

General Topics :: What Kind of Counsel?

What Kind of Counsel? - posted by moreofHim (), on: 2005/9/23 8:59

This passage has really stayed with me as I read it a few months ago. I have had my share of needing biblical counsel and I know many who also have need of it. I have always found it interesting that our flesh would like a "counselor" who will let us off the hook, or justify our actions. Yet, if we want to grow and change into His likeness, then we will want the truth. We will want to know what God says about our hearts, our actions and our emotions. This is why I have enjoyed studying Nouthetic Counseling.

In Him, Chanin

-What kind of counsel do you desire?-

The disciple who honestly seeks to let God remold his mind will direct his energies not to sorting out the exceptions, loopholes, or fine points of the law, but to a **total surrender of obedient love**.

The disciplined Christian will be very careful what sort of counsel he seeks from others. Counsel that contradicts the written Word is ungodly counsel. Blessed is the man that walketh not in that.

Sometimes a person knows well what his trouble is and for this very reason has not consulted the Lord, fearing what He will say: **Confess. Turn around. Quit that indulgence. Do not pity yourself. Forgive that person. Pay back what you owe. Apologize. Tell the truth. Deny yourself. Consider the other's well-being. Lay down your life.**

The person is likely to choose a counselor who will listen "nonjudgementally" to his story and perhaps make light of or dismiss as unwarranted whatever guilt feelings come to the surface. His interpretation of the secrets revealed may be more palatable than that which the person would have found for himself on the pages of the Bible, for the Word is "...sharper than the sharpest knife, cutting deep into our innermost thoughts and desires. It exposes us for what we really are. Nothing in all creation can hide from him. Everything is naked and exposed before his eyes. This is the God to whom we must explain all that we have done." Heb.4:12-13

Throughout our earthly lives...we will accept the solutions, answers, and escapes that the world offers (and there are plenty of those), or the radical alternative shown to the mind attuned to Christ's. The ways of the world exalt themselves against God. They sometimes look rational and appealing to the most earnest disciple, but Christ says to us (as He said to his disciples long ago when they had given up), "Do you also want to leave Me?" Hopefully we will answer as Peter did: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Your words are words of eternal life".

-Elisabeth Elliot (Discipline: The Glad Surrender)

Re: What Kind of Counsel?, on: 2005/9/23 9:06

Quote:
-----for the Word is "...sharper than the sharpest knife, cutting deep into our innermost thoughts and desires. It exposes us for what we really are. Nothing in all creation can hide from him. Everything is naked and exposed before his eyes. This is the God to whom we must explain all that we have done." Heb.4:12-13

OUCH! I've never seen this wording of this passage. Always thought of it more like He will divide for us and cut away our slough, so we see where the life really is....

Quote:
-----Hopefully we will answer as Peter did: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Your words are words of eternal life".

No argument here. :-)

General Topics :: What Kind of Counsel?

Re: What Kind of Counsel? - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2005/9/23 9:31

You wrote:

The person is likely to choose a counselor who will listen "nonjudgementally" to his story and perhaps make light of or dismiss as unwarranted whatever guilt feelings come to the surface.

No truer words were ever spoken.

Thanks for posting this. Elizabeth Elliot has a gift of cutting to the core issue of whatever matter is discussed.

ginnyrose

Re: What Kind of Counsel? - posted by crsschk (), on: 2005/9/23 10:56

Excellent Chanin,

Quote:
-----It exposes us for what we really are. Nothing in all creation can hide from him. Everything is naked and exposed before his eyes. This is the God to whom we must explain all that we have done." Heb.4:12-13

Very much find this verse embedded and is in one sense the measuring line of everything that comes alongside it, in our thoughts, in "application" of how we approach scripture, if we are to be teachable. The thoughts that we may be measuring by our own preconceived ideas, if it "fit's" what we already think we might know, instead of it's opposite, submitting even *that* to the test.

And that can be tricky enough as it is, the tendency is to still measure from our angle, not the Lord's.

Not sure if this fits rightly here or not but have found it a season of much difficulty in prayer. The first is in this not so curious "resistance" to stop the carnal mind of enmity against the Lord from getting to the place of prayer in the first place. It's the "I ought to be praying, I want to be praying...but I don't *feel* like praying, would rather do _____" And that can be well intentioned (possibly), reading scripture, a Christian Classic, a book on *prayer* :-? !!

This may seem dissimilar to what you have presented here yet it seems to be much the same in

Quote:
-----Sometimes a person knows well what his trouble is and for this very reason has not consulted the Lord, fearing what He will say: **Confess. Turn around. Quit that indulgence. Do not pity yourself. Forgive that person. Pay back what you owe. Apologize. Tell the truth. Deny yourself. Consider the other's well-being. Lay down your life.**

Would have to add **Pray** to the list.

The sheer stupidity in it all is that if we could just discipline ourselves, make ourselves do some things that the flesh recoils at there can be great blessing in it. There is a getting through in prayer even when it is a struggle and that may not be on the timetable we imagine... it could take days, BUT that may be because of one problem itself, and though I know this all too well, the reality and the difficulty could be summed up in just this:

Learning how to just shut up.

Everything is always clamoring for attention, not only the outward things, but the noise generated in our own heads. What we 'think' we know, what we apt to jump to conclusions on, what we attempt to rationalize or dismiss, even before the Lord in prayer. The question that keeps begging for an answer is "What is it that you want?" And that is in the sense of ultimately, at the very core of our being. The present needs and specifics for whatever circumstances being set aside for the moment to get at a more pressing consideration. "What" or "Who" is it that we are seeking? I cannot think of any higher 'gift' to seek after than God's thought on the matter at hand, which is His will, not in general but in specific, at this moment in time, in this moment of prayer. And to be able to hear anything at all is to shut up everything to be able to hear, not merely listen. To lay everything, every thought, good, bad and indifferent at His feet and be silent. It is a mighty thing sometimes to get there, to a place of utter quietness and silence before Him, but it can be done, it just may take the time

General Topics :: What Kind of Counsel?

and effort to wrestle with ourselves or wrestle it out of ourselves.

Rev 8:1 And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

Oh, for this in our prayers. How can we receive any counsel whatsoever from the Lord without it? Is it not the very essence of "Denying yourself"?

This is not to open ourselves up to just any old thing in a sort of mystical sense, but purposefully before Him, to "*Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.*" Psa 46:10

When you can get there, to this place of silence, it is rather amazing what you might find. Often it is in the praise and worship that comes forth even if in the struggle before hand you may have been vexed with any number of troubles, concerns, whatever emotions that had to be subdued.

And peace, the rest from fighting against Him, against your own self, the greatest enemy there is. Then it seems we can truly pray and truly intercede for others, gain a truer perspective of ourselves and a clearer understanding of the Lord.

The answer personally to the big question from the Lords perspective, "What is it that you want"?
Keeps coming back to;

Joh 17:3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

That's not mere flowery speech, but from the depths, to be able to share and give back out of the substance of what can only come from Him. It seems an impossibility to share that which we have not received, not from a storehouse of knowledge but from the Counselor Himself. To be clear, what I have found is that getting to this place of silence will bring forth that which has already been absorbed into the spirit, the verses that come to mind, that spring up *after* everything has been laid down, not that have been sized up before hand. The perception gets altered and you find you can learn something more so that you are willing to learn and willing to let go, willing to see things in a different light...

Oh, could go on endlessly with this. Gain silence with the Lord, it's worth every ounce of effort.

Re:, on: 2005/9/23 16:28

"Welcome back Chanin" ... could have used ya some days ago ... but I know y'all have been busy with Katrina's aftermath.

I just wanted to give this link 'just' for a definition and say Thank you for this post and for making yourself seen/heard up here again. :-)

<http://achristiancounselor.com/nouthet.html>

Love in Him.

Annie

Re: nouthetic counsel - posted by moreofHim (), on: 2005/9/23 16:47

Thanks Annie :)

here is another good link www.Nanc.org

The article page is : <http://www.nanc.org/page.asp?contentid=46&sub=7#articles>

In Him, Chanin

General Topics :: What Kind of Counsel?

Re:, on: 2005/9/23 16:51

:-) Praise God !

Re: What Kind of Counsel? - posted by rookie (), on: 2005/9/23 17:30

Quote:
-----Sometimes a person knows well what his trouble is and for this very reason has not consulted the Lord, fearing what He will say: Confess. Turn around. Quit that indulgence. Do not pity yourself. Forgive that person. Pay back what you owe. Apologize. Tell the truth. Deny yourself. Consider the other's well-being. Lay down your life.

Sometimes a person knows well what his trouble is and for this very reason has not consulted the Lord. This I have continued to experience in my life. What I know from the Holy Scripture is that which I fear. Jesus paints a picture of a person who learns from Him. I fear dying to self. I fear losing this life. And according to Scripture, I know that:

1John 4:17 Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. 18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. 19 We love Him because He first loved us.

I have experienced at times this precept. The work of grace in my life has released me from various things which bind me. It is this love that overcomes my fears. Yet I know that there is much more to come.

My heart is not even like Peter's when he said he was willing to drink from the same cup as Jesus would soon do. The Lord said at that time that there would come a day that Peter would willingly drink from the same cup.

Faith is the substance of what I have been given to hope for. The counsel of the Lord by the Holy Spirit has given me the evidence of the faithfulness of God to conform me into the image of His Son. When I have submitted to His leading, the evidence of His faithfulness is beyond doubt. It has been good, very good. This substance of His grace causes me to rest from that which I once strived for foolishly. Thinking like the woman at the well, that a man or this world will bring satisfaction, Jesus through the Holy Spirit causes me to seek for His living water. Yet, I still seek in many ways to satisfy my thirst with water that is of this world. As I seek the water of this world, fear is its evidence. This I know.

God bless Chanin

In Christ
Jeff

Re: What Kind of Counsel? - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2005/9/23 19:44

After I reread this piece again, I was reminded of a verse in Psa. 1:1:

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scoffers! (NASB)

And that means the likes of Ann Landers or Dear Abby? I have been convicted on this issue...how many take their advice for life from persons such as this? After I quit reading these advice columns, and read it again, I was shocked....

ginnyrose

Re: Conviction reading E.Elliot - posted by moreofHim (), on: 2005/9/23 20:40

Alot of Elisabeth Elliot's writings, as well as Nancy DeMoss's writings have been a huge influence on me and has produced much conviction and confirmation that has spurred me on to grow and change.

Here is an excellent piece on Godly counsel by Nancy DeMoss (from "Lies Women Believe: and the truth that sets them free")

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"In spite of all the talk about poor self-image, our instinctive reaction to life is self-centered: How does this affect me? Will this make me happy? Why did this have to happen to me? What does she think about me? It's my turn. Where's my share? Nobody cares about my ideas. He hurt my feelings. I've got to have some time for me. I need my space. He's not sensitive to my needs.

