

Counseling Principles Mentioned or Illustrated in the Bible

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1. Thoughts, attitudes, feelings and actions interrelate:

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee" (Isaiah 26:3).

"Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart, and all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (Matthew 22:37).

"For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7).

Daniel 5:20; Lamentations 3:21-23; Isaiah 55:7; Romans 10:9-10; Proverbs 20:11

2. Actions have natural consequences:

"Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Galatians 6:7-9).

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord" (Romans).

3. We must take responsibility for our actions:

"So, then, every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Romans 14:12).

"And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou" (Genesis 3:9)?

"He that is first in his own cause seemeth just, but his neighbor cometh and searcheth him" (Proverbs 18:17).

Luke 16:2; Hebrews 13:17; Psalms 10:13; Proverbs 1:31; II Corinthians 9:6-7

(Note: Christians know that men are ultimately responsible to God.)

4. Some diseases are psychosomatic:

"When I kept silence, my bones became old through my roaring all the day long" (Psalms 32:3).

"My strength faileth because of mine iniquity and my bones are consumed" (Psalm 31:10; also verse 9 and the rest of verse 10).

Psalm 38:4-7

5. Strong relationships are important:

"If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood

of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).

"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Hebrews 10:25).

6. Strong family ties are important:

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right. Honor thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise), that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 5:1-4).

"Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church; and he is the savior of the body. Therefore, as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word" (Ephesians 5:21-26).

7. Loving one another is important:

"This is my commandment, that ye love another, as I have loved you" (John 15:12).

"Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, "Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it, Thou Shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Matthew 22:36-40).

8. It is important to resolve conflict:

"Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a tax collector" (Matthew 18:15-17).

"Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift" (Matthew 5:23-24).

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye who are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Galatians 6:1).

9. Listening skills are important:

"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath"

(James 1:19).

"A time to keep silence, and a time to speak" (Ecclesiastes 3:7).

"He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him"
(Proverbs 18:13).

I Kings 19:9-18, Proverbs 46:10, Zechariah 2:13

10. Words are powerful:

"Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof"
(Proverbs 18:21).

"But I say unto you that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account of it in the day of judgment, for by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Matthew 12:36-37).

11. Childhood influences our whole life:

"Train up a child in the way he should go and, when he is old, he will not depart from it"
(Proverbs 22:6).

12. We expect from others (including our children) what we expect from ourselves:

"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 thing" (Romans 2:1).

13. Role models are important:

"Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them who walk even as ye have us for an example" (Phil 3:17).

"Wherefore, I beseech you, be ye followers of me" (I Cor. 4:16).

"That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises" (Heb. 6:12).

I Thess. 1:6

14. Behavior is learned:

"I have learned, in whatever state I am, in this to be content" (Phil. 4:11).

"Who comforteth us in all our tribulation , that we may be able to comfort them who are in any trouble, by the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the suffering of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ" (2 Cor 1:4-5).

15. Teaching is an instrument of change:

"For the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light, and reproofs of instruction are the way of life" (Prov. 6:23).

"And the things that thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2).

16. Self-discipline is important:

"He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls" (Prov. 25:28).

17. Disciplining children is important:

"He that spareth his rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him chasteneth him early" (Prov. 13:24).

18. Self-expression is important:

"O Lord, my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me" (Psa. 30:2).

"From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed; lead me to the rock that is higher than I" (Psa. 61:2).

"Confess your faults one to one other, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (Jas. 5:16).

" And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying Eli, Eli lama Sabachthani? That is to say, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me" (Matt. 27:46)?

19. Peer influence is important:

"He that walketh with wise men shall be wise, but a companion of fools shall be destroyed" (Prov. 13:20).

"Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shall not go" (Prov. 12:24).

20. Communication itself is important (that we communicate and what we communicate):

"Howbeit, Jesus permitted him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends and tell and tell

them what great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee" (Mk. 5:19).

"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers" (Eph. 4:29).

"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Rom. 10:14).

Rom. 10:8-10, Song of Solomon

21. Self-disclosure can be an effective counseling tool:

"I say again, Let no man think me a fool; if so, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little" (2 Cor. 11:16).

"For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ" (Phil. 3:18).

Romans 7:15

22. Setting goals is important:

"Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13-14).

"Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Prov. 29:18a).

23. Defining the problem is important:

"And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you" (Matt. 20:32)?

24. Being honest with yourself is important:

"But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup" (1 Cor. 11:28).

25. Be careful not to make assumptions:

"When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he had been thus now a long time, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made well?" (Jn. 5:6).

26. We sometimes do negative things to maintain our sense of security:

"He who is full loathes honey, but to the hungry, even what is bitter tastes sweet" (Prov. 27:7).

