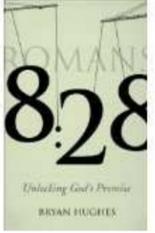


Resources for Life Change

(Resources are available in the Grace Resource Center):

The Grace Resource Center has many new resources available for you. From Bibles, to parenting books, to marriage and family books, to books on issues in Biblical Counseling, to children's books, to books about Christian living and theology, the Resource Center provides a whole variety of very helpful resources for you.

Stop by the Resource Center today, before and after all church services.

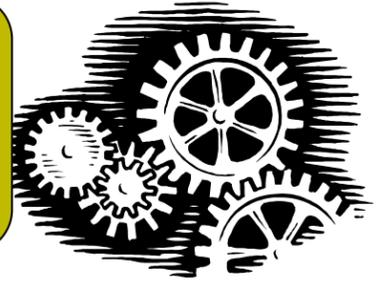
- 1) 8/28: Unlocking God's Promise, by Pastor Bryan Hughes:** Have you ever wondered what God is doing in situations of life? Have you ever been confused about what He is accomplishing in your life? Why does God allow certain things to happen? Is there a passage of Scripture that addresses these questions specifically? These are just a few of the questions Pastor Bryan addresses in his first published book, *8/28: Unlocking God's Promise*. John MacArthur writes, "Romans 8:28 is one of the best-loved and most important promises in Scripture. Bryan Hughes does a wonderful job of unpacking the implications of that promise. This book—like the promise it expounds—is a real treasure." 
- 2) Exalting Pain? Ignoring Pain? What Do We Do With Suffering?, by Ed Welch:** Life is painful at times, isn't it? We frail humans suffer and sometimes we suffer horrendously. How should we help those who are suffering and experiencing pain? In this excellent article, Welch provides the reader with an excellent discourse of wisdom to help us not only respond rightly to our own suffering but to also help others as they suffer too.
- 3) A Recipe For Survival, by Freda J. Rauch:** You may know some who has gluten allergies. If you do, you know first of all how sick one can get when they eat food with gluten in it. You also know how hard it is to find gluten free food without breaking the bank. In this book, Rauch starts by telling the story of her husband who got greatly sick back some time ago and it was found to be a gluten issue. In telling the story, Rauch shows how the gospel of Christ is critical to helping people deal with sickness. Rauch continues on in the book to give page after page of recipes of gluten free books. The author used her background in chemical engineering, to help her develop a system of recipes for people who struggle with gluten.
- 4) Everyday Talk, by John Younts:** This book gives great hope and encouragement to parents. It is very practical and biblical. "Everyday Talk is a masterful book. It provides valuable talking points for conversations about everything from weather, to sex, to music. The two essential features of biblical parenting are properly aligned in this book: penetrating insight into the heart and the centrality of the gospel, not only for salvation, but for life." — Tedd Tripp, pastor, author, conference speaker
- 5) ESV Pocket Bible** —This excellent resource is just the perfect size for a person who is traveling and wants a small Bible to take with him. It also is an excellent resource for giving to others who may be looking for a Bible.
- 6) Addictions: A Banquet in the Grave, by Ed Welch:** A very common problem in our world is "addiction." In fact, most people when they are honest would admit to be addicted to something at some point in their life. Some addictions (to alcohol, drugs, gambling, etc.) are horrific because of the damage they create in the person's life and the subsequent damage on others around the addicted person. In this excellent book, Dr. Ed Welch speaks to the heart of the issues surrounding addictions and then provides a practical application of the gospel of Christ to the person who is trying to break free from the addiction. This is an excellent resource to be sure.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: The Community of Grace Biblical Counseling Ministry and the editor of the monthly newsletter welcome letters from the readers. Letters may be edited if the editorial team deems it necessary to do so to fit the space allowed or due to unbiblical communication practices. We encourage the reader to write with edification in mind. Letters must be signed. Names can be withheld upon request. If you have a question about counseling that you would like to ask for future publications feel free to submit those questions to Pastor Blake Shaw.