It's not enough for us to be the center of our own universe. We want to be the center of everyone else's universe as well-**including God's**. In his book Finding God, Dr. Larry Crabb offers a penetrating analysis of the extent to which the evangelical church has given in to this deception:

"Helping people to feel loved and worthwhile has become the central mission of the church. We are learning not to worship God in self-denial and costly service, but to embrace our inner child, heal our memories, overcome addictions, lift our depressions, improve our self-images, establish self-preserving boundaries, substitute self-love for self-hatred, and replace shame with an affirming acceptance of who we are.

Recovery from pain is absorbing an increasing share of the church's energy. And it is alarming...

We have become committed to relieving the pain behind our problems rather than using our pain to wrestle more passionately with the character and purpose of God. **Feeling better has become more important than finding God...**

As a result, we happily camp on biblical ideas that help us feel loved and accepted, and we pass over the scripture that calls us to higher ground. We twist wonderful truths about God's acceptance, His redeeming love, and our new identity in Christ **into a basis for honoring ourselves** rather than seeing those truths for what they are: the stunning revelation of a God gracious enough to love people who hated Him, a God worthy to be honored above everyone and everything else.

...We have rearranged things so that God is now worthy of honor because He has honored us. "Worthy is the Lamb", we cry, not in response to His amazing grace, but because He has recovered what we value most: the ability to like ourselves. We now matter more than God."

Paul understood that **God does not exist for us, but that we exist for Him:**

"For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him." col.1:16

"...nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God." acts 20:24

The bottom line for Paul was: "TO LIVE IS CHRIST." Once that was settled, nothing else mattered much."

--Nancy DeMoss

General Topics :: What Kind of Counsel?

Re: What Kind of Counsel?, on: 2005/9/23 20:48

Mike, you've said a lot of real truths, here. I have a few points I'd like to pick up on, which you may or may not find helpful. Please eat what's useful encouragement and spit out the pips.

I recognise each of us has to break through alone in prayer and the Lord allows us many challenges to give us an opportunity to practise and overcome in many different scenarios.

Quote:

-----And that can be tricky enough as it is, the tendency is to still measure from our angle, not the Lords.

Stating this is a sign you're *aware* there is a difference. The born again vicar of my local Anglican church, a man in his sixties (relentless evangelist) testified one Sunday morning he had known of a decision he had had to make by that day, for months. He had turned the issue over in his mind every way he could think and was still no clearer as to the right option. Then it occurred to him that he hadn't actually prayed about it, so he brought it before the Lord and within half an hour, had the answer - consisting of an option which had not crossed his mind previously. Amen.

Quote:

-----but I don't *feel* like praying,

Would have to add Pray to the list.

I think you hit on an answer when you said this

Quote:

-----Often it is in the praise and worship that comes forth

I know you meant that in the context of having broken through into silence, so I have two questions. Have you ever tried beginning with the worship? Launching yourself out into the praise by an act of will and continuing until the Spirit catches you up? The other question is, have you ever tried getting to the place of silence from praying out loud...? I mean, by saying what's on your heart - all the thoughts and considerations - and just listen and home in on the points which the Spirit quickens to you, and keep homing in until there is that silence?

Even as I write this, it seems inconceivable to me that you have never done this, but, sometimes, if one is trying to pray while others are asleep, making a noise is not an option. Therefore, because of the benefit of hearing what your spirit is bringing through your mouth to the Lord, I'd say you *must* find a place where you can speak out loud... - the car, the garden, a walk - all can free up the internal system. Then, by listening to what you pray in the Spirit, you are closer to working out the answer to

Quote:

-----The question that keeps begging for an answer is "What is it that you want?"

Your spirit in fellowship with His Spirit knows the answer.... it just needs to be communicated to your thinking brain.

Quote:

-----And peace, the rest from fighting against Him, against your own self, the greatest enemy there is. **Then it seems we can truly pray and truly intercede for others, gain a truer perspective of ourselves and a clearer understanding of the Lord.**

'...from the depths, **to be able to share and give back out of the substance of what can only come from Him. It seems an impossibility to share that which we have not received, not from a storehouse of knowledge but from the Counselor Himself.** To be clear, what I have found is that getting to this place of silence will bring forth that which has already been absorbed into the spirit, the verses that come to mind, that spring up **after everything has been laid down**, not that have been sized up before hand. The **perception gets altered and you find you can learn something more** so that you are **willing to learn and willing to let go, willing to see things in a different light...**

Oh, could go on endlessly with this. Gain silence with the Lord, it's worth every ounce of effort.

Praise the Lord! This is all good. Myself, I'm not keen on playing worship music to 'get into the mood'. I'd rather bring my complaints to God just as they are in true David style, than waste time pretending to be 'spiritual' if something else is burning on my heart.

General Topics :: What Kind of Counsel?

The Father is actually interested in the things that bother us and often, He sends the answers to them for their own sake, because they are important too, especially if they block our route to Him. One thing is sure, He is keen for us to enter His presence by the shortest route. Also, sometimes it is worth LOOKING at the obstacle and having a think about the reason it is an obstacle, instead of trying to push past it with a certain degree of denial. Just a thought.

Re: Wants - posted by crsschk (), on: 2005/9/24 0:45

Quote:
-----Have you ever tried beginning with the worship? Launching yourself out into the praise by an act of will and continuing until the Spirit catches you up?

When it's honest, yes. But ... as a discipline to wrestle away from my own thoughts whether that may come or not.. not thinking of any particular expectations in this particular manner, just to be still.

Quote:
----- The other question is, have you ever tried getting to the place of silence from praying out loud...? I mean, by saying what's on your heart - all the thoughts and considerations - and just listen and home in on the points which the Spirit quickens to you, and keep homing in until there is that silence?

Surely at times, as you mentioned and generally the car, but even without the vocal chords (Difficult with others in the house at an early hour as you also mentioned) there is the unburdening of all these things and often the wonderful sense of silence that just takes over, hadn't thought of it as something to work up to and don't think that is what you are stating perhaps, but it just seems to happen... It's a little different line of thought I may have been trailing, another way would be, what of God's silence? Just to be in His Presence.

Quote:
-----Your spirit in fellowship with His Spirit knows the answer.... it just needs to be communicated to your thinking brain.

Referring back to the "What is it that you want?" Was thinking out loud there maybe without clarification. It is something that will come up often in prayer. It's both a question of my own generating and would like to think from the Holy Spirit as well. It's to ask an honest question of what is it that I am seeking? This is where it may tie in with the next well said statements that Chanin brought forth. (Briefly, hesitated putting this into this thread here in the first place, would prefer it didn't distract from the areas it touched on, will try something different elsewhere)

It does come back to seeking something purely for ourselves and our self interests. That is the "Big question". Surely it varies, but often it's in asking that in an honest matter that I find I really don't "want" anything at all ... "Wantless".

Again, tricky. There is many things I do want. I want to know Him as he in fact is. (Katz). I want to know nothing but Jesus as He is not as I might have wrongly perceived Him. I want to understand and I want for instance those here, all of us to understand so they might help me understand better and turn it around and give it right back again. But asking that question also makes one realize just what it is that matters. It isn't what's in my best interest, but what is God's, better, what is it that He wants? Of me? Of us? And sometimes I can't help but think He would like us to just shut up and listen, :-)

That without any particular expectation, just to be in His Presence. It's quite interesting to think on that verse in Revelation...

Re: Conviction reading - posted by crsschk (), on: 2005/9/24 0:55

Chanin,

Again, this is so on the mark. Felt it a disservice to start taking quotables out of it. What an apt description. Sorry for the interruptions prior, hope this gets well read.

Only the title seems misleading; "Lies Women Believe: and the truth that sets them free".
Women? ;-)

General Topics :: What Kind of Counsel?

Re: What kind of counsel, on: 2005/9/25 0:51

Without doubt, Mike, what you describe here is perfect for this thread, especially the last embedded sentence.

Quote:
----- I want to know Him as he in fact is. (Katz). I want to know nothing but Jesus as He is not as I might have wrongly perceived Him. I want to understand and I want for instance those here, all of us to understand so they might help me understand better and turn it around and give it right back again. But asking that question also makes one realize just what it is that matters. It isn't what's in my best interest, but what is Gods, better, what is it that He wants? Of me? Of us? And sometimes I can't help but think He would like us to just shut up and listen

To clarify what I said earlier a little further, it is O Chambers who encourages us to do things differently for the good of our soul - not to be a slave to routine or to have a pet way of doing things practical or spiritual, such that the rut prevents us from being touchable.

He is also credited with 'if the Spirit doesn't move me, I move the Spirit'; and I think this is what I was trying to get at by suggesting you take the offensive. I do realise it isn't easy, but, like eating any elephant, it has to be cut into smaller pieces (sorry for very old analogy) and I've put a few suggestions in Eli's old thread 'More than Conquerors'.

As OC says, the moment one finds oneself 'disinclined' that is the moment to STOP EVERYTHING ELSE and deal with it before God.

Listen, I know I'm preaching to the converted.... Just want to encourage you there is a breakthrough point... It's just a matter of keeping on pushing until you hit it.

Re: What kind of Counsel for those in need of inner healing?, on: 2005/9/25 1:18

Hi Chanin,

This bit of the quote really bothers me, because people can't help arriving in church with these difficulties.

Quote:
-----"Helping people to feel loved and worthwhile has become the central mission of the church. We are learning not to worship God in self-denial and costly service, but to embrace our inner child, heal our memories, overcome addictions, lift our depressions, improve our self-images, establish self-preserving boundaries, substitute self-love for self-hatred, and replace shame with an affirming acceptance of who we are.

Recovery from pain is absorbing an increasing share of the church's energy. And it is alarming...

Quite simply, if disciples were out roaming the streets laying hands on the sick and healing them - and casting out demons - by the time the healed, recovered and delivered were making commitment to become Christians, they would be ready from the start to take up their crosses. I know this is an oversimplification, but, it IS the reason there are so many people in the church who need attention to their inner man. And, it is not WRONG to need attention to one's inner man.

In fact, the Church's attitude - that it is alarming people arrive as Christians with these needs - is part of the problem. The Church should be MUCH more aware of the damage done by a life of sin and idolatry than it appears to be willing to acknowledge. This sort of denial does nothing to address basic healing needs.

I agree there is a process of how to learn to think differently. Learning how to let go of pain is another valid learning curve, for the emotionally/physically damaged Christian.

(Chanin, I'm not suggesting you don't know this nor, that you are unsympathetic. I'm merely taking the discussion you've offered and running with it as I see the issues. :-)

Quote:
-----We have become committed to relieving the pain behind our problems rather than using our pain to wrestle more passionately with the character and purpose of God.

The brutal truth is, that people whose pain is so little they *still* have inner strength, energy and enough resistance to wrestle with it, are not the sort of people who need the sort of healing which those in the first quoted section do.

I agree wholeheartedly that if 'Feeling better has become more important than finding God...' there is a problem. But, th

at is possibly the perception of the onlooker who is not feeling so unfit that they need to *feel better* to function.

