

The One Anothers *teaching & admonishing one another*



Colossians 3:16

WHAT IS BIBLICAL COUNSELING?

The Role of Biblical Counseling in the Life of the Church

Biblical counseling is vital in the life of the local church. It's not a ministry separate from the local church, but very much to be a part of the fabric of the local church. To counsel someone from the Bible is not reserved for experts or those who have been specially trained. The Bereans displayed a dependence upon the word of God that should be characteristic of all Christians. To practice biblical counseling is not optional. Paul reminded the Ephesian elders *"that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears"* (Acts 20:31), and to the church in Roman, he expectantly wrote, *"concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able also to admonish one another"* (Romans 15:14). To give counsel from the Bible could be considered to be caring, sensitive, heart-targeted discipleship. Biblical counseling requires a biblical anthropology and a keen understanding that all counseling is only pre-counseling until the person comes to Christ. It views the Bible as sufficient to address every issue facing the heart of man.

Biblical counseling differentiates between truth and that which is almost true. Through the study of God's word, it is able to discern that which needs changing according to what He has commanded (whether desires, thinking, speech, or behavior). ***"For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom***

we have to do" (Hebrews 4:12–13). Using God's Word, the Holy Spirit is able to produce change a person's desires, thinking, speech, or behavior. Only the Bible contains the remedy able to change external behaviors together with the internal attitudes of a person caught in sin. Independently, the person is incapable of change.

When a believer counsels another from the Bible, sanctification or further conformity into Christlikeness is the goal, and that to the glory of God. Christians desire that all Christians be more like Christ. Ephesians 2:10 says, *"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."* And Romans 8:28 states, *"And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."* And so it's obvious, in the sovereignty of God, that all things that we encounter, whether good or bad, are purposefully ordained by God for us, and require that we would know how to be godly and lead godly lives. The blessed man of Psalm 1 does not walk in another way, but rather delights in the law of God, and meditates on His law both day and night; resulting in being firmly rooted, producing fruit, and thriving (vv. 1–3).

Biblical counseling is **nouthetic by nature**. The term "nouthetic" comes from the Greek word νοῦς meaning the ruling faculty, mind, understanding, or reason.^{BDAG} So nouthetic carries the sense of placing or putting sense into the mind, and more specifically biblical sense. Of course, this requires a high view of the inerrancy, infallibility, authority, and sufficiency of Scripture.*

*this entire section is paraphrased from "Pastoral Counseling" course notes, Dr. John Street, The Master's Seminary

Context: Approaching Colossians 3:16

An **imprisoned** Paul writes to the church in Colossae (AD 61–62) to **articulate the supremacy and sufficiency of Christ** in response to Epaphras' report that **false teachers** were attempting to dilute the gospel of Christ with Greek **philosophy**, Jewish **legalism**, pagan **superstitions**, and other **pre-Gnostic trends**.^{BK} Paul trained Epaphras who then went of to plant the church in Colossae, a church that Paul had not yet visited.

As is seen with Paul's letter to the Ephesians, the letter to the Colossians **divides into two parts**. Chapters **1 and 2** articulate the **doctrine of the supremacy of Christ**. Chapters **3 and 4** explain how the reality of **the supremacy of Christ is to be applied** to in the **lives of believers daily**. The **themes** seen in the letter include: the **person and work of Christ** (cross, death, resurrection), the believers **union with Christ, false teaching**, and **Christian conduct**. Gentile Christians were taught about Christ and their union with Him and were exhorted to walk in continuity with that union with Christ.^{KE} A Christian's conduct must directly reflect his/her union with Christ.

- 3:1 the Christian's **pursuit** — Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, **keep seeking the things above**, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.
- v. 2 the Christian's **focus** — **Set your mind on the things above**, not on the things that are on earth.
- v. 3 the Christian's **reality** — For you have died and **your life is hidden with Christ** in God.
- v. 4 the Christian's anticipations — **When Christ**, who is our life, **is revealed**, then **you also will be revealed with Him in glory**.
- v. 5 the Christian's **disdain** (the unworthy manner) — the past — Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to **immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire**, and **greed**, which amounts to **idolatry**.

- vv. 6–7 the Christian’s **deliverance** — For it is because of these things that **the wrath of God** will come upon the sons of disobedience, and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them.
- v. 8–9 the Christian’s **disrobing** — But now you also, **put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth.** 9 **Do not lie** to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its **evil practices,**
- v. 10–11 the Christian’s **uniform** — the present — and have **put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him**— 11 a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all.