The Biblical Counseling Committee:
Chairman: Pastor Blake Shaw
Vice-Chair: Dr. Dan Gannon
Members: Ty Typolt, Pam Gannon,
Brad Wright, & Pastor Kelly Jennaway



THE COG
COMMUNITY OF GRACE
Biblical Counseling Ministry
Edition #11 — July 2012



Food for Thought

By Pastor Blake Shaw

(In May we began a series on the "one anothers" of the New Testament, seeking to compel every person who claims to be a Christian to take serious the commands of Scripture related to ministry to one another. This month we focus on "Being of the Same Mind with One Another.")



You'll have to take this by faith but I actually played four years of high school football. I wasn't a very good player but I did start on our varsity team for 2½ seasons. My sophomore year, our team made it to the state semi-final game before losing. One thing I can attest to about that successful team: we were of the same mind. We had one goal, one passion in mind: to win the state championship. We had one Head Coach who called the shots. We had one Final Authority for plays, and that was the Play book. We were a rag-tag bunch of guys. Some of us were farm kids. Others grew up in businessmen's homes living in town. Some of us were poor, while others were fairly wealthy. Some of us were religious while others referred to Jesus Christ only when swearing. Some of us were really good athletes, while some of us, like myself, were just average guys who loved sports and wanted to play ball. But, regardless of background, we were of the same mind. In other words, we had a thing called "unity."

Sports fan or not, please read on. Imagine for a moment being on that football team. But imagine with me that each person on the team has his own agenda and each player has a commitment to get attention, fame, and glory for himself. Game day arrives and as the team prepares for the game, the quarterback tells his teammates that he is tired of handing the ball off to running backs and throwing passes to receivers and seeing them get to score all the touchdowns. He states that in this game he is going to run the ball any time he wants, which will be almost every down. The running backs respond by telling the quarterback that they frankly don't care and that he can plan on them not doing any blocking for him. The receivers and lineman say the same. On defense, the defensive captain decides that he hasn't agreed with the way the defensive coordinator has called the defensive sets the last few games so he is going to call whatever defense he wants. The middle linebacker decides that he just wants to put someone in the hospital so it doesn't matter if he hits someone with a football or not, he just wants to smack someone. One of the defensive backs announces that his goal is simply to get as many interceptions as possible so he'll be taking some chances diving for some passes that possibly, in wiser moments, he would not even attempt. Another defensive back announces that he is tired of bailing out the defensive linemen and linebackers after they miss tackles so he refuses to make any tackles on running backs who make it past the line of scrimmage. I could go on with the analogy but I won't. Obviously, this is a train wreck waiting to happen, isn't it? The game is going to be a disaster and unless something really odd happens,



this game is going to be a wipe-out of staggering proportions. What is going on with this team? "Self-centeredness," you say. That's true. But there is something else afoot. Is this team of the same mind with one another? Not even close. Once they step outside of submission to the Head Coach and following the plays in the Play Book, chaos and division will result.

By the way, this quality of having the same mind is what the church is supposed to have as well. Romans 15:5-6 says, "Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus, so that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Biblically we already have unity, because our unity is in Christ. The verse above is not saying, "Create unity." If you are a believer in Christ then you are part of the body of Christ. There is unity. Biblically we are commanded to preserve the unity of the body, not create it (Ephesians 4:3). In fact, there is not one command in Scripture that tells us as believers to create unity in the church, but it does speak of maintaining unity. Scripture does speak of being of the same mind with one another. In the May issue we saw that we are members of one another (Romans 12:5). In June, we were reminded to bear one another's burdens (Galatians 6:1-3). This month, ponder the fact that we are commanded to be of the same mind with one another. How do we pull this off? I believe Romans 15:6 helps us answer that question when it says, "...so that we may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." That is the aim. That's the goal. That should be our passion. In fact, if that is not our goal and our passion, then we immediately fail to be of the same mind with one another. This concept of being of the same mind has staggering implications for counseling. Almost on a weekly basis I am challenged by some well-meaning Christian regarding my philosophy of counseling and have even, at times been accused of causing division because of my stand on the sufficiency of Scripture. When I was making tackles on that high school football team, one thing I never imagined in my wildest dreams is that I would actually be accused by Christians of causing division by taking a stand for God's Word. But it happens. Our challenge as believers is not only to say, "Jesus is our Savior," but to also make sure that we are truly submitted to the Head Coach and to His Play Book for life. How about you? Are you truly submitted to our Head, the Lord Jesus Christ, in every aspect of life? Is His Book truly your final authority? The challenge before us is whether we really have one passion: God's glory. Once we step away from making much about God and doing everything to magnify Him, being of the same mind is impossible.

