacons for Ministry Leadership at Missionary Baptist Church" (D.Min. project, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2014).

²Adapted from The Master's College, "Class and Faculty Evaluation" (Santa Clarita, CA: The Master's College, 2015).

APPENDIX 2

WOMEN COUNSELING WOMEN CURRICULUM RUBRIC

This rubric was used to evaluate the curriculum for the Women Counseling Women (BC572) course by the expert panel.

CURRICULUM EVALUATION RUBRIC - LESSONS 1-10

Name of Evaluator _____

Date _____

1 = Insufficient (0%). 2 = Requires Attention (<90%). 3 = Sufficient (≥90%). 4 = Exemplary (100%).

Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
Biblical Accuracy					
The content of the curriculum reflects accurately what the Bible teaches.					
Scope					
The curriculum's content sufficiently covers each issue it is designed to address.					
Logical Order					
These lessons address topics at the appropriate time, according to the participants needs.					
Methodology					
The topics were clearly explained and demonstrated.					
Practicality					
This curriculum will help students better apply the Bible by growing as a biblical counselor.					

APPENDIX 3

WOMEN COUNSELING WOMEN COURSE PRE-SESSION AND POST-SESSION SURVEY

This survey was given to students who took the Women Counseling Women (BC572) course.

Invitation

You are invited to take part in this research study. The information in this form is meant to help you decide whether or not to participate. If you have any questions please ask.

Why are you being asked to be in this research study?

You are being asked to be in this study because you are a student enrolled in an elective course Women Counseling Women at The Master’s College Graduate Program.

What is the reason for this research study?

The purpose of this study is to determine whether there was an increase in knowledge post course regarding specific counseling issues specific to women.

What will be done during this research study?

Students who participate in this study will fill out a survey prior to and at the end of their course.

Documentation of informed consent

You are freely making a decision whether to be in the research study. Signing this form means that (1) you have read and understood this consent form, (2) you have had the consent form explained to you, (3) you have had your questions answered and (4) you have decided to be in the research study.

Signature of Participant

Date

Print Name

My signature certifies that all elements of informed consent described on this consent form have been explained fully to the participant. In my judgment, the student possesses the legal capacity to give informed consent to participate.¹

¹Adapted from Connie Wallace, “Measuring Changes in Attitude, Skill and Knowledge of Undergraduate Nursing Students after Receiving an Educational Intervention in Intimate Partner Violence,” 2009, accessed May 25, 2015, <http://www.csm.edu/wfdata/files/Academics/Library/InstitutionalRepository/27.pdf>.



WOMEN COUNSELING WOMEN COURSE PRE-SESSION
AND POST-SESSION SURVEY

The sample survey below only includes questions for the topic of “bitterness” but when this survey was developed and given out to students, each counseling topic (10 in all) included 3 to 6 questions to measure increased knowledge.

Directions:

Please answer each question to the best of your knowledge.

(Multiple Choice – Circle Just One)

Bitterness

This is an example of what will be developed once the curriculum has been written.

1. When does the potential for bitterness to take place in the heart?
 - a. When you've been hurt in some way and you dwell on it.
 - b. When someone makes a choice that is different than yours.
 - c. When someone makes a comment about how you are dressed.
 - d. All of the above.
 - e. None of the above.
2. According to Ephesians 4:32, what is the biblical definition for bitterness?
 - a. Resentful state of mind.
 - b. Harshness.
 - c. Settled hostility.
 - d. All of the above.
3. When Paul calls for the believer to put off bitterness, what is the idea he has in mind?
 - a. To abandon this mental condition because it's connected to the old man.
 - b. To be stoic and pretend bitterness does not exist.
 - c. To walk away from the person you are bitter towards and pray for them.

Please answer each question in essay form.

4. What are some outward behaviors that you might observe in a person struggling with bitterness?
 - a. Withdrawal?
 - b. Distrust?
 - c. Critical?
 - d. Unregenerate?
 - e. All of the above?
 - f. None of the above?

5. As the believer lays aside their bitterness, they are exhorted to be becoming "forgiving as God in Christ has forgiven them." What type of forgiveness is Paul speaking about in Eph. 4:32?
 - a. Transactional forgiveness?
 - b. Tenderhearted forgiveness?
 - c. Attitudinal Forgiveness?
 - d. All of the above?
 - e. None of the above?

APPENDIX 4

WOMEN COUNSELING WOMEN COURSE
STUDENT GROWTH ASSESSMENT



THE MASTER'S
UNIVERSITY

STUDENT GROWTH ASSESSMENT

Structured, Open-Ended Interview Questions

The Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) for the Women Counseling Women course at The Master's University (TMU) are as follows:

1. To increase the student's confidence in the sufficiency and superiority of the Scripture for handling all the personal and interpersonal problems of life.
2. To equip and train the student in the basic concepts and distinctive features of woman-to-woman counseling.
3. To challenge the student to build her own counseling practices on solid, biblical theology.
4. To help the students develop an understanding of counseling and its necessity in the women's ministry of the local church.
5. To teach the roles of female counselors in a church context and how they relate well to church leadership.

Consider which of these elements below you may have grown while in the Women Counseling Women course and indicate your honest assessment of each. Growth should be measured by your increased practice of, appreciation for, or sense of value for a particular discipline.

Please indicate your response on the following scale: 1 = significant growth, 2=much growth, 3=some growth, 4=no growth. Comments to explain or expand on your response are welcomed.

With Respect to My Relationship with the Triune God

- | | | | | |
|----|--|-------------|-------------|-----------|
| 1. | I have a growing confidence of God's active presence in my life. | | | |
| | Significant Growth | Much Growth | Some Growth | No Growth |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | | | | |
| 2. | I practice a regular time quiet time and look forward to that time with God. | | | |
| | Significant Growth | Much Growth | Some Growth | No Growth |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | | | | |
| 3. | I trust God to help me through any problem or crisis I face. | | | |
| | Significant Growth | Much Growth | Some Growth | No Growth |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

15. I have a genuine and growing love for Jesus.
 Significant Growth Much Growth Some Growth No Growth
 1 2 3 4
16. I feel comfortable telling a counselee/disciplee to “follow me as I follow Christ.”
 Significant Growth Much Growth Some Growth No Growth
 1 2 3 4

With Respect to Biblical/Practical Competence

17. I am confident in my ability to clearly explain the gospel to someone.
 Significant Growth Much Growth Some Growth No Growth
 1 2 3 4
18. I feel comfortable to disciple/counsel someone.
 Significant Growth Much Growth Some Growth No Growth
 1 2 3 4
19. I feel confident to help others apply the Word of God to their own heart idols.
 Significant Growth Much Growth Some Growth No Growth
 1 2 3 4
20. Think back over the last 2-3 months (post-class). Pick an inner struggle, attitude, or discipline where you note you’ve experienced change as a result of what you learned in the WCW course. Describe the change and the process leading up to that change.