Colossians 3:16

READ: Colossians 3:12–17

wooden literal:

ὁ λόγος τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐνοικεῖτω ἐν ὑμῖν πλουσίως ἐν πάσῃ σοφίᾳ·

the word of Christ dwell in/among you abundantly in all wisdom;

διδάσκοντες καὶ νουθετοῦντες ἑαυτοὺς ψαλμοῖς, ὕμνοις, ᾠδαῖς πνευματικαῖς ἐν χάριτι,

teaching and admonishing each other psalms, hymns, songs spiritual in thankfulness,

ᾄδοντες ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν τῷ θεῷ·

singing in the hearts of you to God.

ἐνοικεῖτω is a present active imperative; a compound word that combines the preposition “in” with the word for “a dwelling” or “house.” Paul writes

that it is the word of Christ that is to continually to live in, dwell in you all — believers in the church in Colossae. It's a verb used metaphorically to also describe the residing (*to make their home in*) of someone or something in the life of the person; 1) **of God** — *I will dwell in them...* 2 Corinthians 6:16; 2) **of the Holy Spirit** — *But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you...* Romans 8:11; *...through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us...* 2 Timothy 1:14; 3) of faith — *For I am mindful of the sincere faith within you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice,* 2 Timothy 1:5; and 4) **of sin** — *but sin which dwells in me* Romans 7:17.

But I'm going to argue that ἐνοικείτω is **more dynamic than** simply **residing**. We know the word of God is active and living, sharper, piercing, and able to judge (Hebrews 4:12). The word of Christ richly dwelling in the believer is operative and is a powerful force in the life of the believer. Hendriksen writes, "The objective, special revelation that proceeds from Christ should govern every thought, word, and deed, yes even the hidden drives and motivations of every member, and thus should bear sway among them all and this richly, bearing much fruit." The word of Christ is not static knowledge, it does not reside idly, but when **heeded** (Matthew 13:9 – *he who has ears, let him hear*, John 14:15 – *if you love Me, you will obey My commandments*), when **accurately handled** (2 Timothy 2:15), when **hidden away** in the heart (Psalm 119:11 – *Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You*), when **held forth** to others (2 Timothy 3:17–17; **Philippians 2:16**).^{WH}

WHY IS IT VITAL TO LET THE WORD OF CHRIST ABUNDANTLY DWELL AMONG YOU? it is the teacher, the instructor, the admonisher

Yet, many have the word of Christ dwelling in them but poorly; it has no might force and influence upon them.^{MH}

WHY COULD THIS BE? [not abundantly, full of the Scriptures]

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE ABOUT THIS?

- Deuteronomy 11:8–9, 18–20 ***“You shall therefore keep every commandment which I am commanding you today, so that you may be strong and go in and possess the land into which you are about to cross to possess it; 9 so that you may prolong your days on the land which the Lord swore to your fathers to give to them and to their descendants, a land flowing with milk and honey... “You shall therefore impress these words of mine on your heart and on your soul; and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. 19 You shall teach them to your sons, talking of them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road and when you lie down and when you rise up. 20 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates....;”***
- Proverbs 1:2–8; 2:1–4; 3:1–8, etc...

διδάσκοντες (from διδαχή meaning objectively a teaching, doctrine) means to provide instruction in a formal or informal setting, to teach. ^{BDAG} The object of this teaching is each other which is synonymous with one another. This is to be continually done in the church between believers – present tense. And the nominative use relates back to the subject of the verbal action, namely the word of God. This is what is to be taught.

νουθετοῦντες means to counsel about avoidance or cessation of an improper course of conduct, admonish, warn, instruct. ^{BDAG}

The word is derived from the noun νοῦς which speaks of 1) the ruling faculty, the mind, one’s understanding, or one’s reason ^{BDAG}; 2) the way of thinking, mind, attitude, as the sum total of the whole mental and moral state of being. The mind is the immaterial aspect and the natural sphere in a person that feels, perceives, thinks, wills, & especially reasons. The place of conscious mental events and capabilities in a person. It could be described as the organized conscious and unconscious adaptive mental

activity of a person. "It refers to a person's disposition; the pattern of making judgments about fundamental issues in life (truth vs. error; right vs. wrong; beauty vs. ugliness; reality vs. myth). What we use to perceive and make sense of ourselves, the world around us, God, etc.... The mind is the domain of convictions, values, desires, judgments, attitudes, and affections. The mind is fundamentally religious in nature; it is the seat of worship." ^{BK}
It's an aspect of personhood and reflective of one's nature.

In the OT, the word (חשב) *khaw-shav* is used: 1) to employ the mind to think, plan, make a judgment; 2) the result of mental effort to think, regard, value, compute: (make) account (of), conceive, consider, count, cunning (man, work, workman), devise, esteem, find out, forecast, hold, imagine, impute, invent, be like, mean, purpose, reckon(-ing be made), regard, think. ^{TWOT}

The verb νοέω is derived from νοῦς to grasp or comprehend something on the basis of careful thought, perceive, apprehend, understand, gain an insight into (1 Timothy 1:7; Romans 1:20; Matthew 16:11; Mark 7:18; John 12:40). In 1 Corinthians 2:14 Uses it a bit differently. The natural man is without power/ability to know/knowledge because the Holy Spirit is active in revealing that knowledge, and therefore Paul indirectly addresses the mind/understanding/one's ability to perceive. And other terms for mind exist (νόημα; διάνοια), each with their own significance.