27. Sometimes it is important to re-story our lives.

(2 Cor 5:21; God re-names people throughout the Bible. 1 Chronicles 4:10, Gen. 32:28)

28. The need to reframe:

"So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer" (2 Cor. 5:16).

"But we have the mind of Christ" (I Cor. 2:16).

29. Importance of externalizing the problem:

Romans 7:17-20

30. Don't rescue people: Many scriptures illustrate the dynamics of the Karpman Drama Triangle. Jesus himself was compassionate, but did not "rescue." See especially Luke 12:14.

"A hot-tempered man must pay the penalty , if you rescue him, you will have to do it again" (Prov. 19:19).

"And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight" (Phil. 1:9).

"Be wise as serpents, but innocent as doves" (Matthew 10:16).

31. Importance of a good self-image:

"Each one should test his own actions. Then he can take pride in himself. . ." (Galatians 6:4a).

32: Cybernetic loops:

"The law produces wrath" (Romans 4:15).

"Whoever corrects a mocker invites insult; whoever rebukes a wicked man incurs abuse" (Proverbs 9:7).

33. Breaking loops with reframes:

"A kind man benefits himself" (Proverbs 11:17).

"He who seeks good finds good will" (Proverbs 11:27).

34. Paradoxical interventions:

Lose your life to **save** it (Mark 8:35 & Matthew 10:39).

Be **weak** to be **strong** (2 Corinthians 12:10).

Humble yourself to be **exalted** ((Matthew 18:11).

Give in order to **receive** (Matthew 19:21, Mark 10:29, & Luke 6:38).

The **work** of God is to **believe** in Christ (John 6:29).

Serve in order to **rule** (Matthew 20:26).

Become a "**fool**" to become **wise** (1 Corinthians 3: 18).

Surrender to become **wise, holy, righteous** (1 Corinthians 1:30).

35. "Be curious, not reactive":

Illustrated by many of Christ's responses to the Pharisees.

36. Look for the flow of information in a system.

" 'Are you the king of the Jews?' (Pilate asks Jesus). 'Is this your own idea,' Jesus asked, 'or did others talk to you about me?' "

37. Patterns of behavior are passed down through the generations:

Abraham lied about Sarah being his sister; his son, Isaac, told the same lie; Isaac's son was Jacob, which means "deceiver".

38. Triangles are a common dynamic:

"Herod and his soldiers ridiculed and mocked him (Jesus). . . That day Herod and Pilate became friends – before this they had been enemies" (Luke 23: 11-12). The stress between Herod and Pilate was relieved by triangulating on Christ.

See, also, the triangles between Isaac, Rebecca, Esau and Jacob.

39. Differentiation was illustrated by Christ:

" 'Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?' " (Luke 2:49) Christ's separation from his mother and step-father was not betrayal. He stayed connected with his family while separating from them.

" 'Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?' Pointing to his disciples, he said, 'Here are my

mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother' " (Matthew 12: 46-48). Jesus had been told that His mother and brothers were outside and desired to speak with Him.

" 'Yet not my will, but yours be done' " (Luke 22:42). Christ separated the emotional and intellectual fields. Believers are called to do the same: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding" (Proverbs 3: 5-6).

40. Relationships form systems:

The body of Christ is "held together by every supporting **ligament**. . . as each part does its work" (Ephesians 4: 14 & 16).

". . . If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are **many parts, but one body**" (1 Corinthians 12: 14-26).

41. Reciprocity (Nagy's concept of justice) in relational systems:

"Honest scales and balances are from the Lord" (Proverbs 21:2). God created us in His image, and God desires justice.

42. Nagy's concept of indebtedness down through the generations:

" 'So you testify against yourselves that you are the descendants of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of the sin of your forefathers' " (Matthew 23:31). The Pharisees were indebted to their forefathers and to their religious system to kill Christ. Killing Christ was a "symptom for togetherness" (Friedman in *Generation to Generation*, p. 156).

" 'Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as you are' " (Matthew 23:15).

43. One person's differentiation can affect the whole family:

When Joseph revealed himself to his brothers, by implication the entire family matured (Genesis 45:3 & 50:19).

44. Allowing each other to be “weak” in order to build a “neutral platform”:

“For to be sure, he was crucified in weakness, yet he lives by God’s power. Likewise, we are weak in him, yet by God’s power we will live with him to serve you.”

45. Allowing imperfect understanding:

“Each heart knows its own bitterness, and no one else can share its joy.” Proverbs 14:10

46. Look for the good motive:

“I myself am convinced, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, complete in knowledge and competent to instruct one another.” Romans 15:14