APPENDIX 5
WOMEN COUNSELING WOMEN SYLLABUS



THE MASTER'S
UNIVERSITY

BC572: WOMEN COUNSELING WOMEN

The Master's University & Seminary
21726 Placerita Canyon Road; Santa Clarita, CA 91321
Spring 2017
January 16-May 5, 2017

Instructor: Shelbi Cullen, MA, D. Ed Min Candidate (scullen@masters.edu)

In order to best serve you through email correspondence, please identify yourself using your full name, your class name, number, and section along with your question or note. You are responsible for keeping up to date with any emails from the College and your instructors sent to your student email address. This is our primary means of communication for changes and updates.

Course Description

This course outlines the basic concepts and distinctive features of woman-to-woman biblical counseling. It will focus on Gospel-centered counseling, that is, the process of one Christian woman coming alongside another woman with words of truth from God's Word to encourage, admonish, comfort, and challenge her. These words of truth are grounded in the saving work of Christ, and presented in the context of relationship. The course will present the practical principles of understanding how the Gospel applies to every area of life. Discussion in this course will include a description of the qualifications of the biblical counselors, the roles of the counselor in biblical counseling and the role of counseling in the ministry of the local church. Emphasis will be placed on the theological foundations of biblical counseling and the key aspects of progressive sanctification. In addition, practical suggestions will be given concerning the counseling process which brings broken and hurting people to the love of Christ and His sufficient Word. Case studies will be utilized to enhance learning. The goal is to equip women to fulfill their scriptural mandate to mentor/counsel other women and bring ultimate glory to God.

Getting Started

- Read your course syllabus thoroughly, send any questions about the course to the instructor, and indicate completion of your reading on the course page.
- Obtain all required textbooks and materials.
- Review the guidelines for assignment style and formatting. If you have never read the style guide, please read it immediately before continuing your studies.

Course Outcomes

21. To enrich and improve the student's personal life and relationship with Jesus Christ.
22. To increase the student's confidence in the sufficiency and superiority of the Scripture for handling all the personal and interpersonal problems of life.
23. To equip and train the student in the basic concepts and distinctive features of woman-to-woman counseling.
24. To challenge the student to build her own counseling practices on solid, biblical theology.
25. To help the students develop an understanding of counseling and its necessity in the women's ministry of the local church.
26. To teach the roles of female counselors in a church context and how they relate well to church leadership.

Textbooks

Please also note that you are expected to obtain the following resources in order to utilize them in your studies throughout the program:

- John and Janie Street, *The Biblical Counseling Guide For Women*, 978-0736964517, 16.99
- Amy Baker, *Picture Perfect: When Life Does Not Line Up*, 978-1939946379, \$15.44
- Lou Priolo, *Pleasing People: How Not To Be An Approval Junkie*, 978-1596380554, \$13.55
- Lou Priolo, *Self-Image: How to Overcome Inferiority Judgements*, 978-1596380790, \$4.99
- Mark Shaw, *Strength in Numbers: The Team Approach to Biblical Counseling*, 978-1885904898, \$13.95

Please also note that you are expected to obtain the following resources in order to utilize them in your studies throughout the program:

- *The Journal of Biblical Counseling* Archive, and Subscription
- Logos Bible Software with Silver Library, and Logos Academic Training (Apply at <http://www.logos.com/user/academic/apply> first to receive a significant student discount on your purchase.)
- Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 8th ed., 978-0226816388, \$18.00. (This resource serves as the program style guide.)

Materials

- Class Notes
- DWT Example & Form
- Reading Response Sample

Course Requirements

1. **Reading and Reading Reports:** There will be assigned weekly reading. The reading will prepare you for the lectures. You must be prepared to discuss the reading in class. The Instructor will call on individuals to give thoughts and feedback during the

discussion so keep detailed notes. The student will turn in a reading report as prompted in the course schedule below that is designed to assist the student to interact with the reading in a godly way. The student should answer the following four questions in a 2-3 page (not counting the title page), double-spaced document.

1. *Did you read all of the assignment?*

- Write out the percentage of reading you accomplished.

2. *What key principles did you see in the assignment? (1 page)*

- Determine what you consider to be the most significant statements or contributions of the book to the ministry of biblical counseling. Each response should have all of the following elements: 1) the principle stated succinctly, 2) the page reference, cited parenthetically, wherein that principle can be found in the textbook, 3) the biblical text which that principle draws upon, and 4) a specific use for counseling ministry or personal sanctification.

3. *What were the most significant challenges or lessons you learned for your own life from the reading assignment? (1 page)*

- This portion of the reading response focuses on the relationship between the reading and your life and calls you to respond in repentance (a turning from who you are presently to greater likeness to Jesus in love for God and love for others). The student is not required to give extensive details about his life, but it should include clear and specific attention to each of the points required.
- Your response should correspond to the following outline:
 - (1) the specific point in the textbook that prompted the element of conviction (this conviction may be a personal area of growth or a challenge to greater excellence in the field of counseling), with the page number where the point was made,
 - (2) why that point was a significant challenge or lesson.
 - (3) how the Scripture addresses the matter of conviction—concerning what needs to be put off in behavior and wrong worship (provide specific references),
 - (4) how transfer of worship is taking place for you—concerning the renewing of your mind by reestablishing who/what is your treasure and redeemer and why, and
 - (5) how you plan to practice right worship in *one* specific action of loving God and loving others (e.g., in approaching the Lord, a certain relationship, daily task, conflict situation, service project). Consider especially how you might encourage someone by sharing how you grew in response to this reading assignment.

4. *Was there anything had questions about?*

- This portion is an opportunity for you to ask questions or to ask for clarification.
- These question may be discussed during class if time permits.