νουθετέω – verb – *to put in mind*; to counsel about avoidance or cessation of an improper course of conduct, admonish, warn, instruct. Paul uses the term in participle form. It is to "confront as a friend" (this was the normal method of formal counseling before the advent of secular psychology in the early 1900s) and consists of lovingly confronting people out of deep concern in order to help them make those changes that God requires takes the view that the Bible is sufficient to counsel, correct, and admonish individuals. Romans 15:14 theme verse in nouthetic counseling. *"Personally I am convinced about you, my brothers and sisters, that you yourselves are full of goodness, amply filled with all [spiritual] knowledge, and competent to*

*admonish and counsel and instruct one another” (AMP); And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and **able also to admonish one another** (NASB).*

Jay Adams (1929—2020), as Presbyterian pastor and teacher at Westminster Theological Seminary is known as the father of nouthetic counseling. His works include *Competent to Counsel* (1970) made a case for how secular psychological systems are opposed to Scripture. He rejected the unbiblical theories of Sigmund Freud, Carl Rogers, John Watson, and B. F. Skinner. Nouthetic counseling holds 3 basic ideas in its practice.

- 1) **Confrontation:** uses the Bible, not human ideas, to speak to people about their problems and uses the Bible as a mirror to show the counselee sin issues he or she may not even be aware of
 - a. James 1:22–25 But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; 24 for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. 25 But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does
- 2) **Concern:** displays genuine concern and seeks the welfare of the counselee. The counselor strives for an emotional connection with the counselee and not a detached, clinical relationship. This close relationship is already evidenced within the fellowship of the local church, making counseling biblically a characteristic within a healthy church environment.
- 3) **Change:** The goal is to bring change in accordance with God’s commanded will. By drawing wisdom from the Word of God, the counselor desires that the counselee experience the power and

blessing of the Holy Spirit and “walk in the ways of the good and keep to the paths of the righteous”

- a. Proverbs 2:20 *So you will walk in the way of good men, And keep to the paths of the righteous.*

Biblical counseling attempts to return to a strictly biblical method of problem-solving.

It's Bible-based, Christ-centered, and local church-oriented.

What does Paul say about the mind of the unbeliever?

- Ephesians 4:17
 - So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their **mind**,
 - presupposition – that man, apart from God, has a mind that operates in futility
 - **state of being without use or value, emptiness, futility, purposelessness, transitoriness**
 - **Result:** 2 Peter 2:18
 - For speaking out arrogant *words* of vanity they entice by fleshly desires, by sensuality, those who barely escape from the ones who live in error,
- Romans 1:28
 - And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved **mind**, to do those things which are not proper,
 - **‘not standing the test’, then unqualified, worthless, base of person**
 - **Result:**
 - disqualified 1 Corinthians 9:27,
 - failed the test 2 Corinthians 13:5-7,
 - rejected in regard to the faith 2 Timothy 3:8,

- They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed. Titus 1:16
- Colossians 2:18
 - Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on [visions] he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly **mind**,
 - as instrument of various actions or expressions.
 - α. In Paul's thought esp., all parts of the body constitute a totality known as σ. or flesh, which is dominated by sin to such a degree that wherever flesh is, all forms of sin are likew. present, and no good thing can live in the σάρξ
 - **Result:** Romans 7:18
 - For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not.
- 1 Timothy 6:5
 - and constant friction between men of depraved **mind** and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain.
 - **Friction = One characterized by constant argumentativeness and therefore irritating, wrangling, frictional wranglings**
 - **Depraved = to cause to become morally corrupt, deprave, ruin**
 - **Deprived = to cause another to suffer loss by taking away through illicit means, rob, steal, despoil, defraud**
- 2 Timothy 3:8
 - Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these [men] also oppose the truth, men of depraved **mind**, rejected in regard to the faith.

- Titus 1:15
 - To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their **mind** and their conscience are defiled.
 - **defilement through socially or culturally unacceptable behavior**
 - **to cause the purity of something to be violated by immoral behavior, defile**
 - **contamination**

ἐν πάσῃ σοφίᾳ describes the manner in which both teaching and admonishing takes place; with all wisdom. Believers within the local church are to teach and admonish from word of Christ and characterized by divine/godly wisdom; to instructively apply biblical truth to specific circumstances and situations so that the recipient comes to think and live in a different way that's aligned with that biblical truth. This wisdom is sourced in God (Proverbs 1:7, 2:6, James 1:5; 3:17, etc...)