The word 'feel' here, is misleading, because it has been put there by the writer/speaker/thinker and it suggests (again) there is something wrong with feeling unfit, where the word chosen could just as easily have been 'being' unfit. BEING BETTER. That's the purpose of healing.

An honest Christian will still press on by faith even though they're 'feeling' rough, if they perceive God Himself is meeting their need for strength in the inner man. Many do this. But, if God has not met them, it is OUT OF ORDER of fellow Christians to be critical of the deep injury which GOD has chosen NOT to heal at their conversion. We should ALL be aware HE orders their lives and ours, as we do our best to be stones in the same temple, being made to fit perfectly together. It takes time and patience to chip away at those edges, but, it is glorious Body-building work, in which we all are called-upon to engage.

Were the *received wisdom* in churches such as is necessary to help those in need through their personal distress, perhaps this would not be such a legitimate discussion.

EDIT: 26.9.05 1300hBST

I was going to apologise here for having used capitals (because I was in a hurry) rather than italic and bolds which appear more measured. Perhaps the capitals make the post look as if I'm ranting. But, judging from the posts that follow this one, I have to accept there may be a difference culturally, which the US posters are genuinely concerned about.

What troubles me is not the emphasis on the necessity for each individual to lay down self-pity (AMEN!) and also to take responsibility for bringing themselves and their sin to Jesus for forgiveness, but the underlying implication that these two approaches somehow constitute healing.

When Jesus healed, yes, sin was sometimes mentioned - but not always. Further, He healed multitudes again and again. As I asked earlier in the original post here, where is this healing ministry in the Church today?

JESUS CHRIST still is the Great Physician who HEALS. This is not directly to do with the sin of the sick/injured/abused person. I could say very much more on this subtlety. I think it is more helpful to testify of my own having received the Holy Spirit and gifts while still needing monumental healing. The Lord graciously used me in many situations while 'going I was healed' (like the 10 lepers), even though my needs were profound.

The 18 year old Joseph was not the subject of the sort of abuse which cripples lives such that they require much hard work *from the survivor* to turn them around. The betrayal by his family was serious, yes, but as the governor, he was in a much better position to organise a happy outcome, than the little people who have to fight against an entire system to be acknowledged.

With due respect to the many examples in the SingleVision article, 'A Victim No Longer', attitudes were attributed to the healed person by the pool of Bethesda, which were entirely added to scripture by the speaker. They are not a valid interpretation of the healed person's experience of being healed - which is after all, at the very least, an encounter with the Living God. When HE says take up your bed, I'm sure He's willing to take responsibility for issuing that command.

Lastly, without doubt, a local church is not *naturally* equipped with the attitudes which will most benefit survivors of childhood sexual abuse. And while there are a few considerations which all churches should be able to give all survivors who are healing (since manifestly there are many survivors who don't want to heal at all), in general, survivors of repeated assaults need more than TLC or 'discipline'. A clear boundary should be set beyond which their participation is neither mandatory or expected (depending on their gifts and graces) to enable the local church to get on with all the rest of its work.

General Topics :: What Kind of Counsel?

Re:, on: 2005/9/25 1:19

Mike, I do believe whole-heartedly that you 'did' hit it.

Quote: ""I want to know Him as he in fact is. (Katz). I want to know nothing but Jesus as He is, not as I might have wrongly perceived Him.

And sometimes I can't help but think He would like us to just shut up and listen,;-) ""

You got it all right there my brother.

We have to have a place to go and Make Time to go there, that is our 'Sanctuary', so to speak, and just cry out for what you've asked for above ... period. He'll be found of us who "Seek diligently", is what He said.

As extreme "hunger and thirsting" that only HE can see. And when it's strong enough and real enough ... He Knows.

HE has to Reveal Himself. No one can reveal Him to me or you or anyone else.

Chip calls it, "the revelation of Jesus" and others call it "to SEE Him" and others, "to Kiss the Son", and so forth, but it's personal, between you and HIM ... and comes as we plead to see His Glory. To see HIM as HE IS. To see the REAL HIM. And to be ready and willing to be crushed by seeing Pure Love & Pure Holiness all at once.

All that you've said within those few quoted sentences.

Amen ! :-)

Edit to P.S. ~ Just got that tap on the shoulder to add And He wants that with us all the much more than we desire it and even that desire, no matter how weak or strong, came from HIM to begin with.
All Praise to Jesus.

Re: Different aspects - posted by crsschk (), on: 2005/9/25 10:46

Changed my mind, had thought of moving this reply and realized how disjointed it would have been, so I withdrew the effort and put back the original... In other words, never mind....

Quote:
-----To clarify what I said earlier a little further, it is O Chambers who encourages us to do things differently for the good of our soul - not to be a slave to routine or to have a pet way of doing things practical or spiritual, such that the rut prevents us from being touchable.

Oh with much certainty! There are many thoughts from OC that have been driven deep down into the marrow, one that rises to the top is "*How unconventional!*"

Quote:
-----also credited with 'if the Spirit doesn't move me, I move the Spirit'; and I think this is what I was trying to get at by suggesting you take the offensive. I do realise it isn't easy, but, like eating any elephant, it has to be cut into smaller pieces (sorry for very old analogy) and I've put a few suggestions in Eli's old thread 'More than Conquerors'.

As OC says, the moment one finds oneself 'disinclined' that is the moment to STOP EVERYTHING ELSE and deal with it before God.

Listen, I know I'm preaching to the converted.... Just want to encourage you there is a breakthrough point... It's just a matter of keeping on pushing until you hit it.

General Topics :: What Kind of Counsel?

Think we are both touching on different aspects, this being a multi-faceted Diamond. There is an aspect of Paul's; "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." 1Co 9:26,27 on the one hand that may be applicable here, applying it to this "*being still*" (Interesting how this keeps coming up)

On the other hand there is the wrestling of Jacob, "Then he said, "Let me go, for the day has broken." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." Gen 32:26

Funny how these can criss-cross, just prior to this was, "When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he touched his hip socket, and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him." Gen 32:25 Decommissioned in the flesh and yet "I am not going anywhere", still holding on. Not sure I am making any sense whatsoever here, perhaps that's where the whole exercise elsewhere was heading, that of prayerlessness and of silence, of listening and truly hearing ... if there is any goal in it at all it would be to just to get us praying.

Re: - posted by crsschk (), on: 2005/9/25 11:33

Quote:

-----This bit of the quote really bothers me, because people can't help arriving in church with these difficulties.

I don't think that is what is being stated here. Nancy seems to be putting her finger on the matter with; "*... has become the central mission of the church. "* and "*...absorbing an increasing share of the church's energy. And it is alarming...*"

Look at the verbiage in just that one paragraph, it's telling; "Our", "Self" these are the things that she rightly points out that a large part of Christendom has become... "*Your best life now*" It's the theme of the age. {*EDIT ~ Was just convicted of this as I was listening to a message from Ernest O'Neill, surely disagree with the philosophy, but the slight was wrong, I recant it, irregardless of motives. <http://www.howtolivevictorious.com/> } It would be just as much an error to have no compassion, but I don't think that is what is being spoken of, the emphasis is on coddling sinners and not telling the truth, the greater insult is "*We are learning not to worship God in self-denial and costly service.*"

Quote:

-----As a result, we happily camp on biblical ideas that help us feel loved and accepted, and we pass over the scripture that calls us to a higher ground. We twist wonderful truths about God's acceptance, His redeeming love, and our new identity in Christ into a basis for honoring ourselves rather than seeing those truths for what they are: **the stunning revelation of a God gracious enough to love people who hated Him, a God worthy to be honored above everyone and everything else.**

Very much think she is right, the emphasis is upside down. Had started musing yesterday on this thought;

"Honoring the King"

Just the implications and what that *used* to mean. Perhaps another thread altogether.

General Topics :: What Kind of Counsel?

Re: victims? - posted by moreofHim (), on: 2005/9/25 14:47

Hi guys,

There are many interesting responses here and I don't have time to get to each individual thing that deserves attention.

Mike you are right in saying that it is NOT just women who believe lies :-). I think some one should write a similar book for men. Actually I do know of one that is pretty close to it and it is called "God's Gift to Women" by Eric Ludy- it dispels the lie of the "brotherhood"- what men have grown up believing is real manhood and reveals what God intends real manhood to be- LIKE CHRIST.

I have had my own set of "issues" from the past. I have experienced rejection and pain in my past and have gone through the whole gamut of healing, forgiveness and all of that.

O, how do I want to say what I want to say?

Here are the words that come to me:

accepting responsibility

being obedient

not making excuses

-and the opposite of these:

transference(blaming others for our problems and mistakes)

This is where much counsel takes a wrong turn. It creates "victims". Yes, I have had a bad past. I could blame many of my problems and my actions and attitudes even now (my perfectionist tendencies, the way I treat my husband, my controlling behavior,etc... on how my past effected me.

But I won't and don't use excuses. I am responsible for what I know now. If I know something is wrong- then I better do my darndest to let the Lord change me in that area.

"Look at Joseph, you talk about a person that was abused and betrayed. At the age of sixteen or seventeen, he was just a kid. His whole family was messed up. You talk about a co-dependent family! His brothers threw him in a pit, soaked his coat in blood, then sold him to traders, who carried to Egypt as a slave, where he was betrayed by Potiphar's wife, then he's sent to prison, he's forgotten by the butler, but in all of this he says God was with him.

And when he had opportunity to revenge himself with his brothers, he had a fabulous statement to make, "you meant this for evil, but God meant this for good." Joseph had Single Vision, he saw that God meant it for good. Was he a victim? He knew he was victimized, but he knew he stood there by the grace of God and that God had worked through him and through his brothers and through all of those who had abused him for his good and for His glory. Joseph did not see himself as a victim." -Gene Veal(Single Vision Counseling)

Because of sin in this world, people in all eras have had terrible tragic lives. But guess what? God still expected obedience and worship. Joseph did that.

I am not saying God doesn't have compassion or that we should not have compassion. I think that when we go through certain experiences (which were allowed by God maybe for this very reason) is so that we can have compassion on those who have had similar experiences.

The tragedys of Joseph's life were not an accident. God knew what He was doing and what He was planning. He was molding Joseph and He is molding us and creating all kinds of opportunities for us, when we experience pain and rejection, etc... God does everything He does to bring Himself glory.

I look back now on my life as a child and young person and I wouldn't change anything. I am who I am today because of my hardships, because I've let God use these things for His good. I can understand people when they feel rejection and I know why they do the things they do. I am drawn to them- to want to help them and bring Truth to them.

I know I fall short, but as much as I've been able, **I have refused to live as a victim and allow myself to use my rejec**

tion and pain as excuses for wrong attitudes and wrong behavior.

Seeing ourselves as a victim leads to self pity. O, what a mess we get ourselves into then!

There are a couple of wonderful articles at SingleVision Counseling site.