2. ***Discovering Wonderful Things (DWT)*** will be used in an effort to help each student focus on preparation for counseling sessions. Each student will practice observing, interpreting, applying and prayerfully asking God to change their life first according to the guidelines provided by the ***Discovering Wonderful Things*** study guide. The purpose of

this assignment is to give the student specific practice in growing in Christ-likeness and in preparation for her counseling sessions. The counselor can only lead the counselee as far as she has gone herself (Luke 6:40).

According to the assignment schedule you will complete a “Discovering Wonderful Things” study sheet (sample and form located on course page). The form requires the student to give attention to a single passage in five categories: Observation, Interpretation, Application, Prayer & Results. Review each verse daily (memorizing it) over the course of the week assigned. This assignment is to be typed and limited to a single page for each passage.

3. Women Counseling Women Project. This project will be a 12-15 page, double-spaced, typed paper to be submitted in Turabian 8th Edition format.

1. *Select one counseling problem or issue common to women that you want to research more thoroughly.* Perhaps it will be an issue in your life with which you have the greatest trouble, one in which you sense a real deficiency or an issue that has challenged you the most in counseling. This project may become a future chapter in a volume two edition of the Women Counseling Women book. So be thinking about a topic that has not already been addressed in volume one. This project should include the patterns of wrong thinking, behaving, and the heart driving the issue. It should also include practical homework.

Here are some samples of issues you might want to deal with:

- Daydreaming and lust
- Reconciliation after Adultery
- Infertility
- Dealing with a Sinning Husband (handling sin biblically)
- Singleness
- Sexual Immorality
- Post-abortion

*Once you decide the area you believe the Lord would want you to work on get the approval of the Instructor by the assigned date (**March 6, 2017**)

2. *Complete the Research Section of Your Project.* This portion of the paper will be a thoroughly researched Biblical analysis of the issue chosen. For example if you chose ‘daydreaming and lust’ as your issue then this section of the paper would be a thorough research into related passages explaining God’s view of that issue and how it should be addressed in the believer’s life. This section might also give biblical examples of the issue but will definitely address the declaratives related to the issue (“**Because of this...**”) as well as the obligations (“**Therefore...**”) you will put off the sin and put on the obedience that God desires in the issue chosen. This section should be approximately 10–12 pages of the paper. You must include

footnotes and a bibliography of all resources used and it is not part of the 15 pages total for the paper.

3. *Complete the personal application and plan for change section of the paper.* This section should be 2-5 pages. In this section you will outline the specific application of your research to the issue you have chosen and give a specific plan for change that you are implementing to achieve Christlikeness in the area selected.
4. *Presentation.* You will present your project to your peers and professor in class. Expect the presentation to be 25-30 minutes long. This should give the class a good overview on your research and personal application of the project. Please provide an outline for the class that includes the personal application and plan for change.
5. *Final Exam.* The final exam is your Presentation Project.

Course Schedule

The dates reflected below signify when assignments are *due*. Submit assignments according to the method listed. Include a title page with every assignment; follow Turabian standards for formatting and style.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Submit via</i>
Jan 16	Read: BC572 Syllabus Read: <i>The Biblical Counseling Guide for Women</i> , (Forward, Introduction, pgs 9-16)	Canvas
Jan 23	Read: ✚ <i>The Biblical Counseling Guide for Women</i> , (Chapter 4, Bitterness, pages 67-81) Questions For Discussion in Class: Answer Questions 1-5, pages 80-81 DWT: Ephesians 4:31-32 Memory Verse: Ephesians 4:31-32 (Recite for Class)	Canvas
Jan 30	Read: <i>The Biblical Counseling Guide for Women</i> (Chapter 2, Anxiety, pages 35-51) Questions For Discussion in Class: Answer Questions 1-5, page 51 DWT: Philippians 4:6-8 Memory Verse: Philippians 4:6-8 (Recite in Class)	Canvas
Feb 6	Read: <i>The Biblical Counseling Guide for Women</i> (Chapter 7, Depression, pages 117-134) Questions For Discussion in Class: Answer Questions 1-5, pages 132-133 DWT: Psalm 42:5-6 Memory Verse: Psalm 42:5	Canvas
Feb 13	Read: <i>The Biblical Counseling Guide for Women</i> (Chapter 16, Transgenderism, pages 289-327) Questions For Discussion in Class: Answer Questions 1-5, pages 326-327 DWT: Ephesians 5:1-3 Memory Verse: Ephesians 5:1-2	Canvas

***Project Proposal Due (see page 4 of your syllabus for more**

detailed instruction).

<i>Feb 20</i>	Read: <i>The Biblical Counseling Guide for Women</i> (Chapter 17, Victim of Abuse, pages 329-347). Questions For Discussion in Class: Answer Questions 1-5, pages 346-347 In lieu of a DWT- read and journal observation notes for 2 Samuel 13:1-22	<i>Canvas</i>
<i>Feb 27</i>	Reading: <i>Picture Perfect: When Life Does Not Line Up</i> Reading Response: ✚ <i>Picture Perfect: When Life Does Not Line Up</i> DWT: Galatians 3:3	<i>Canvas</i>
<i>Mar 6</i>	Reading Response: ✚ <i>Self Image: How to Overcome Inferiority Judgements</i> DWT: 1 Samuel 16:7	<i>Canvas</i>
<i>Mar 14</i>	NO CLASS – Spring Break	
<i>Mar 20</i>	Reading Response: ✚ <i>Pleasing People: How Not to be an Approval Junkie</i> DWT: Galatians 1:10 Memory Verse: Galatians 1:10 No Assignments Due	<i>Canvas</i>
<i>Mar 27</i>	Group One Presentations (See page 5)	<i>Canvas</i>
<i>April 3</i>	Group Two Presentations (See page 5)	
<i>April 10-14</i>	No Class – Spring Reading Days	
<i>April 18</i>	Group Three Presentations (See page 5)	
<i>April 25</i>	Reading Response: <i>Strength in Numbers: The Team Approach to Biblical Counseling</i>	<i>Canvas</i>
<i>May 1-5</i>	Final Exam Week – Submit Your “Final Presentation”	<i>Canvas</i>

Basis of Evaluation

Reading and Reading Responses	20%
Course Participation	20%
DWTs	20%
Project Presentation	40%

Grading Scale

The grades for this course will be calculated using the following grading scale: (Please be aware of the Academic Probation Policy.)