WHAT ARE THE ATTITUDES OR VIRTUES REQUIRED TO EFFECTIVELY TEACH AND ADMONISH ONE ANOTHER? (see vv. 12–14)

WHY ARE PSALMS HYMNS AND SPIRITUAL SONGS DESCRIBED AS BEING VEHICLES FOR TEACHING AND ADMONISHING?

- songs of praise to God, sourced from the Scriptures, about Christ's person and work
- they are the anthems of truth and praise
- providing testimony of God's good works, who He is and what He has done for us
- powerful reminders
- worship pleasing to God
- singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God
- causes growth in grace

- These serve as very effective vehicles for the outpouring of confession of sin, gratitude, spiritual joy, rapture..., they are a tonic for the soul and promote the glory of God,...and fix interest upon the indwelling word of Christ. ^{WH}
- serves to calibrate, moves one's mind off the world's overstimulation
- there is a need to be biblically accurate in what one says and sings

HOW DOES COLOSSIANS 3:16 CONNECT TO EPHESIANS 5:18?

- It would seem, given the parallel nature of the passages that these verses find themselves in, together with the corresponding nature of Paul's letters to the Ephesian and Colossian churches, that letting the word of Christ richly dwell within you would be part of being filled by the Holy Spirit; especially as that word is applied within the church, and between believers via psalms, hymns, spiritual songs, etc....

WHAT MIGHT BE SOME MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT BIBLICAL COUNSELING?

- I don't need to
- it's only for professionals
- I don't know my Bible, so therefore I'm out
- **wisdom is required on both sides of biblical counseling; both in the being an instrument of its transmission or being the recipient**
 - **Proverbs 9:8–10** *Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you, Reprove a wise man and he will love you.
9 Give instruction to a wise man and he will be still wiser,
Teach a righteous man and he will increase his learning.
10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,
And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.*
 - **Proverbs 12:15** *The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, But a wise man is he who listens to counsel.*
 - **Proverbs 19:20** *Listen to counsel and accept discipline, That you may be wise the rest of your days.*

- It's alright to blend modern psychology
 - **Proverbs 21:30** *There is no wisdom, there is no understanding, And there is no counsel against the Lord.*

V. Further Study

Memorize: Colossians 3:12–17

Pray: Confess to God times of not letting the word of Christ dwell in you richly and not being able to carry out the teaching and admonishing of each other because of lethargy, misconceptions, or lack of commitment to being in the word yourself, and pray that God would continually help you to grow in this area; both in ability and in seizing opportunities.

Acknowledge that the new man needs to be put on and is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created you. Thank God for the times He's already used you as an instrument of teaching and admonishing with all wisdom, and thank Him for the times you've benefitted from being on the receiving end. Ask that God would continually help you to strive to practice these whenever you find yourself in the company of other believers.

Sing: #368 Speak, O Lord

Discuss:

1. In your own words, explain Colossians 3:16 to a friend together with its application in daily life and in the church.
2. Having understood what it means to "teach and admonish one another?" How can you most effectively participate in this within the context of your local church? Who in your life may need teaching and admonition from a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, and love?

3. In what ways is the church strengthened when Colossians 3:16 is the intentional and active practice of the church?
4. What practical changes need to be made in your life in order to better let the word of Christ richly dwell in you?
5. What further implications arise when individuals and/or the church are not practicing Colossians 3:16 (ie. one's view/church's view of God, view of the atonement, view of sin, view of Scripture, etc....)?
6. What blessings arise out of obedience to this verses?
7. Create a list of verses that specifically address teaching and admonishing (putting in the mind). Memorize them, so that you can be reminded of the necessity of biblical counseling in the local church.

next class: Sunday May 21st, 2023 —

VI. Citations & Resources

JA – Jay E. Adams, *The Christian Counselor's Manual & Competent to Counsel* (ask any of GraceLife's elders for additional resources on counseling biblically)

KE – Dr. Keith Essex, "New Testament Studies" course notes (The Master's Seminary)

WH – William Hendriksen, *Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon* (NT Commentary)

BK – Dr. Brad Klassen, "Ordination Preparation" course notes (The Master's Seminary)

DW – Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar*

BD – *Biblical Doctrine* eds. John MacArthur & Richard Mayhue (GraceLife Library)

A-S George Abbott-Smith, *Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament*

BDAG – Bauer, Danker, Arndt, and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*

TWOT – *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* TWOT

Recommended Commentaries

- Exegetical:
 - *O'Brien, Colossians, Philemon (Word Biblical Commentary)
 - Pao, Colossians & Philemon (Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the NT)
- English Interpretation:
 - FF Bruce, The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon and to the Ephesians (New International Commentary on the NT)
 - *Moo, The Letters to the Colossians and to Philemon (Pillar NT Commentary).
- Expository:
 - John F. MacArthur, Colossians & Philemon (The MacArthur NT Commentary).

* highly recommended