(http://www.seegod.org/featured_article.htm) A Victim No longer

(http://www.seegod.org/self_pity.htm) Self Pity

We can look to Jesus as our example:

"Whenever your flesh would call itself a victim, if you'll walk in the Spirit of Christ who you really are, Christ does not have a problem with being a victim. Was there anyone ever victimized as Christ was on the cross? For your sin, not his. You don't hear Jesus crying he's a victim. No, he says, if you take up your cross and follow him, you'll lay down your life for another. Not as a victim at all."

"How do we deal with it? The Bible says lay it aside. **'Not my will, but thine be done' is the Christ attitude.** The result of referring to what's happened to you, by referring to yourself as a victim, can result in irresponsibility." -Gene Veal (Single Vision)

In Him, Chanin

Re: - posted by ginnrose (), on: 2005/9/25 16:29

Chanin,

Your testimony proves exactly what I have believed for a long time after counseling females in a crises pregnancy.

Far too many people are looking for something that satisfies their inner self, making them feel good. People have been so blinded by this absorption with self that they cannot think outside the box. All they think about is me, me, me, I, I,....In actuality they are guilty of violating the first of the ten commandments: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Meaning they are more interested in serving self than in God and if God can fix it, fine, 'I will allow him to come alongside of me and see if he can fix it' without surrendering their hearts and minds to the One who so longs to come in and make his abode with him/her.

In a lot of cases people want to continue in sin without repenting BUT want to CANCEL the consequences of that lifestyle. This is the heart of most people who have been damaged by a sinful lifestyle, either theirs or another's. We have had women in our church who say they have been victims of abuse and belabored this pass. They say they want help, and we continued to listen and offered advice and love. And they continued their spiel of woe. Now we are beginning to believe they are rebellious people and are shifting blame onto others for their problems.

Lies women believe? Yes, this is one of them: "I have been abused." Males, less they are accused of being uncaring, etc, have capitulated and helped no one. Ditto, to the older and wise women.

Am I harsh? Sounds like it. The reality is that we have allowed rebellious females to manipulate the rest of us. To redeem this victim mentality will require people to stand up and call it what it is and not allow these people to control the group they are a part of.

Now to the ones who really are victims of abuse, there is help and it must be given by a loving church family. And it will be done. But you must want help and that includes a complete surrender to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and ASSUMING responsibility for your own life AND actions and quit the blaming game. Anything less will never work and the rest of us help no one if we work contrary to this.

Likely, there will be people who will believe I have never been abused; don't know what I am talking about; everything always went fine with me. The answer to that is 'no' it has not. But I quit blaming when I realized that on judgement day God is going to hold me accountable for my own actions and to shift blame onto others will never be accepted by Him.

General Topics :: What Kind of Counsel?

ginnyrose

Re: obedience - posted by moreofHim (), on: 2005/9/25 17:55

Ginnyrose,

yes, I agree.

I can use my own life once again as an example. Some of you read recently about my husband's affair this year. I can tell you that it is one long process of "not my will, but Thy will be done". I mean, of course there was the initial dying to self and the forgiveness, etc... but as time goes on there is still so much more that I need to die to every day.

It would be so easy to use excuses for harsh tones and uncaring behavior. I mean, I have every right to treat my husband a little badly once in awhile after what he did to me, right? NO. It is so easy to say to myself "I deserve" a little something for what he put me through.

I have to fight my flesh that wants to bring old things back up- because "I can". I choose to renew my mind. I choose to obey the Lord.

Of course, I have failed a time or two. Sometimes my flesh gets the best of me and I let self pity get to me and then it's all down hill from there for half the day. But I am the one that chose to sit there and let my mind wander back to "it's not fair", "how could he", "I don't deserve". But it's sin and it's wrong and it only makes matters much worse for myself and my family.

If I would have taken the counsel of most friends and family members, I would never be where I am now with this. They want to let me off the hook, let me have some leeway. Give me excuses to do what I want, to listen to my feelings, to let me be persuaded by my feelings. That is why I let God and His word be my counselor. He is sufficient for all counsel.

The Lord knows I was hurt. I know He cares. But I also know that He says HE is enough for me. That I am to put my trust in HIM and He will take care of me. I can't put my trust in my feelings or my unmet needs.

I am responsible for me. For my behavior and my obedience. I am not responsible for my husband's. I am not responsible for my parent's behavior/obedience or lack of it. I am responsible for me.

And like you said, Ginny, I will stand one day before the judgement seat and be held accountable for ME.

In Him, Chanin

Re: more from E.E. - posted by moreofHim (), on: 2005/9/25 17:59

Here is some more from Elisabeth Elliot's "Discipline: The Glad Surrender". This is from the chapter on 'The Discipline of the Mind'.

"A renewed mind has an utterly changed conception, not one of reality, but of possibility. A turn away from the kingdom of this world to the kingdom of God provides a whole set of values based not on the human word, but on Christ's. Impossibilities become possibilities.

The worldly mind says, "Look, I am human. Don't expect me to love that woman, not after what she did to my family. It's impossible."

The word of Christ is, "Love your enemies. Do good to them that hate you." This is indeed impossible, as it was impossible for Peter to walk on the sea, until he obeyed the command. The mind made over from within begins to think Christ's thoughts after Him.

General Topics :: What Kind of Counsel?

The natural mind prefers argument to obedience, solutions to truth. It's immediate response, when the truth is presented, is no. No way. It refuses to be nailed by the truth.

The disciple who means to compel every one of his thoughts to surrender in obedience to Christ would do well to test himself by asking:

Whose glory do I seek?

Is this for or against the knowledge of God?

Is it more important to me to understand than to obey?

Is it more important to me to know that to believe?

Do I reject a particular truth because it will inconvenience me?"

-E.Elliot

Re: What kind of Counsel?, on: 2005/9/25 20:37

Quote:
-----Not sure I am making any sense whatsoever here, perhaps that's where the whole exercise elsewhere was heading, that of prayerlessness and of silence, of listening and truly hearing ... if there is any goal in it at all it would be to just to get us praying.

Mike, you are and you aren't. The thing that's dawned on me since my last post to you, is what I'm *not* saying. You are better at saying everything right through to the end - the builder in you finishes the job - whereas I am a dreamer/designer by comparison and I have the end in sight - in my mind's eye. Well, *that's* no use to you, the reader....

Quote:
-----Think we are both touching on different aspects

I've known all along you are talking about getting into *silence* with God. That is, into *prayerful* silence. (I don't mean noisy with prayers offered, but into silent communion and whatever it leads to in His presence). Sorry I didn't make this clear.

Maybe you know everything I've brought to the fore here, but, you didn't say that you do, which is why I *am* saying it (again). In summary, my suggestions are 1) praise and worship 2) praying aloud 3) avoiding denial of the obstacles.

Quote:
-----1 Co 9:26, 27 on the one hand that may be applicable here, applying it to this "being still"

Let me say clearly, I accept this point; but let me also say, there are times when the *trying* involved in this exercise, is counter-productive, in that it becomes an end in itself and takes on a life of its own. That's why I was suggesting to change tactic. The enemy hates a resourceful pray-er, because normally us humans are so predictable just exactly because of what you said earlier about thinking we 'know' what God thinks about things.

Therefore, to expand a little on that and the possibility of denial (of a genuine or legitimate obstacle), there is a simple solution. Simply, one prefaces one's offering to the Lord with the invitation to Him to show one how one is wrong. That's what I call an 'outmanoeuvre' of the enemy; you've taken the ground from his feet, then. The same goes for obstacles. By properly considering them, the Lord will soon show another layer of understanding, if one is open to receive it.

This may seem like a very long way round, but it's much more a matter of developing a strategy than *time-wasting*, for as long as we do not understand ourselves, we are vulnerable. The sooner we can recognise and pigeonhole (turn away from) the distractions, the sooner we are in the Lord's presence more consciously.

The thing I had not said is, I see these approaches as possible entrances to the silence. Perhaps several or all are necessary sometimes. As one connects with His presence in a deeper way through these honest prayers and praises, the silence breaks in all by itself and one is suddenly *out of touch* with the world of thought and effort. There is a challenge to stay there if one is conscious of the transition, but, that's a further discipline I'm learning.

General Topics :: What Kind of Counsel?

Now you thought you might not have been making sense. Have I made a little *more* sense, this time?

Of Jacob, you said 'hanging on'. I'd say 'I will not' (let thee go) does it for me. It reminds me of the years (and still occasionally) when I regularly (that is, all the time!) prayed to be delivered from myself. I knew there was no escape to God, if I took myself with me. Ha! ;-)

Re: Living testimonies - posted by crsschk (), on: 2005/9/26 0:57

Thank you Chanin, Ginnyrose.

Quote:
-----I look back now on my life as a child and young person and I wouldn't change anything. I am who I am today because of my hardships, because I've let God use these things for His good. I can understand people when they feel rejection and I know why they do the things they do. I am drawn to them- to want to help them and bring Truth to them.

Would concur wholeheartedly.

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2005/9/26 2:30

Chanin,

Your testimony ought to be distributed far and wide.

When we recognize that I, only me am responsible for my own sin, that God will only hold me accountable for me it will make all the difference in the world in how I view life and my difficulties.

Jesus died for ME, and expects ME to bring MY sins to the cross and find redemption there for ME. I can not do it for an other, much as I would like. To soft pedal my sin or anyone else's for that matter will never help anyone. If you want to experience deliverance you must take charge of your own life, surrender it to Jesus and then you will get the deliverance you so earnestly desire.

Chanin, you said it so beautifully. God bless you, my dear. With your attitude, I think you will make it because Jesus is there to render you assistance...after all He is more interested in you then you are..Is this not awesome? we serve a wonderful God, do we not?!

ginnyrose

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2005/9/26 2:33

I think I am going to have to buy this book. E. Elliot says it like it is. I love it!

ginnyrose

Re: Tozer once said....., on: 2005/9/26 9:19

..."God crucifies without pity, those whom He wishes to raise without measure".

There is not greater submission than to go willingly to the cross. Jesus did it for us, and welcomes us to take the step of faith and put an end to our life being directed by the appetites of our flesh.

The flesh wants to build it's own security system, it's own independent wealth. God alone has true riches, if only we'd let go, if only we'd submit ourselves to His will, direction, and purpose for our life.

I'm so called to just lay what little I have left down and pursue giving my life up for my fellow man. I'm torn between aiding brother Troy in New Orleans or going to southern Mexico and teaching in a missionary training school. My worst deficiency is GOING. I haven't left yet. I'm holding on to the life of a worldly king when I am called to be child of the Heavenly king.

It is soooooo difficult to break out of the mold. It is soooo difficult to stop procrastinating. It is soooo difficult to get out of t

he boat and run across the water to Jesus. Oh God help us all.