A	96–100 (4.0)	B–	86–87 (2.7)	D+	76–77 (1.3)
A–	94–95 (3.7)	C+	84–85 (2.3)	D	72–75 (1.0)
B+	92–93 (3.3)	C	80–83 (2.0)	D–	70–71 (0.7)
B	88–91 (3.0)	C–	78–79 (1.7)	F	below 70 (0.0)

Late Work & Extensions

Students are expected to submit all assignments according to their due dates given in their course syllabi and to plan accordingly to meet those deadlines. Late work, however, will be accepted within two weeks of its due date, but will incur a 30% deduction from the grade it would have received had it been submitted on time. Assignments over two weeks late will not receive credit—no exceptions. Only in cases of extreme unforeseen circumstances—occurring before the original due date—such as a medical emergency, a family tragedy, or other circumstance which debilitates the student from attending to his studies—will an extended due date (extension), without penalty, be considered at the discretion of the instructor. It is the student’s responsibility to contact his instructor as soon as these debilitating circumstances arise and to ensure that his assignment has been received by the instructor by the extended due date.

Course Etiquette, Disclaimers, and Other Matters

Attendance Policy Due to the limited amount of time available for classes, class attendance and participation is extremely important. Therefore, each student is required to be present at all sessions in order to maximize educational effectiveness. Not only is class attendance essential to this course, but also class participation. Class participation includes one’s attitude toward the subject and her classmates, active involvement in discussions, and an evident desire to advance in holiness. This class is intended to be a lecture and discussion course. Feel free to question, comment, and discuss as it is appropriate. This should be a corporate activity—an opportunity to sharpen one another, to encourage one another unto love and good works (Prov. 17:17; Heb. 3:13; 10:24, 25), and to be encouraged yourself.

Etiquette Please arrive before the start time of class to allow yourself to settle into to your seat and to be ready to participate as soon as class begins. As you consider questions and comments, please seek to contribute with the flow of class discussion. Stay on topic. Remember also that your instructor is guiding the course and has an agenda for each class meeting which may limit class discussion or frequency of questions. Questions of a personal nature or that would not really contribute to the benefit of your classmates should be reserved for a private/side conversations with the instructor. Last, when bringing food items to class, please refrain from foods with strong smell as they may be a distraction to others.

Mobile Devices Laptops and other mobile devices are welcomed in the classroom strictly for note taking purposes. If at any time a student is observed abusing the privilege (e.g., checking e-mail, playing games, Facebook, doing other homework) she will be marked absent for that day. As a courtesy to the class, please silence your cell phone during class.

Informed Consent The student's grasp of the discipline of practical theology and biblical counseling taught in this course can only truly be measured by an evaluation of the student's growth in wise living. The student, then, is expected to continually and comprehensively pursue a thorough grasp of the curriculum in order to succeed in reaching the objectives of this course. For this reason, the student may be asked in various assignments to disclose personal information concerning thoughts, emotions, aspirations and conduct. This information will be handled carefully with the privacy protections accorded to all academic information. Unless necessary for the student's preservation of the health and safety of the student or other persons, or unless the assignments reveal a persistent refusal to abide by the student code of conduct or as otherwise required by law, the student's instructing personnel—who review such assignments for guidance and evaluation—will not disclose the contents of personal disclosures to anyone. For example, your instructors will review and give guidance to your assignment, but he or she will not disclose this information to the school administration in the same way that your grades are disclosed to the school administration. By registering for this class for credit or audit, you are giving consent to your instructors at The Master's College to request and review such information.

Disclaimer This syllabus is intended to reflect accurately the course description, content outline, course objectives, grading criteria, activities to be evaluated, examination dates, course bibliography, and other information. However, during the semester the professor reserves the right to modify any portion of this syllabus as may appear necessary because of unforeseen events and circumstances.

Academic Dishonesty It is the responsibility of the faculty member to pursue suspected incidents of academic dishonesty occurring within his/her courses. If a student is found to be guilty of cheating, plagiarism or another form of academic dishonesty, the faculty member is required to document the incident in writing and submit the report to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The first documented incident of academic dishonesty will result in the student failing the assignment or the course at the instructor's discretion depending on the severity of the incident. Any subsequent documented offense of academic dishonesty by that student (regardless of whether it occurs in the same or any other course taken by the student at the College) will result in automatic failure of the course and expulsion of the student from the College for a minimum of one academic year.

Disability Service The Master's College is committed to practicing principles of equal opportunity and to provide educational programs and/or activities for all students based upon sovereign biblical principles. We are also committed to comply with various state and federal regulations, among them the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, regarding discrimination against individuals with disabilities.

To comply with these regulations we provide a variety of services to individuals with disabilities through the Office of Disability Services. Persons having questions about obtaining available services at TMC should contact Dianna Costanzo at (661) 362-2269, or email her at dcostanzo@masters.edu.

Because regulations do not permit the College to inquire about existing or perceived disabilities, we invite individuals to identify a qualified disability and specifically request reasonable accommodations to assist them in meeting the requirements and expectations of one or more of their courses.

APPENDIX 6

WOMEN COUNSELING WOMEN COURSE:
DISCOVERING WONDERFUL THINGS WORKSHEET

“DISCOVERING WONDERFUL THINGS” Psalm 119:18
 Before you begin to study...Pray for understanding! (Proverbs 1:23)
 PASSAGE _____ DATE: _____

<p>OBSERVATION: Who, What, and Where? What does this passage say about God the Father, God the Son, or God the Holy Spirit? Who is the audience?</p>	<p>INTERPRETATION: What is the context? Do some word studies? Are there any commands to obey? Consult trusted commentaries on Logo’s.</p>	<p>APPLICATION How might you respond in light of this truth?</p>	<p>PRAYER Personalize and pray it back to God.</p>
		<p>Meditation: Pick one truth to meditate upon.</p>	<p>Fruit in your life! At the end of the week, What fruit did you see in your life as a result of applying this truth?</p>

APPENDIX 7

WOMEN COUNSELING WOMEN COURSE T-TEST RESULT

The following tables display the t-test results from comparing the pre- and post-project WCW scores. The t-test demonstrated that the Women Counseling Women (BC572) course made a significant statistical difference in there was a change in course knowledge for the eleven participants who completed the WCW course.

The bar graphs in this appendix are a visual representation of mean scores from the pre- and post-course survey. The horizontal axis is the question number, and the vertical axis is the mean scores of students in the class.

