

TEACHING AND COUNSELING

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Teaching and counseling are two different disciplines which are blended in Spirituotherapy. The one that is emphasized may be greatly influenced by the background of the counselor.

For example, if the counselor has been trained in humanistic counseling, he will have been told that he is not to impose his values on others. Too, he may have been trained in client-centered therapy which allows the counselee to determine the direction and goals of counseling. On the other hand, a pastor turned counselor may turn the counseling session into a teaching venue where a curriculum is followed to impart information whether or not the counselee is prepared to receive it.

Both of these extremes have merit, and the blending of them can produce great benefit to the counselee. First, we must determine the need and understand the counselee before attempting to impart information. It is like feeding a baby. There are those who feed on schedule whether the baby is hungry or not; others are committed to feed on demand which most nearly approximates the counseling model discussed here.

After having become thoroughly acquainted with the situation that caused the person to come for counseling, it is necessary to view this in the context of the individual's life history. Once this is established, it is time for teaching, which takes the form of presenting the foundational truth in the form of the Wheel and Line. Usually, this can be done in the first session so that the counselee has a context in the Scriptures from which to begin study to see a spiritual answer to a psychological/social situation.

Upon his return, it will be necessary to determine his understanding of his situation relative to the spiritual truths presented. Once this is fully understood by the counselor, he trusts the Holy Spirit to show him where additional teaching will be applicable to allow the counselee to move forward in understanding and appropriating truth.

This kind of give and take will typify the ongoing counseling relationship. Rather than going into the interview with an agenda, it is better if the

counselor determines to respond to the expressed or discerned needs of the counselee - feeding on demand rather than a predetermined schedule.

It is rather common for an insecure counselor to have a plan or agenda for each session; this avoids having things arise for which he is unprepared. Spirituotherapy is trusting the Holy Spirit to provide what is needed at the moment it is called for. The Word has something to say about a word fitly spoken; when the Holy Spirit has prepared the heart and given the counselor a word to meet that heart preparation, a *rhema* occurs and the counselee receives spiritual ministry - not just intellectual understanding.

Of course, the counselor must have a repertoire of scripture and spiritual counseling experience from which the Holy Spirit can draw; there is no premium of ignorance! However, this should be accessed on demand rather than levied on the unsuspecting counseling in measured and scheduled doses.

Also, there is the temptation to turn counseling into ongoing discipleship which should be the role of the church. While the cross is the beginning of discipleship which is the role of Spirituotherapy, such counseling should not usurp the role of the church.

The counseling teaching mixture of blending described above should typify the entire counseling relationship. Once the counselee has found victory and has some steadiness in his walk, he should be referred to the church for ongoing individual discipleship or mentoring as well as corporate ministry, usually in a small koinonia group for accountability. In my experience, the counseling relationship should not require more than an average of 3 - 5 interviews before the church assumes the responsibility. It is our position that the initial counseling should and could be done by the church once the church is prepared to assume its responsibility.

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