It is truly time to stop talking about God and to start being like Jesus. I know and you know that is where real abundant life is. God gets so sick of us and our own kingdoms that He allows hurricanes and tornados, earth quakes and fires to come upon us and burn up our hay and stubble. He places us in such desperate circumstances that we have nowhere and nothing to turn to except Him. Oh what a blessed place to be. No where to turn to, but the cross. Jesus was stripped of His garments, all worldly acclaim. Will you submit to such humiliation and shame for His sake? Will I? I must. I simply must, even if it kills me. I simply must. Why? Because I want what is beyond the cross, eternal life. That is the one thing, I simply must have, eternal life with God. I want to honor Him with my obedience. I want to be loved by my Heavenly Father, and I want Jesus to manifest Himself to me, according to His Word (John 14:21)

Jesus made it ever so clear, "keep my commandments". Are these the written law? Indeed they are. But are they not also the law that guides us day by day when He woos us into serving our fellow man instead of seeking position and power over him or her?

Jesus came to serve. It is impossible to be like Him and not serve somebody. It's impossible to be obedient to His voice and not become a servant. He said, "no greater love hath a man than this, that he lay down his life for a friend". Our lives must be invested in others, their physical and spiritual welfare. There is so much more to being a christian, than just talking about it. We must come to a place of being, not just believing. If there is life, something must be growing. Growing in God is growing in love, loving our neighbor as ourselves.

I simply must do something very radical very soon. I'm so sick of me I could scream. I'm so lazy I'm not worth the price of a bullet to put me out of my misery. Thank God, it's not over yet. There is still precious little time to submit, surrender, to go to the cross and die, that I might live.

Paul said that if we have been crucified with Christ, we shall also reign with Him. We don't have to wait to reign with Him. I said we don't have to wait on the next life to reign with Him. We can begin now, in this life, by dying to self, and finding some one some where to love as we would love ourselves.

Are there hurting people in this world? Indeed there are, and so precious few good samaritans to bind their wounds and broken hearts. Oh there are plenty who would say "be filled", or "be warm". But how few there are who would offer up what they have stored for themselves to relieve the suffering and pain of another.

Jesus is coming back, to judge the nations as a Shepherd would divide the sheep and the goats. Are you tired of being an old goat? I sure am. Goats will eat almost anything. Goats don't grow anything, save maybe it's milk, that will benefit another. Sheep grow wool. Lambs offer their own flesh, to support and give life to another.

Oh I have to do something really soon. I just can't put it off any longer. I know this is the truth of God's Word. I know it's His will and purpose for our lives. My children are grown. There is nothing restraining me except my fear of hunger, loss of comfort. Yet deep in my heart, I know that God will feed me, if only I obey His call. Please pray for me.

In Him,

Lahry

Re: - posted by moreofHim (), on: 2005/9/26 10:02

Lahry, you have brought up some wonderful points!!

Quote:

-----It is truly time to stop talking about God and to start being like Jesus

Quote:

-----I'm so sick of me I could scream. I'm so lazy I'm not worth the price of a bullet to put me out of my misery. Thank God, it's not over yet. There is still precious little time to submit, surrender, to go to the cross and die, that I might live.

I have felt this way many times!!!!!! I can so relate!

General Topics :: What Kind of Counsel?

Quote:
-----He said, "no greater love hath a man than this, that he lay down his life for a friend". Our lives must be invested in others, their physical and spiritual welfare. There is so much more to being a christian, than just talking about it. We must come to a place of being, not just believing.

Amen! I cannot tell you how many times this past year or 6 months that the Lord has brought situations to me and his question is 'will you lay your life down?' Even if it is just for someone in your own home, maybe it is for your in-laws, maybe a neighbor, or maybe some in need. But He has made it so clear to me that it is not just about laying down our "lives" as we think about what a life is- but about what our "lifestyle" is. Will we lay down our comforts, our desires- things that make up our own life.

I thank the Lord for you Lahry and for bringing us in contact with Troy. You are right, he is the real deal. I thought it was awesome that he used to have a church and he said the Lord told him to go out into the streets to preach and help those who are the 'least of these'.

What a concept! BE THE CHURCH, not just go to church or pastor a church! :-) I wish more people could see this.

Dan (my husband) is still in weekly contact with Troy and is still doing what he can to give some help. I think we may have started something that my husband is now addicted to :-P He cannot wait until he can go back down there to help rebuild or whatever needs to be done.

But whether you help Troy or whether you go to Southern Mexico- the Lord will be with you. I pray that the Lord will direct you and lead you to go where and when He wants. May He open up a door for you so you will know.

Reading John Piper's book, "Don't Waste Your Life" has made such an impact on my life lately.

"I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work." Jn 9:4

"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil." Å—Eph. 5:16

In Him, Chanin

Re: What kind of Counsel?, on: 2005/9/26 10:38

Quote:
-----It is soooo difficult to get out of the boat and run across the water to Jesus. Oh God help us all.

I simply must. Why? Because I want what is beyond the cross, eternal life. That is the one thing, **I simply must have, eternal life with God**. I want to honor Him with my obedience. I want to be loved by my Heavenly Father, and I want Jesus to manifest Himself to me, according to His Word...

There is so much more to being a christian, than just talking about it. We must come to a place of being, not just believing. If there is life, something must be growing. Growing in God is growing in love, loving our neighbor as ourselves...

I'm so lazy I'm not worth the price of a bullet to put me out of my misery. Thank God, it's not over yet...

Yet deep in my heart, I know that God will feed me, if only I obey His call. **Please pray for me**.

Yes, bro.

I identify with your cry to make it across Jordan.

Could I just make one suggestion...?

I heard a house-church leader who had been short of funds and renovating the house in which the church met, (seemingly for 'forever'), say he'd felt like a prisoner in his own home. I wonder if, sometimes, we imagine we should be somewhere else, because we instinctively devalue how we normally spend our day?

General Topics :: What Kind of Counsel?

May I suggest you may be in the centre of God's will **now** and you will know what and where to do and go, if so be God has a different plan for you?

Re: - posted by moreofHim (), on: 2005/9/26 11:07

Quote:
-----May I suggest you may be in the centre of God's will now and you will know what and where to do and go, if so be God has a different plan for you?

I agree. The Lord will give you the revelation and the wisdom to make a move when it's time. :-)

In Him, Chanin

Re: What Kind of Counsel? - posted by LetUsPray (), on: 2005/9/26 11:36

I apologize to come in so late, but I want to highlight something that is not often addressed in our churches. I believe that it touches on what has been discussed, but also that it goes a bit further. It deals with LISTENING and UNDERSTANDING what the Holy Spirit tells us.

Quote:
-----"It's not enough for us to be the center of our own universe. We want to be the center of everyone else's universe as well--including God's. In his book Finding God, Dr. Larry Crabb offers a penetrating analysis of the extent to which the evangelical church has given in to this deception:
"Helping people to feel loved and worthwhile has become the central mission of the church. We are learning not to worship God in self-denial and costly service, but to embrace our inner child, heal our memories, overcome addictions, lift our depressions, improve our self-images, establish self-preserving boundaries, substitute self-love for self-hatred, and replace shame with an affirming acceptance of who we are. Recovery from pain is absorbing an increasing share of the church's energy. And it is alarming...
We have become committed to relieving the pain behind our problems rather than using our pain to wrestle more passionately with the character and purpose of God. Feeling better has become more important than finding God..."

Quote:
-----Paul understood that God does not exist for us, but that we exist for Him:
"For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him." col.1:16. "...nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God." acts 20:24 .
The bottom line for Paul was: "TO LIVE IS CHRIST." Once that was settled, nothing else mattered much."
--Nancy DeMoss

These quotes reflect truth, but there remains a problem. Knowing all that, being taught all that, etc., etc, may still leave somebody in bondage. Sometimes more is needed.

Example: a number of years ago I (together with a lady from the church I attended at the time), counseled a Christian lady who had been systematically sexually abused for a number of years. Did she love Jesus? Yes, otherwise she would have ended her life. Did she receive proper counsel? No, for she was still tormented. Did she know that she had to "crucify self and that Jesus was All in All"? Yes, but she was still tormented.

After we had seen her twice, she called again. During the time she called the Lord gave me a word. Did I run over to tell her the word? No, it was given so we could finally get to the real issue. There were three sexual spirits who physically oppressed her at night. Only through the "word of knowledge," could we insist and persist until the truth came out. This was so immensely embarrassing for this lady that she couldn't say it, she had written it down and it took three hours of patiently and lovingly insisting that "there was something else," before she finally got the letter out of her bedroom and gave it to me. The church is full of well-meaning but judgmental Christians. How does one tell as a Christian-- many denominations don't even accept this possibility-- that one is tormented in this way? It is so sad, because one simple prayer and a command in the "Mighty, All Powerful Name of Jesus," set this lady free, after many counselors, church es, and who knows what else.

We don't have all the answers, but Praise God, we have a Savior Who Does!

If we'd only learned to obey, AND listen.

General Topics :: What Kind of Counsel?

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2005/9/26 12:37

Lahry,

Here is a scripture that has challenged me so much: Isaiah 8:12-14a: You are not to say, 'It is a conspiracy!' In regard to all that this people call a conspiracy. And you are not to fear what they fear or be in dread of it. It is the LORD of Hosts whom you should regard as holy. And he shall be your fear. And he shall be your dread. Then he will become a sanctuary(NASB) (Sorry if this translation offends you..).

Perhaps this can help you with your fear. I understand this is talking about conspiracies, however, do not most fears depend on uncertainties? This then means we must learn to discern the voice of the Spirit in affairs of life and if questions remain about this all we need to do is ask Jesus to teach you to be able to discern his voice, discern between your thoughts and His voice. When you get this it will give you courage unlike you ever have had before.

God bless you in your walk with Him,
ginnyrose

Re: What Kind of Counsel? - posted by LetUsPray (), on: 2005/9/26 13:23

Last week I posted under Forum Revival Prayer: If you think this is useful, WILL YOU? Reading through this thread and a number of the posts, I cannot help wonder why so few SI members responded to this question?

Paul, in these two prayers, gives us a clear direction to More Of Him, a clear and concise expression of Who Christ is at the same time asking the Father to make it clear to us, SO THAT CHRIST MAY BE FORMED IN US.

In Ephesians 2:10 Paul tells us: For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

What better way to "according to His will," ask Him to open the door, so we may walk through it to do the good works He has prepared for us in Christ Jesus. You may not believe this, but God actually does exactly that. He opens the door, and He prepares you for His service. Sometimes it may take quite a long time, if so, then wait IN HIM.

Re: being prepared - posted by roadsign (), on: 2005/9/26 15:50

Quote:
-----What better way to "according to His will," ask Him to open the door, so we may walk through it to do the good works He has prepared for us in Christ Jesus. You may not believe this, but God actually does exactly that. He opens the door, and He prepares you for His service. So sometimes it may take quite a long time, if so, then wait IN HIM.

Wow! Hans, What timely words for me. I just finished this thread, not planning to respond to it - till I got to these words at the very end of it all.

This is just what is happening to me. He opened a door:

For a while now, I have been trying to understand the issue of homosexuality and trying to learn how we as Christians can help. In spite of many unhelpful words from Christians, God has not failed to teach me and guide me. I kept on trying to learn, even though there are no homosexuals directly in my life.