T-Test Results: Bitterness

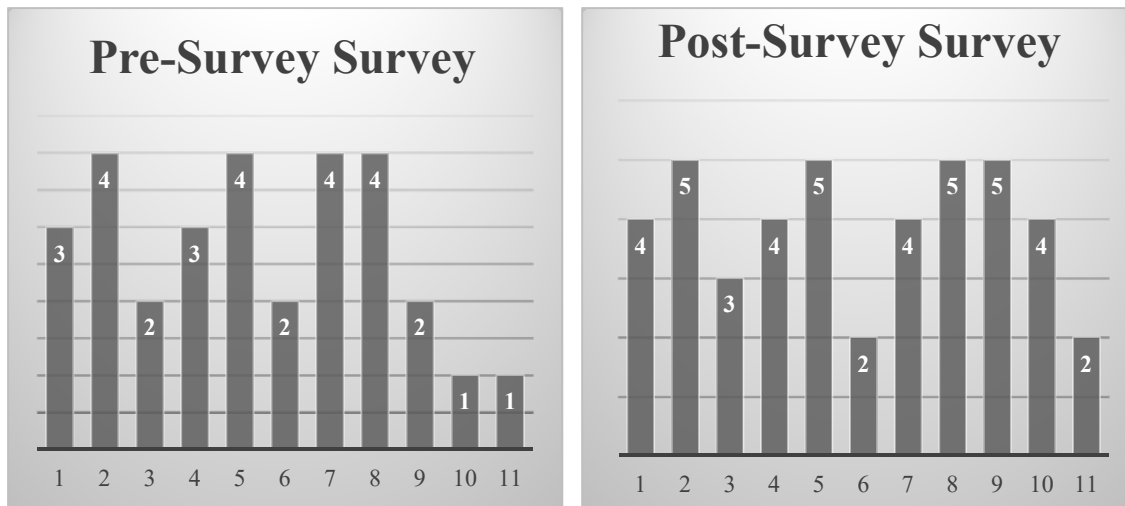


Figure A1. Pre- and post-survey results, bitterness

Table A1. T-test: Paired two sample for means, bitterness

Statistic Categories	Post Score	Pre Score
Mean	3.909090909	2.727272727
Variance	1.290909091	1.418181818
Observations	11	11
Pearson Correlation	0.645007496	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	10	
t Stat	3.992918259	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.001273636	
t Critical one-tail	1.812461123	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.002547272	
t Critical two-tail	2.228138852	

In comparing pre- and post-course bitterness surveys, a paired, one-tail, t-test showed a statistically significant improvement ($t_{(10)} = 3.909, p = .001$)

T-Test Results: Anxiety

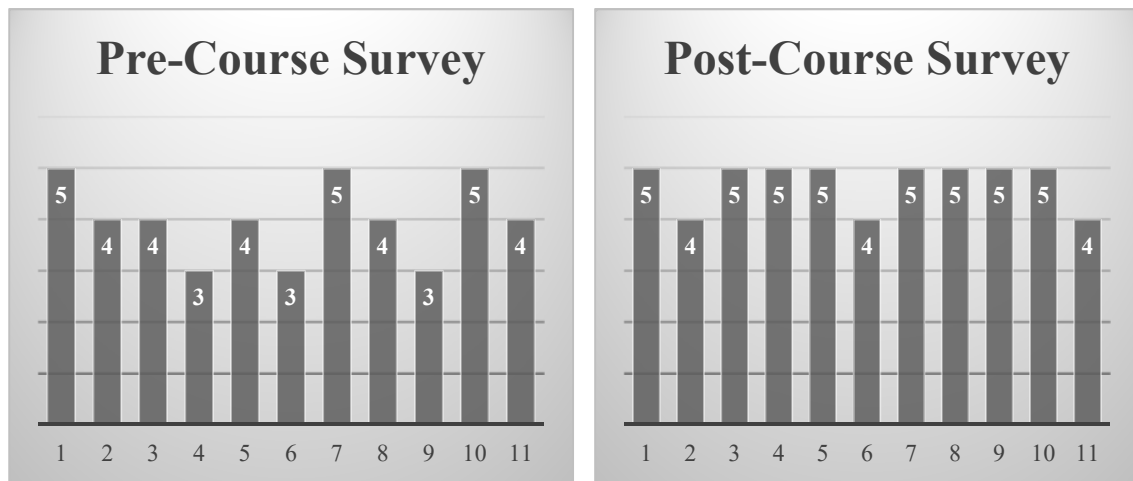


Figure A2. Pre- and post-survey WCW results, anxiety

Table A2. T-test: Paired two sample for means, anxiety

Statistic Categories	Post Score	Pre Score
Mean	4.727272727	4
Variance	0.218181818	0.6
Observations	11	11
Pearson Correlation	0.276385399	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	10	
t Stat	3.067859955	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.005942053	
t Critical one-tail	1.812461123	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.011884107	
t Critical two-tail	2.228138852	

In comparing pre- and post-course anxiety surveys, a paired, one-tail, t-test showed a statistically significant improvement ($t_{(10)} = 3.067, p = .005$)