The Counseling Zone By Pastor Blake Shaw

(A Look at the Basics of Biblical Counseling—Part 3)



The past two editions of *The COG* were devoted to delineating the initial step in the practice of Biblical Counseling. We saw that counseling begins with what is called “involvement.” In peacemaking it is called building passport into a person’s life. Our example for involvement is the Good Samaritan who was willing to get truly involved in another person’s life. Let’s face it, most people who seek counsel, arrive at the counseling appointment with a lack of trust in you the counselor. So building a relationship with the person to the point where they have some level of trust is critical. Building passport into another person’s life so that you can then speak truth to them in a caring, warm relationship is our starting point.

But we dare not stop at involvement. It is important but it isn’t all that is involved in Biblical Counseling. So where do we go once we have built a relationship of trust? The next very important element to Biblical Counseling is called investigation. Proverbs 18:13 is a key verse to consider. It says, “He who gives an answer before he hears, it is folly and shame to him.”

Have you ever met with some fellow believer and he shares with you how he has been experiencing some difficulty in life. As you listen you feel sorry for him. He explains the situation and then you wonder, “What do I say in response?” So you dole out the infamous Romans 8:28 (which is an awesome verse by the way) and try to encourage him. Half-way through your quoting of this verse he interrupts you and finishes the verse for you? And then he says, “Yeah, I know. I know. God works everything together for good and I’m supposed to love Him in the process.” What may have just happened? It

is possible, maybe even probable, that you violated Proverbs 18:13. You may have just given an answer before you heard and now you have the egg of folly and shame all over your face. One thing that some counselors in the secular system have figured out is that you have to ask a lot of questions. Some Christian counselors (from what others tell me) are really good at hearing the whole story before they give an answer to the person. That’s not a principle from psychology. God’s Word actually tells us to hear the story before you give the answers.

In the first part of our focus on the key element of investigation, I want to help you understand that gathering data is absolutely critical in order for you to provide God’s answers to the person’s problems. I’ve landed in folly and shame way too many times in my years of ministry. I’ve been guilty of hearing just a small part of someone’s story and then grabbing my Bible announcing, “Here’s God’s answer to your problem,” only to find out that I totally missed the real issues.

Gathering data by way of investigation requires that you pattern yourself after your Creator. In other words, learn to do two things: 1) Learn to ask questions. Have you ever noticed the questions that the all-knowing God asked in Scripture? As you read through the pages of God’s Word, make a mental note of the questions that God asks. Questions are powerful, aren’t they? In fact, it is possible that questions convict the conscience while accusations harden the heart. I personally believe God asked questions of people, not because He was sitting on the edge of His heavenly seat longing for answers to the puzzles of human-

ity. But He used questions to expose the heart and to poke on the human conscience. Read Genesis 3-4 and you have listed some of God’s first questions. Go to Job 37-42 and you’ll find Job on the witness stand and God, the Judge, asking questions. So learn to ask questions. And may I suggest that we learn to ask questions that can’t be answered with a “yes” or a “no”. See what happens. For example: If I asked you, “Are you a Christian?” I would get a “yes” or a “no” for an answer and very superficial data. But if I ask you, “Tell me about your relationship with Christ and your own personal faith,” it is probable that I have a boat-load of data coming my way.