Well, just four days ago, I got an email from a lady who found me through the web, and she poured out all her pain and grief, and shame that has resulted because she just discovered that her daughter was a homosexual and had hidden it for ten years. She shared how she couldn't talk about it with anyone in the church. (That doesn't surprise me!)

Anyway - this mom is truly broken. She has committed herself to Christ and is allowing him to work in her own life - break down her pride and unhealed areas. This is rapidly shaping into a truly touching story of God's merciful hand. As I minister to this mother, and encourage her in her relationship with God, I know that she will be able to minister wisely to her daughter, and the barriers will be broken down.

True healing is a work of God, and we are merely his servants preparing our lives to obey him at any time in the ministry.

General Topics :: What Kind of Counsel?

y of counsel and edification. As we are prepared, he will bring the broken to us.
Diane

Re: I got off of my dead back side today and went....., on: 2005/9/26 18:17

Chanin and all,

I was so disgusted with myself this morning that I went and got my wife and we drove down to New Orleans and visited Pastor Troy Bohn. My Lord what a mess they have on their hands down there. Every house has all it's furniture piled up at the street. Multitply that around the church Troy is Pastoring.

The dry wall had to be cut off the walls at the mid way point because that is how high the water was in the church and in the school. They now have power. In the midst of all this they are distributing food and cooking meals for "whosoeverwill".

My wife and I got to do some real prestigious ministry. There was a card board box there about 4x4x4. It was filled with disposable diapers of all sizes. So we sorted and bagged them for the folks coming in that need them. What a privilege to help them, even in such a small way.

Pastor Troy and his associate pastor both lost their homes and all their belongings. Devasted? Hardly. They have "acquired" some old motor homes and have them parked behind the school. That way than can stay close to all the activity. Pastor Troy had to stop and think of what day of the week it was. He was not even sure that we were still in September. It's just been one day at a time. Dismayed? Discouraged? Absolutely not! He is in ministry heaven. Peoples needs are being met and souls are still be won to Christ. It never stops with Troy and his team. It's all they live for and live they do. They are alive in Christ Jesus.

We are planning on going back next weekend and try to get some other folks to go with us. This is not going to go away any time soon. The needs are overwhelming for man, but God is supplying in the midst of it all. What a privilege to finally get to fellowship with Troy. Oh how I love this wonderful man of God.

We were talking about ministry, and he related the following about a recent trip to Los Angeles, his home town. He said they were on Hollywood Blvd. They had cast some demons out of some folks so a police car came rushing up too them. The policeman inquired about a report that they had recieved that somebody was casting out devils. Troy said, "that would be us, officer". The policeman asked, "do you have a license to do that". Troy said "sure, you want to see it"? The policeman quickly replied no. Just as he was about to get in his squad car and leave, he turned around and said, "don't you be casting demons out of anyone who doesn't want you to do that".

Is that hilarious or what. Troy is unshakable. He is such a humble man, full of grace and love for his God and his fellow man.

If you would like to know more about Pastor Bohn, go too www.biggrace.com. It won't take you long there to see that Troy Bohn and his team are diligent about winning souls and helping the down and out. There is also a place where you can donate if you like. I can tell you assuredly, this is a worthy place to sew seed in the kingdom.

He said they are well stocked with clothes, but food, diapers and such as that, consumables are what will be needed for a long time. So if you want to help that way, praise God. Just contact them through the info on the web page above. I know Chanin's husband and family have already gotten infected with the grace that God gives to those who will lay it on the line for another. It is so awesome.

We are planning at least one day down there each weekend, to help, it doesn't matter doing whatever. It just matters that I need to be there, helping in the kingdom of God instead of the kingdom of man. I have also discussed briefly about a long term service with them in the near future. All Debbie and I really need is a average size travel trailer, and I would quit tomorrow and go. If you know of anyone who has one they would like to sew into the kingdom, do let us know. We don't need much, just a place to lay our head.

Well, that's my report from the scene. To the passer by it looks like chaos and disaster. But in reality, it is a move of God to draw untold thousands to Himself. He is still a jealous God. To God be the glory, now and forever amen.

In Him,

Lahry

Chanin, Pastor Bohn was really delighted to meet your husband. I could tell it was a meeting of two servants of the Lord. I'm so glad for all. Keep up the good work. You are making a difference. Praise God. Who knows, we may just see you there someday soon.

Lahry

General Topics :: What Kind of Counsel?

Re: Lahry - posted by moreofHim (), on: 2005/9/26 20:35

I know this is kind of getting this thread off track but.....

Lahry,

Bless your heart!!! I am so glad that you had a chance to go and "be the church" :-). Isn't it amazing that you finally got to meet Pastor Troy in person? I mean, even the fact that my husband and daughter got to meet up with him, through you, through me through Sermonindex! Only God can do that! What divine appts. He is making.

What you wrote about helping with the diapers- it so reminded me of Oswald Chamber's biography where he was explaining about the annual Camp meeting they were doing.

Quote:
-----One thing that remains with us long as we live was not the preaching, not the meetings, nor the marches, nor the testimonies (these were grand) but the splendid, supereffacing service of the students who waited tables, washed the dishes, erected tents, pulled them down and DID THE DRUDGERY. Their lives for 10 days were one unbroken testimony to the blessing of God and to one at least, the impression grew strong, that if our Lord was here, He would still again be hidden and obscure as ONE WHO SERVED.

Praise God!

In Him, Chanin

Re: - posted by moreofHim (), on: 2005/9/26 20:46

Oh, I forgot.... I LOVED the story about Pastor Troy and the police! What a hoot! I can just see it all right now. :-)

In Him, Chanin

Re: Praise the Lord, on: 2005/9/26 22:07

God is so good.....all the time.

Lahry

Re: - posted by HopeinChrist, on: 2005/9/27 0:23

Quote:
-----She shared how she couldn't talk about it with anyone in the church. (That doesn't surprise me!)

It doesn't surprise me either. I think the majority of churches (in America at least) ignore masses of hurting broken people. This is why there are so many Christians seeking counsel from secular avenues, because the church refuses to deal with it. The one quote from Larry Crabb, (whom I have a lot of respect for) indicated that this seems to be the whole mission of today's church. I'm sorry but I just don't see it. Yes they are preaching feel good messages but they are still ignoring real issues in the lives of people. I'm not sure if they just don't want to deal with it or if they just don't know how. Compassion is required to minister to hurting people. This means being touched with the feeling of their infirmities. Are we not willing to do this? Does it rehash unresolved issues in our own lives that we have stuffed and kept in darkness rather than bringing it to his light where healing can begin. I made a post yesterday in the Healing who gets it thread on Luke 4:18 which I am going to repost a portion of here because I think many missed it because the thread had fizzled.

The Spirit of the Lord upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised

broken=to crush completely, to shatter, break in pieces and shivers, to bruise.

General Topics :: What Kind of Counsel?

heart carries the idea of.....thoughts, feelings, and mind, which to me would represent the soul.

I find it intriguing that Jesus specifically referred to this healing as part of his purpose.

This kind of healing is usually a process rather than an event. Think about this shattering leading to shivers. These shivers may be buried deep and in various places. Some may surface quickly and be dealt with and others may take some time to surface. Perhaps some event will cause a shiver to surface or it may be that our compassionate, patient physician is waiting for us to mature and grow in trust and dependency on Him so that he can begin to dig around and cleanse those tender areas.

Diane wrote

Quote:
----- The church is full of well-meaning but judgmental Christians. How does one tell as a Christian -- many denominations don't even accept this possibility -- that one is tormented in this way? It is so sad, because one simple prayer and a command in the "Mighty, All Powerful Name of Jesus," set this lady free, after many counselors, churches, and who knows what else. We don't have all the answers, but Praise God, we have a Savior Who Does! If we'd only learned to obey, AND listen.

It deals with LISTENING and UNDERSTANDING what the Holy Spirit tells us.

This is key. Look at the various ways Jesus healed blind people. I think this was to show us not to get hung up on methods. There are endless circumstances that could lead to a person being shattered in the heart. Two individuals who may have experienced similar circumstances causing their brokenness may arrive at their healing by different avenues or methods but the Who (Jesus) it comes through will be the same.

Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2005/9/27 7:43

Quote:
-----This means being touched with the feeling of their infirmities. Are we not willing to do this? Does it rehash unresolved issues in our own lives that we have stuffed and kept in darkness rather than bringing it to his light where healing can begin.

I think this is the issue. We cannot minister to the infirmities (vulnerability) of others until we have been sufficiently broken. I've seen this over and over again. Those who have been through the pain of the healing process, can relate, and are not so prone to judge and give unrealistic solutions.

While taking counseling courses can be of great value, and while professionals are needed, there is a very, very deep need for an ongoing context of trusting relationship.

The latest Barna Statistic reveals that most evangelicals feel they are doing well in this area of relationship. If their self-perception was true, we would be witnessing an incredible massive healing of broken hearts and broken relationships within our churches and communities. My how self-deluded we are!!!!

May God do whatever it takes to break us out of our mass denial.

Diane
(P.S., Hope in Christ, I do not claim that last quote you made, but I sure agree with it)

Re: healing - posted by moreofHim (), on: 2005/9/27 8:50

Quote:
-----I've seen this over and over again. Those who have been through the pain of the healing process, can relate, and are not so prone to judge and give unrealistic solutions.

It depends on what you mean by unrealistic solutions. I have been broken many times over and been through an excruciating healing process (with the help of the Lord and His word alone). Yet much of my counsel seems 'judgmental' or unrealistic to a lot of people.

General Topics :: What Kind of Counsel?

I think that it is beneficial to have those who have experienced pain and suffering and brokenness to help those who are hurting, but it doesn't have to be that way. It takes a compassionate heart, someone with a heart like Jesus and knows the Truth of His word.

I told this to Dorcas in a pm, but when I went through my healing process, I left the church system because I could discern that they wanted to counsel me in a 'humanistic' way. They wanted to give me excuses and lead me down the wrong path. I wanted the truth- even if it hurt. I wanted to be healed the right way, the way God intended. So I left and I let God Himself be my counselor. He was and He did. Seeing Him for who He really was for the first time, seeing my heart for what it was, seeing that I was clinging to worthless idols (yes, because I had been hurt, but once you know that, there is no excuse), I just held onto him and obeyed each step of the way. That's what it took.

Jesus was broken, He knows what pain, suffering, and rejection is like- how did He react? He said 'not My will but thine be done'. I know that people who need healing don't know this, but they can be taught this. Hurting people can be taught how to receive healing in a biblical way. We just have to give them the truth, not the truth mixed with man's ideas and psychology too.

Just because someone has not been through a person's exact situation, or been broken to the extreme that they have does not mean that they won't be able to counsel them. They just need to know the truth of the word and know Jesus intimately. Of course it helps, no doubt.

I see from my own tragedies and experiences that I can discern and see a hurting person from a long way off- but my counsel would still be the same counsel God gave me- and yes, it does seem unrealistic to many, but God is not realistic. He is sovereign and Holy.