T-Test Results: Depression

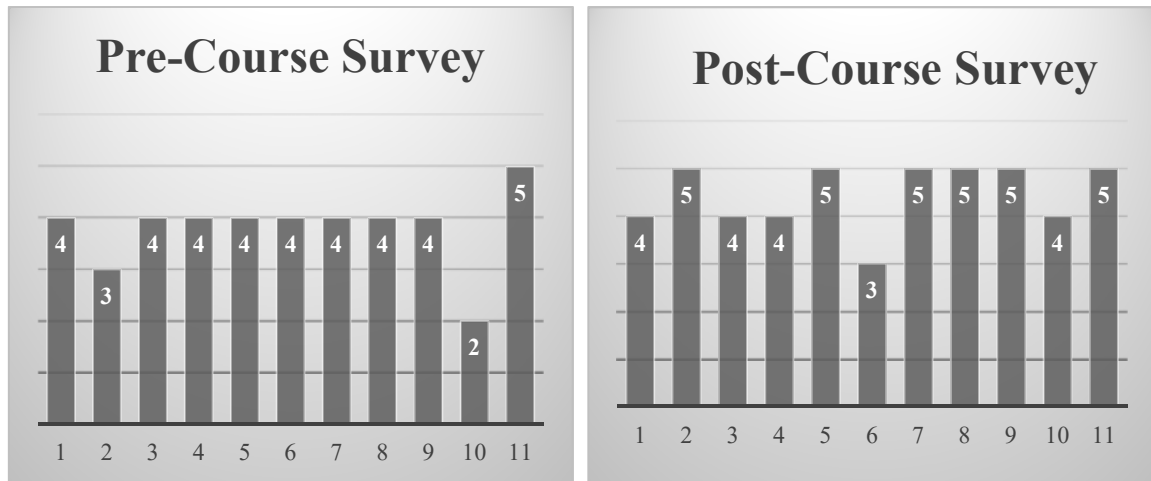


Figure A3. Pre- and post-survey WCW results, depression

Table A3. T-test: Paired two sample for means, depression

Statistic Categories	Post Score	Post Score
Mean	4.454545455	3.818181818
Variance	0.472727273	0.563636364
Observations	11	11
Pearson Correlation	0.176117488	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	10	
t Stat	2.283148256	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.022770642	
t Critical one-tail	1.812461123	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.045541284	
t Critical two-tail	2.228138852	

In comparing pre- and post-course depression surveys, a paired, one-tail t-test showed a statistically positive improvement ($t(10) = 2.283, p = .022$).

T-Test Results: Homosexuality

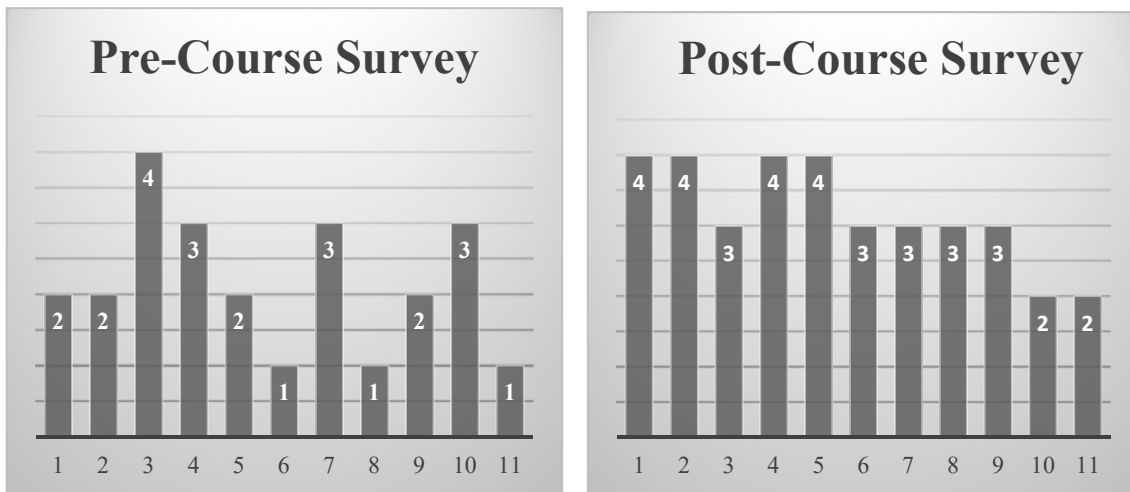


Figure A4. Pre- and post-survey WCW results, homosexuality

Table A4. T-test: Paired two sample for means, homosexuality

Statistic Categories	Post Score	Pre Score
Mean	3.181818182	2.454545455
Variance	0.563636364	1.472727273
Observations	11	11
Pearson Correlation	-0.099780723	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	10	
t Stat	1.61955266	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.068198564	
t Critical one-tail	1.812461123	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.136397128	
t Critical two-tail	2.228138852	

In comparing pre- and post-course homosexuality surveys, a paired, one-tail t-test showed a statistically positive improvement ($t(10) = 1.619, p = .068$).

T-Test Results: Sexual Abuse

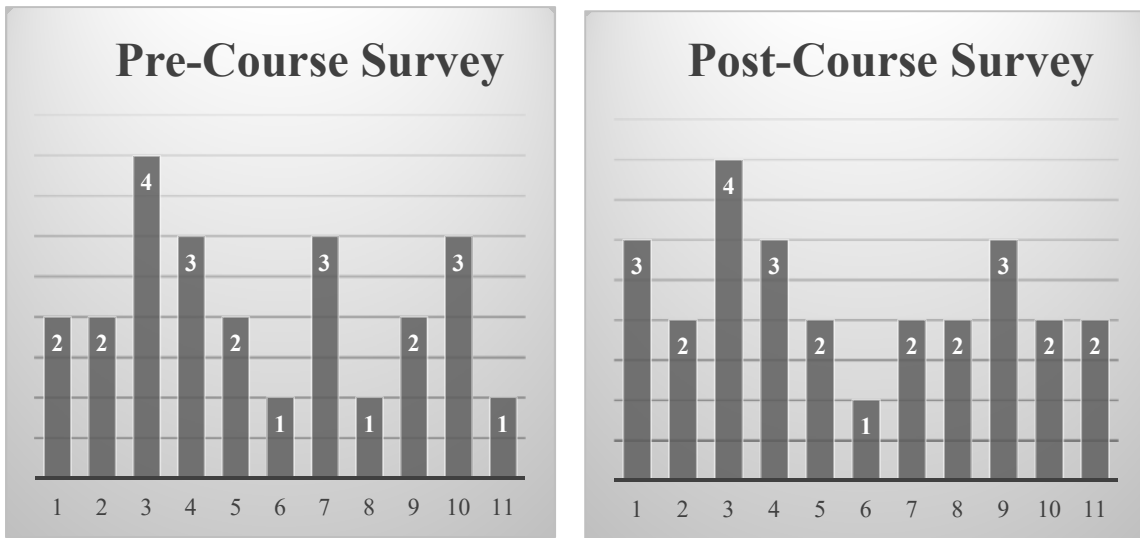


Figure A5. Pre- and post-survey WCW results, sexual abuse

Table A5. T-test: Paired two sample for means, sexual abuse

Statistic Categories	Post Score	Pre Score
Mean	2.363636364	2.181818182
Variance	0.654545455	0.963636364
Observations	11	11
Pearson Correlation	0.663909392	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	10	
t Stat	0.803219329	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.220260848	
t Critical one-tail	1.812461123	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.440521696	
t Critical two-tail	2.228138852	

In comparing pre- and post-course sexual abuse surveys, a paired, one-tail t-test showed a statistically positive improvement ($t(10) = 0.803, p = .220$).