2) Secondly, as you learn to ask questions, also learn to listen. We are to be like Jesus Christ. We are to follow God. We know that God listens. He listens well. He listens purposefully. So we need to learn to listen. Listen for what a person says that is hard data. From the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks. So listen to what people say. Listen to how people say what they say. Are they sarcastic? Do they speak with a sound of disdain for another person? Do they constantly joke about things? How the person says something can be very revealing to what is really going on in the heart.

If you are asking great questions and listening closely you begin to gather a lot of very important data, thus making it easier for you to apply God’s Word and bring His solution to the problem for the counselee. Next month we’ll develop this principle of investigation more fully. Until then, start practicing. Ask great questions and then listen, and listen well.

Q: Does forgiveness mean I trust the one who sinned against me?



A: It’s sometimes hard to know if you can or should trust someone after you’ve forgiven them. For example, when a child lies to her parents and seeks forgiveness, do you trust her? Or, perhaps even more difficult, when a spouse commits adultery, repents, and is granted forgiveness, do you trust the spouse? What about a repentant child abuser? Does forgiveness mean you once again entrust your children to their care?

A common way to think about this is: **I forgive them but they will have to earn back my trust.** But is this the best way to look at the issue?

Answer: Forgiveness:

As background, let’s recall several things about forgiveness.

1. Forgiveness is granted following true repentance (godly sorrow as in 2 Cor. 7:9-11). So if you have forgiven someone, you have already trusted (believed) that their repentance is real.
2. Forgiveness reconciles the relationship that was broken, just as God’s forgiveness of us reconciles us to Him.
3. Forgiveness does not “forget” passively, but rather it *chooses* not to remember anymore....there is a difference. Forgetting is passive, letting memories fade with time. Choosing not to remember is an active process, an act of the will in which you decide not to dwell on the offense and let it control how you relate to this person.
4. Finally, forgiveness does not mean (necessarily) a removal of consequences. God forgives His people, but often allows consequences that will protect others or teach them not to sin again. We find an example of this in David’s life in his sin against Uriah and Bathsheba: (See 2 Sam 12:9-19). While God forgave him, consequences remained.

Trust:

Now, let’s recall what we are talking about when we use the word, “trust.” What does the word “trust” mean?

Trust is:

- to place confidence in, depend, rely on, to commit or place in one’s care or keeping
- to permit to stay or go or to do something without fear or misgiving
- to rely on the truthfulness or accuracy of believe
- to hope or expect confidently

Interestingly, we are never directly commanded to trust people. In fact, the Word of God often warns *against* putting trust in people. Consider a passage like Jeremiah 17:5-8.

Thus says the Lord, “Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind and makes flesh his strength, and whose heart turns away from the Lord. For he will be like a bush in the desert and will not see when prosperity comes, but will live in stony wastes in the wilderness, a land of salt without inhabitant.”

“Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord and whose trust is the Lord. For he will be like a tree planted by the water, that extends its roots by a stream and will not fear when the heat comes; But its leaves will be green, and it will not be anxious in a year of drought nor cease to yield fruit.”

Love:

Though we are never commanded to trust in another person, we are directly commanded to love one another. And among all the wonderful ways in which love expresses itself, love is said to ‘believe all things’ (1 Cor. 13:7). Commenting on this verse, John MacArthur says, “Love is not suspicious or cynical. It believes in the best outcome for the one who has done wrong—that the wrong will be confessed and forgiven, and the loved one restored to righteousness....Love will always opt for the most favorable possibility.” In other words, love believes that one is ‘innocent until proven guilty’. Even when found guilty, love believes the best possible interpretation of motives.

Comparing Love and Forgiveness: Love’s expressions as seen in 1 Corinthians 13 ties in to what we’ve seen about forgiveness.