There is no other reason in the world that I could be speaking a couple of times a week to the 'other' woman (the girl who my husband had an affair with). The Lord has given me the opportunity to share His love and light with her. To even be her friend and try to counsel her with her own marriage. To the human person this is impossible, it is unrealistic that I should forgive her so soon and even try to befriend her and help her. But Jesus asks that I lay my life down. He asks 'will I give up my own comforts and feelings in order that she may be saved and she may have life. I cannot say 'no'. And after I took the step of obedience, my heart was filled with compassion for her. He did it. I just prayed for the strength to obey. I don't see her as the 'other' woman. I see her as a sinner needing a savior. I see her as a hurting person needing Jesus.

This is the kind of counsel I receive from the Word and from the Lord. To many, if I was to counsel someone this way, it would seem like I was harsh or judging them or unrealistic. I am just obeying the Lord.

In His love, Chanin

Re: What Kind of Counsel?, on: 2005/9/27 12:31

Hi Chanin,

I'm going to respond to some points on the previous page first, then yours.

Quote:
-----**Does it rehash unresolved issues in our own lives that we have stuffed and kept in darkness rather than bringing it to his light where healing can begin.**

What HopeinChrist draws to our attention here, is a Biblical principle - something like taking the log out of one's own eye so to see clearly to help the other person with the speck in theirs - or Romans 2:1 Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. 2 But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. 3 And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?

I've deliberately left out the next verse (about the goodness of God leading to repentance) because that is a separate step

General Topics :: What Kind of Counsel?

p. What the above verses from Romans 2 say to me, is, those who are unhealed, do not want others who are unhealed, to heal. They 'minister' their own condition to others in a similar condition, trying to persuade those others not to change their grid of reference... WHY? Because if *one* person heals, it immediately alters the group dynamic and puts further pressure on their (the church leader's) own unhealed state.

It's not an accident that some church leaders are unkeen for some church members to heal. While they have the 'power' - control - over a church member's options, they are demonstrating a classic stance, which mimics completely the dynamics in abusive situations. Therefore, the last thing an unhealed member needs, is to come under the influence of such a leader - a church leader who is unwilling to lead the way to healing, by going first.

The basic principle at work here is the same for preachers - they *must* be in the good of their own message themselves, before they can lead others into it.

The log (Matt 7:3 NASB) analogy is not brilliant either, because Jesus is obviously referring to sin (as is Paul in Romans). And that is not the issue for the person who requires to heal. I'm not saying that person has no sin.... they may do.... it may be contributing to their malaise... but the Lord Himself will raise that to the top of the priority list in His own good time, and the person will then deal with it next.

Meantime, if healing is the need, then those who are themselves unhealed are busy managing the load of *their own log*, and everything they see is distorted by this their own burden.

We have the Lord's word on this one. Thus, I believe we should dispense with the false notion that one who is unhealed is somehow now specially equipped to take on the nursing of others. I've heard this many many times and would make his comment - that those who have learned to live with their 'pain' are not likely to be able to minister healing to those whose 'pain' is so strong it cannot be lived with. At best, they will minister the solution for pain which they themselves employ - pain management.

Before those of you who are not ready to deal with your pain, come back at me, I do realise God's timing is perfect, it's unique to the individual and cannot be rushed. But, when you *are* ready, what you need, as Chanin said, is a safe space where you are free to meet with God and exchange your pain for His Health. This is not a *one session* event. If it had been that easy to separate you from your pain, you would have done it loong ago. Very few 'ministers' who are *not ready or willing* to deal with their own pain, can facilitate this transaction. You are on your own with God. Amen.

I have more to say in future posts depending on responses here.

Lahry - posted by crsschk (), on: 2005/9/27 16:26

Quote:
-----We were talking about ministry, and he related the following about a recent trip to Los Angeles, his home town. He said they were on Hollywood Blvd. They had cast some demons out of some folks so a police car came rushing up too them. The policeman inquired about a report that they had recieved that somebody was casting out devils. Troy said, "that would be us, officer". The policeman asked, "do you have a license to do that". Troy said "sure, you want to see it"? The policeman quickly replied no. Just as he was about to get in his squad car and leave, he turned around and said, "don't you be casting demons out of anyone who doesn't want you to do that".

Thanks Lahry, that more than made my day. Strange, that I have twice attempted to address the whole of "being sick of myself", yesterday wrote it all out and then canned it. This morning again thought it had adequate expression and thought I had posted it.... It never showed up...
Maybe, just maybe it has something to do with brevity...

I know what you mean, what a blessed state to come to.

Quote:
-----I know Chanin's husband and family have already gotten infected with the grace that God gives to those who will lay it on the line for another. It is so awesome.

General Topics :: What Kind of Counsel?

James is beginning to ring in the head lately, just that one verse...

Re: Lahry - posted by roadsign (), on: 2005/9/27 19:59

Chanin said:

Quote:
-----Just because someone has not been through a person's exact situation, or been broken to the extreme that they have does not mean that they won't be able to counsel them. They just need to know the truth of the word and know Jesus intimately. Of course it helps, no doubt.

I agree, having a similar experience is not necessary, nor does it guarantee an ability to empathize.

What is helpful is the ability to empathize with feelings and emotions that result from troubling experiences - such as loss, fear, loneliness, shame, and rejection.

However, I would think that if one has never known, for example, loss of any kind, I'm not sure how well that person could be able to identify with someone experiencing loss.

I agree with you that knowing Christ is important, and that would imply a certain level of empathy with his own life on earth - his loss, his sufferings etc.

Paul was eager to identify with Jesus' sufferings. Would that not include such experiences as loneliness, loss, rejection, as well as physical feelings of hunger, fatigue, etc? Surely that would have made Paul a very empathetic person.

Re: What Kind of Counsel?, on: 2005/9/28 8:36

roadsign said

Quote:
-----I think this is the issue. We cannot minister to the infirmities (vulnerability) of others until we have been sufficiently broken. I've seen this over and over again. Those who have been through the pain of the healing process, can relate, and are not so prone to judge and give unrealistic solutions.

I would like to rephrase 'until we have been sufficiently broken', please, because it gives the idea that the Lord Himself is hurting us more than we already are, and I don't think that's what you mean, Diane. I think you mean that the person who needs healing, who has been concealing undisclosed, ill-defined ... um ... past trauma?... old pain? ... undiagnosed illness ... untold sinful secrets... has survived this long by denying that underlying truth (or truths) and now, the cover-up scenario has to be yielded to the Lord - the facade has to be given up. This is what Hope meant by bringing things from the darkness to the light.

For the person going through the exposure of the comparative lie they have been promoting to the outside world (which they themselves may have believed for a long time 'I can manage' (sound familiar, anyone?)) the relinquishing of this world-facing exterior, is an emotionally painful process at the least, fraught with questions about inner security when other people find out'.

Quote:
-----However, I would think that if one has never known, for example, loss of any kind, I'm not sure how well that person could be able to identify with someone experiencing loss.

This is true. I have a friend who's just spent 10 years to qualify in many skills as a traumatologist. Each student has to go through quite a few sessions of counselling for themselves, so they don't bring their own issues to the client (As referred to in my last post, unhealed people instinctively do this.) One fellow student apparently had had such a healthy life (now a 23 year old) there there was NOTHING for her to discuss. My friend commented that of course, she would eventually have unpleasant life experience to reflect upon but, if he was looking for a therapist, it would not be her - someone who had *absolutely no idea* what he was talking about!

Quote:
-----Paul was eager to identify with Jesus' sufferings. Would that not include such experiences as loneliness, loss, rejection, as well as physical feelings of hunger, fatigue, etc? **Surely that would have made Paul a very empathetic person.**

Paul would still have had to deal with his own issues under those circumstances. Isn't that why we find him singing hymns at midnight in jail, and saying 'Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, to be content.' (Phil 4:11) and 'I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.' (Phil 4:13)

It is not to the empathy that we come. It is to the compassion by which Christ healed and heals. It is to the Father's heart, who would see His children whole and functioning with all the inner health (wholeness) and spiritual wealth which belongs to them in Christ.

Re: What Kind of Counsel?, on: 2005/9/28 15:38

Someone wrote to me with this comment. I have permission to post it here.

Quote:
-----It's not an accident that some church leaders are unkeen for some church members to heal. While they have the 'power' - control - over a church member's options, they are demonstrating a classic stance, which mimics completely the dynamics in abusive situations.

"Just reread these insightful words and realized something,,,

This message of just "repent and get over your pain" is probably an expression picked up by loyal laypeople from pastors who have an agenda that does not include time and care for hurting people.

It's ironic...people are converted and pressed into service before being properly cared for and healed. The presumed reason? For ministry of course...we need to reach all the hurting people out there! And so the bait and switch never ends...

The whole idea of a pastor operating as the spiritual support of people lives is misguided...real communities are self-sustaining.

The real issue I'm afraid, is that these pastors are caught in a trap...they want to care for people but they have to care for the apparatus instead. When you have an organization to run, you only want healthy horses to pull the wagon. Caring for hurting people is a distraction to church growth and an emotional drain.

The solution then, is to create a "shape up or ship out" gospel where pain is mocked and needs are scoffed at.....

Today, there is doctrine and tithing. People do not intercede at all but instead proclaim truisms to each another from a safe distance. The overarching message is that spiritually mature saints should have no needs at all.

The only way to even begin to address this situation is to reduce the pastors spiritual authority, redistribute it around the community. Then he will not be the only bandwidth for transmitting spiritual ministry to the body... an impossible situation that causes the pastor to actually begin *resenting* his sheep.

It's simple emotional economics... The pastors have taken control of the spiritual supply chain and are finding out they can't meet the demand. So they condemn the demand side to shift responsibility away from the supply side. A real answer would be to move from a socialized (church government based) ministry, to a supply side (community based) ministry model, where the healthy individuals in the community can care for the hurting individuals.

What do you think? "

I think that sounds like a house-church working properly in a limited geographic area.

And, until the western church gets back to more of a third world simplicity and smallness, hurting people will continue to find themselves abandoning the unwelcome formality they face, which reminds them they feel leprous.

General Topics :: What Kind of Counsel?

Re: use of word "broken" - posted by roadsign (), on: 2005/9/28 22:32

Quote:
-----I would like to rephrase 'until we have been sufficiently broken', please, because it gives the idea that the Lord Himself is hurting us more than we already are, and I don't think that's what you mean, Diane. I think you mean that the person who needs healing, who has been concealing undisclosed, ill-defined ... um ... past trauma?... old pain? ... undiagnosed illness ... untold sinful secrets... has survived this long by denying that underlying truth (or truths) and now, the cover-up scenario has to be yielded to the Lord - the facade has to be given up. This is what Hope meant by bringing things from the darkness to the light.

Thank you, Dorcas for clarifying my use of words, and defining the real intent of my word choice, "broken".

It is not a case of being damaged further, but of being set free from well-fortified defences.

We do need to be careful with our words, because others can interpret something very different than we intended. So, again, thank you for your keen discerning eyes.