T-Test Results: Perfectionism

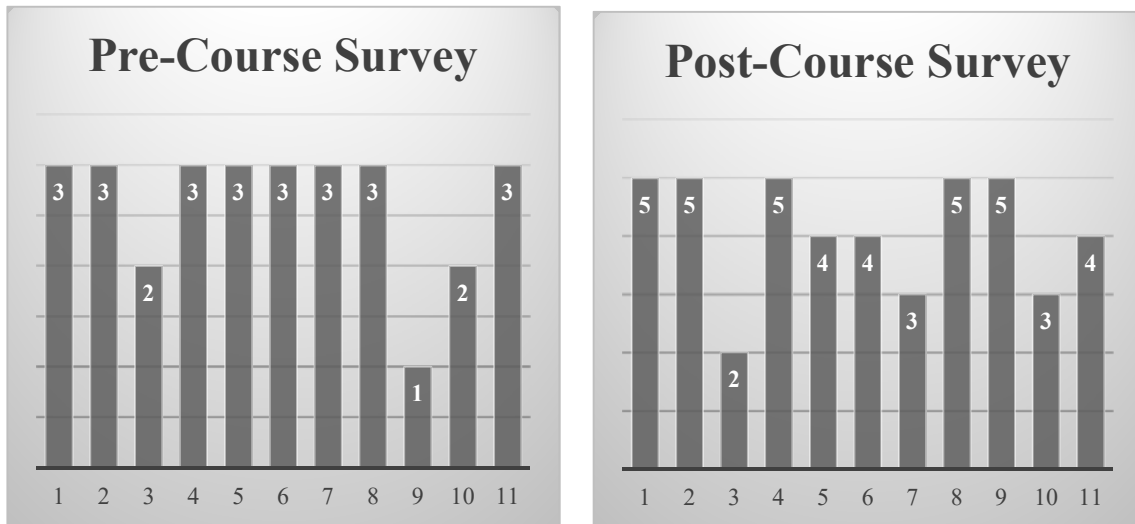


Figure A6. Pre- and post-survey WCW results, perfectionism

Table A6. T-test: Paired two sample for means, perfectionism

Statistic Categories	Post Score	Pre Score
Mean	4.090909091	2.63636
Variance	1.090909091	0.45455
Observations	11	11
Pearson Correlation	0.193649167	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	10	
t Stat	4.276179871	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.000810562	
t Critical one-tail	1.812461123	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.001621124	
t Critical two-tail	2.228138852	

In comparing pre- and post-course perfectionism surveys, a paired, one-tail t-test showed a statistically significant improvement ($t(10) = 4.276, p = .000$).

T-Test Results: Self-Image

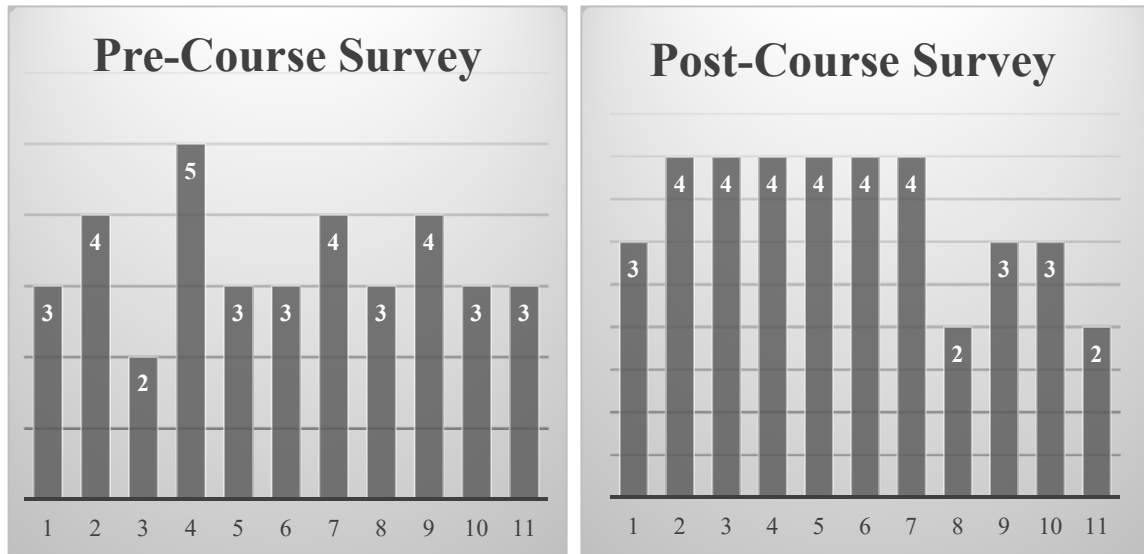


Figure A7. Pre- and post-survey WCW results, self-image

Table A7. T-test: Paired two sample for means, self-image

Statistic Categories	Post Score	Pre Score
Mean	3.363636364	3.363636364
Variance	0.654545455	0.654545455
Observations	11	11
Pearson Correlation	0.236111111	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	10	
t Stat	0	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.5	
t Critical one-tail	1.812461123	
P(T<=t) two-tail	1	
t Critical two-tail	2.228138852	

In comparing pre- and post-course self-image surveys, a paired, one-tail t-test showed a statistically non-improvement ($t(10) = 0, p = .05$).