1. Forgiveness believes that the guilty one’s repentance is real...Love also believes the best.
2. Forgiveness reconciles...love reconciles rather than being easily ‘provoked’-- irritated, upset or angered.
3. Forgiveness chooses not to remember a wrong...love does not take into account a wrong suffered.
4. Forgiveness may, for the good of someone, allow consequences to remain, and love does this as well, because love ‘does not seek its own’, but seeks the good of others.

We see that many aspects of forgiveness encompass several of love’s expressions.

Let’s get practical:

How can we reconcile all these thoughts about forgiveness, love and trust?

It seems clear that you cannot place your ultimate trust in man—we are all sinners. Only God is completely trustworthy. You can, and should trust God. Your focus after forgiveness will be on trusting **God** and *loving* others.

Trust in God and love the one you have forgiven. Since love believes the best about others, **I’m going to believe the best... that the repentant person sincerely wants to change, and doesn’t want to go back to the sin for which they have sought forgiveness.** I’m going to believe that they would welcome my coming alongside them to help them not fall into that trap again. Therefore, I’m going to do everything I can to make it easy for them to do what is right, and hard for them to do what is wrong.

In the case of a child who has lied that might look like restricting the child from situations that tempt her to lie until she has developed more spiritual muscle to tell the truth. For example, you might not allow the child to spend unsupervised time at the mall if that’s the setting which tempted the child to lie. It might also look like providing consequences so that the child is helped to remember how serious lying is. In other words, love believes that the child genuinely doesn’t want to lie to you again, and you put a plan in place to help the child succeed in that God-honoring desire.

In the case of a spouse who has committed adultery, love believes that the spouse genuinely doesn’t want to sin against God and against you by getting involved with an outside party again. Thus, you might request that your spouse give you access to his or her cell phone records, to e-mails, or face-book interaction. You might request that your spouse be involved in regular counseling and accountability. You might request your spouse make job changes. The goal of these things is to strengthen your spouse as he or she seeks to grow in faithfulness and demonstrate the fruit of repentance. Love believes that the spouse sincerely desires to change.

With the repentant child abuser, in love you believe the best about them...that they do not want to commit this sin again. Therefore you help them by not allowing them unrestricted access to children, among other appropriate legal and practical restrictions.

As you trust God and obey Him by loving others, (Matthew 22:37-39) people may or may not respond righteously. How others respond to your obedience to God is not something you can control. You must leave that up to the Lord.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the Lord and turn away from evil. ~Proverbs 3:5-7

God alone is trustworthy and He has made it clear that our ultimate trust is not to be in man but in Him (Psalm 9:10,146:3). Forgive others and trust in God. Love others and trust in God.

It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in man. ~Psalm 118:8

Counselor's Corner

Introduction to Biblical Counseling, taught by Pastor Blake Shaw: There are many misconceptions about Biblical Counseling in the church today. There are also many people in the church who wonder if they can actually counsel others. In this class Pastor Blake presents both the

philosophy of True Biblical Counseling and the How-To’s of Biblical Counseling. Homework includes reading a textbook and weekly verse quizzes. 9:00am-10:20am, Room 802

Counseling Observation, lead by Ty and Jeanie Typolt and Dan and Pam Gannon. For those who have taken the Introduction to Biblical Counseling class previously, we offer this class to give you the opportunity to see counseling at work. This class moves the student from studying the philosophy of Biblical Counseling, to seeing how it actually takes place. Homework includes reading a short textbook. 10:40am-12:00pm (noon), Fireside Room.

Medical Issues in Counseling, taught by Dr. Dan and Pam Gannon. This class, offered in the evenings as a part of Montana Bible College’s counseling curriculum, addresses physiological factors that influence areas in a person’s life that are critical to consider when counseling that individual. Topics include: good health, sleep, depression, ADD/ADHD, chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia, headaches, obsessive/compulsive disorder, and addictions. Homework includes the reading of a textbook. Tuesday nights, 6:00pm-8:30pm, Room 604. Cost is \$125 for audit. Partial scholarships available for Grace Bible Church members upon request.