I am concerned for that person you spoke of who has never experienced anything bad in his entire life. I wonder how he will cope when something bad happens. Can education alone prepare him for that?

Thanks for sharing about pastors who try to keep the system intact at the expense of the needs of the individual. Unfortunately our pastors must live with a constant dilemma - to support the system, or to seek spiritual maturity for the individual. The two often don't go together.

Diane

Re:, on: 2005/9/28 22:40

Diane, dorcas, Chanin, etc.

I just read dullrainbow's post on Greg's Earthquake thread ... and that feeling of impending doom that a lot of us have been feeling in some way or another for some time now has just made me even the more grateful for you ladies and for this thread, and others like it.

Can't exactly put into words why, as much as 'feel' how wonderful it is to be able to sit back and see 'real life' interactions between women who "care" about each other and 'others'.

God Bless you and Protect ya's, until we see Him.

A cyber-hug.
Annie

Re: What Kind of Counsel? - posted by LetUsPray (), on: 2005/9/29 22:56

I have been reading through this thread several times. I can't but help feeling that something is missing. If I have misunderstood the contributors, please forgive me. I want to highlight what I want to say with a personal testimony, not to draw attention to myself, but because walking out our faith in Christ is obeying His Word and the Christian Life experience. In an earlier thread I recounted a situation where the church had failed a hurting lady completely.

I hinted at the possibility that "something" may be missed because of a number of reasons. Most cases I have encountered have already been mentioned: Church programs and the church organization overshadow every need of broken people. My experience is that almost every church sends their hurting people to "Christian," or even secular "experts." Many of the people I met as a result of the way God worked in my life, had been for years involved in a form of dependency through regular weekly visits with counselors and never finding freedom.

Many denominations don't recognize or systematically ignore the possibility of demonic oppression. Some charismatic denominations or groups declare that it is impossible for a born-again spirit-filled tongue-talking Christian to be oppressed - might I add, even inhabited - by evil spirits. This poses an enormous problem for the Christian who struggles with bondages that don't seem to go away by fasting, praying, going forward after altar calls, being prayed over, etc.

I was saved in a charismatic church. A few months later, after praying with a pastor received the gift of tongues. Strangely enough some of the difficulties I struggled with prior to my conversion didn't go away. Sure, I was on cloud nine for several weeks, but I came crashing down when my rage manifested itself again and I experienced very strange things, even physical attacks by unseen beings. I was scared as I had never been before. To make a long story short, through time I was delivered of three demons. The last one was the most difficult, because its root was hidden in something that I had no recollection of. It came to the surface when I attended a compulsory counseling session as part of a course. During that session something started actually to speak through me and at one point I saw myself when I was sexually molested as a small child.

Praise the Lord that I can hold a crying baby – I have 5 grand-children – or be with a little animal that cries during the night and not hit or kick it. I beat my oldest daughter for the first time when she was only 2 weeks old.

The story is much longer, but through it all God was faithful and restored and healed and renewed. We serve an awesome God. The problem I want to identify is that if I would have stayed in the charismatic church, I would have never found freedom. They simply declared that it was not possible for the Holy Spirit and a demon to be in the same body. Most other churches don't even want to talk about this, so the person in bondage will struggle and be hopelessly defeated in their Christian walk and never experience the abundant life in Christ. My experience is that demons can be in a born-again Christian and they only come out one way: by command in the name of Jesus Christ. I also believe that it is very important that someone who is involved with hurting people has experienced God's comfort for their own pain, because God's Word sets the precedence:

2 Corinthians 1

3 Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;

4 Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

It is my prayer that ALL who confess the Lord Jesus Christ as the Lord of their life will experience the abundant life He promises us.

Re: What Kind of Counsel?, on: 2005/10/2 23:54

Quote:
-----Many denominations don't recognize or systematically ignore the possibility of demonic oppression. Some charismatic denominations or groups declare that it is impossible for a born-again spirit-filled tongue-talking Christian to be oppressed – might I add, even inhabited – by evil spirits. **This poses an enormous problem for the Christian who struggles with bondages that don't seem to go away by fasting, praying, going forward after altar calls, being prayed over, etc.**

In a different thread, a brother expressed concern at *relying on* revelation (from God) which comes from outside scripture... which I countered, quoting the places in John's gospel where it is unmistakable that Jesus *did* - He relied on what His Father showed Him to say or do...(John 5:19, 30)... This is how (roughly-speaking) certain gifts of the Spirit work in practice, and we need to trust the words which God is always speaking, as one and another of us church members hear from Him.

This is Counsel. This is the Counsellor in action.

I used to sit under ministry which suggested I could not be 'born again' if I had a demon, yet, that I had a demon was what God showed me. But so, the moment I disclosed this to another sister, her reaction was to say 'Oh no no no no no. That can't be true!' In other words, *disputing* what God had shown me. This led to all sorts of difficulty for me. Moreover, it points to a need for Christians to trust each other's judgement in such matters.

This is merely another facet of what Hans describes in his post, except, the problem is even deeper if a minister is unapproachable by a flock member... and inclined to use his status to bolster his spiritual authority (instead of the other way round), thus adding a layer of protection to himself, from having to admit he doesn't know how to help the needy person.

Or, flock members are forbidden to minister to each other using their gifts. No wonder the Church is weak and in need.

General Topics :: What Kind of Counsel?

Re: What Kind of Counsel? - posted by LetUsPray (), on: 2005/10/3 11:00

Bless you Dorcas,

You wrote:

Quote:
-----I used to sit under ministry which suggested I could not be 'born again' if I had a demon, yet, that I had a demon was what God showed me. But so, the moment I disclosed this to another sister, her reaction was to say 'Oh no no no no. That can't be true!' In other words, disputing what God had shown me. This led to all sorts of difficulty for me. Moreover, it points to a need for Christians to trust each other's judgement in such matters.

I thank you for your honesty. This "facet" of Christian ministry is almost covert, except for some groups who sadly again go into excesses. I know that for me, and my walk in Christ, this is a reality. It is my prayer that this may encourage some dear brother or sister out there who seems to be fighting a losing battle.

I agree with some of the posts that one can resist the devil and he will flee from you; I actually quote that Scripture quite often myself. Unfortunately, the reality is that many new, and even some mature, Christians never seem to be able to get to the abundant life promised by Jesus Christ Himself, and continue to be oppressed and effectively lied to by the devil.

A number of years ago I visited my son at Bible College. He asked me to talk to one of the students who struggled with great difficulties and physical demonic manifestations at night. She had gone to her profs and lecturers who all told her to "pray about it," and it will go away. Not even: "I will pray with you," no, she was sent off by herself; she was desperate and contemplating suicide.

This is Christian love in action? This is bearing each others burdens and thereby fulfilling the law of Christ? In a Bible College no less; sadly "this" did not fit "their" theology. In less than 2 hours this girl was completely free. After I called her several months later, she was still free and actually experiencing the real love of Christ that to this point had eluded her. Could she have done this on her own by seeking God? I cannot answer that and we will never know.

I share this because I know that there are a lot of Christians out there that struggle. I see this manifested on a regular basis in the lives of Christian leaders who fall for some sin and after they have repented and are set free, will be kicked out by their Christian "brothers and sisters." I am not referring to those who choose to sin; who actually dabble in some secret activity. I am talking about those who, because of things that were passed to them by adult perpetrators—often Christians—and as a result are in bondage. A little book called Christian set yourself Free, was in circulation a number of years ago. People borrowed it from me quite regularly; I can testify that these people did not get free because eventually their difficulties became public knowledge.

It is my prayer that my opening this aspect of What Kind of Counsel, may actually encourage someone who is questioning their faith.

Edit, missed this last para while pasting:

We are commanded by Christ to LOVE our neighbors; this sometimes means that what we encounter may not be pretty. This "facet" of ministry certainly isn't that, but it certainly demonstrates the Love and the Power of our Glorious and Mighty King and Savior Jesus Christ.

Re: two kinds of bad counsel - posted by roadsign (), on: 2005/10/3 11:41

Quote:
-----She had gone to her profs and lecturers who all told her to "pray about it," and it will go away.

There seems to be two common types of "counsel" that are very unhelpful. They are like either a flight response or a fight response: FIGHT or FLIGHT.

1. FLIGHT: denial - go away, let's not talk about it, you pray about it, just claim victory (cop-out)

General Topics :: What Kind of Counsel?

2. FIGHT: I'll fix you right now. Just do what I say. Just stop the sin. Now, listen to ME (control)

Neither of these express love because they leave no room for LISTENING to the person in need. There is no empathy. There is no room for admitting the feeling of inadequacy and helplessness, of poverty in spirit, of hungering for God's wisdom and insight.

Diane

Re: two kinds of bad counsel, on: 2005/10/3 15:18

Diane,

I think where you have identified 'FIGHT' and 'FLIGHT' I would add the missing third, which is **FRIGHT**. Without doubt, fright is an important factor in the way needy people are met by the brethren.

Possibly, both the needy person and the one who is supposed to have the answers, are frightened.

What this suggests to me is, individuals are not familiar with taking their fears directly to the Lord. I know all about this because I was one of them...

But now, I wouldn't go anywhere else, unless I needed a witness to a prayer, to make it harder for the enemy to mess with my head afterwards. This is a seriously important **strategy** which is only possible once one has got past caring what another trustworthy Christian knows about one's failures or difficulties.

In fact, it is important to keep track of what I would call 'safe' Christians... brothers or sisters who know the Lord and who have done their own transacting of sensitive matters with God, in the past. They don't need to announce this about themselves. Their peace and communion announces it for them. These people will have all the time in the world for anyone who is set on going through with God no matter the (apparent) toll. Note them for future reference.

Quote:

-----Neither of these express love because they leave no room for LISTENING to the person in need.

This point about listening is very important. I would add further explanation of it though..... The act of listening to another person tells the other person that they exist. It is like looking in a mirror.

Some people make a point of always saying 'hello'. Don't be fooled. They may be doing this, not because they want you to feel valued, but, because you'll say 'hello' back to them and that makes *them* feel valued.

I hate to introduce this element of apparent cynicism but it's more to show the dynamic than anything. (There really are people who only greet other people because they care about themselves.) In 'church', there is a phenomenon similar to one found in Casualty departments of hospitals. There are people (in church) who are fine. They are socially well adjusted, have other family members in church with them and no want detains their thought life. These people chatter freely with others who are equally without care. These are the barely-wounded who walk into Casualty.

Then there are people who when asked, decline to share information... they have all kinds of reasons for their reticence, every one of which is valid to them. These are like those who came in by ambulance or who struggled to get to Casualty because they were really ill and there was no-one to bring them. They sit or lie quietly waiting to be seen, hoping the doctor will get to them before they lose consciousness. They are so quiet, it's easy for staff to ignore them, instead of recognising them as the sickest people waiting.

People have died in these circumstances.

(This is why the triage system was brought into general hospitals from the battlefield. Perhaps churches need to consider something similar.)