T-Test Results: People Pleasing

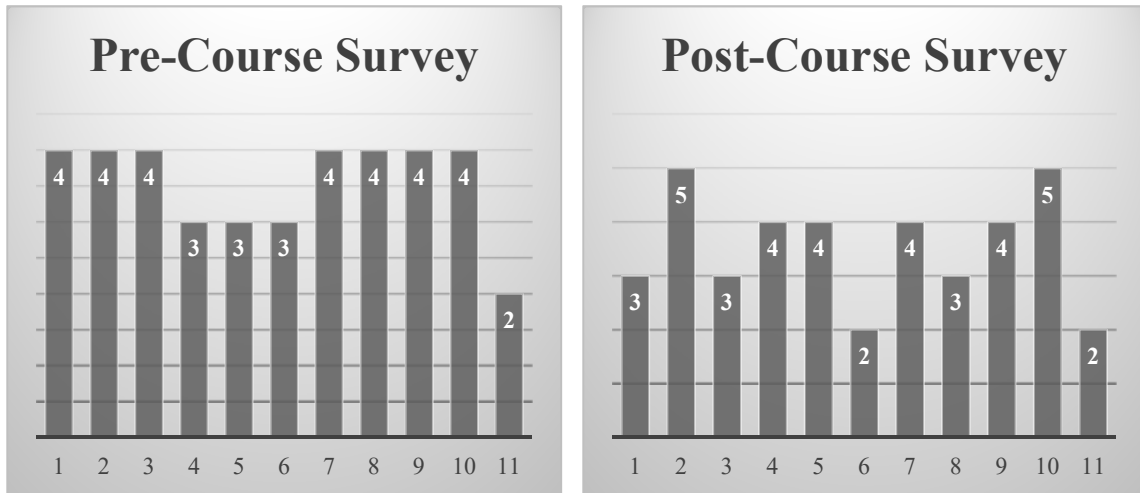


Figure A8. Pre- and post-survey WCW results, people pleasing

Table A8. T-test: Paired two sample for means, people pleasing

Statistic Categories	Post Score	Pre Score
Mean	3.545454545	3.545454545
Variance	1.072727273	0.472727273
Observations	11	11
Pearson Correlation	#N/A	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	10	
t Stat	0	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.5	
t Critical one-tail	1.812461123	
P(T<=t) two-tail	1	
t Critical two-tail	2.228138852	

In comparing pre- and post-course people-pleasing surveys, a paired, one-tail t-test showed a statistically non-improvement ($t_{(10)} = 0, p = .05$).

T-Test Results: Team Counseling

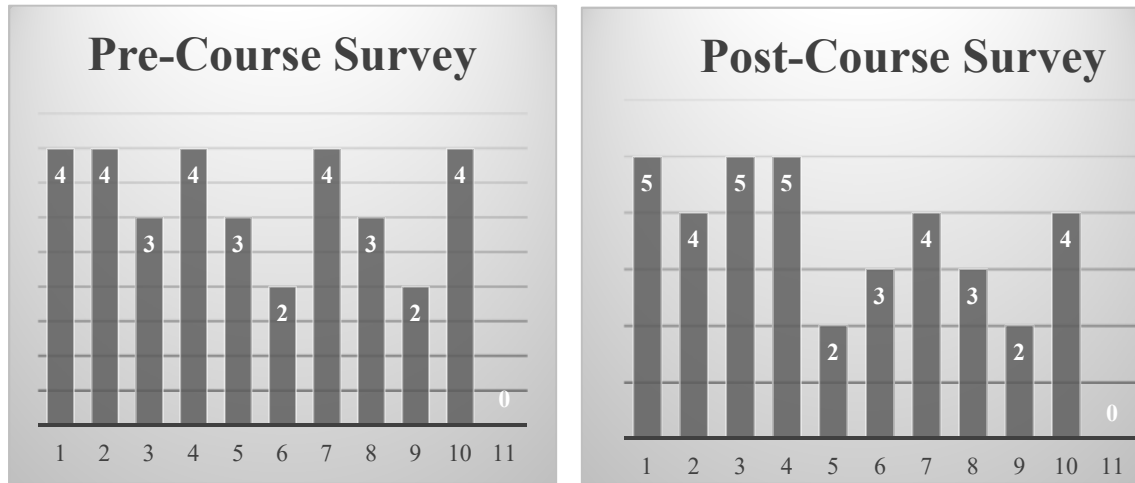


Figure A9. Pre- and post-survey WCW results, team counseling

Table A9. T-test: Paired two sample for means, team counseling

Statistic Categories	Post Score	Pre Score
Mean	3.363636364	3
Variance	2.454545455	1.6
Observations	11	11
Pearson Correlation	0.857834267	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	10	
t Stat	1.490711985	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.083444798	
t Critical one-tail	1.812461123	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.166889596	
t Critical two-tail	2.228138852	

In comparing pre- and post-course team counseling surveys, a paired, one-tail t-test showed a statistically non-improvement ($t(10) = 1.490, p = .083$).

APPENDIX 8

WOMEN COUNSELING WOMEN COURSE CURRICULUM
RUBRIC FOR WCW STUDENTS

CURRICULUM EVALUATION RUBRIC (STUDENTS) - LESSONS 2-9					
Name of Evaluator _____			Date _____		
1 = Unsatisfactory (0%). 2 = Fair (<90%). 3 = Sufficient (≥90%). 4 = Excellent (100%)					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
Curriculum Relevance					
The curriculum is relevant to the issue of women counseling women in regards to the topics of bitterness, anxiety, depression, homosexuality, sexual abuse, perfectionism, self-image, people-pleasing, and team counseling.					
Curriculum Biblical Accuracy					
The curriculum was faithful to the Bible's teaching on bitterness, anxiety, depression, homosexuality, sexual abuse, perfectionism, self-image, people-pleasing, and team counseling.					
Curriculum Format					
The amount of reading was appropriate					
The amount of course work was appropriate.					
Practicality					
The curriculum was sufficiently thorough in its coverage of the topic.					
The curriculum demonstrates integration of biblical principles and practical application.					
The direct teaching method was adequate.					
The topic challenged my own life.					

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ABSTRACT

DEVELOPING A WOMEN'S BIBLICAL COUNSELING COURSE AT THE MASTER'S UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL IN SANTA CLARITA, CALIFORNIA

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The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2017
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This ministry project was designed to redevelop the course known as *Women Counseling Women* for the students enrolled in The Master of Arts Program at The Master's University in Santa Clarita, California. Chapter 1 outlines the ministry context at The Master's University, Santa Clarita, California, the project's rationale, purpose, goals, and research methodology. Chapter 2 examines biblical and theological rationale for women counseling women as a biblical model. Chapter 3 reviews the theoretical and practical issues related to women counseling women by comparing and contrasting an integrative counseling approach, a secular counseling approach, and a biblical counseling approach. Chapter 4 reviews the specific elements of the project, which consisted mainly of a ten-week curriculum equipping women who counsel women on specific topics. Chapter 5 analyzes the project, specifically data collected from the students on ten lectures; the data collected from the students in the course both pre- and post-surveys.

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