

Grace Bible Church

2015 Biblical Counseling Conference

Session #1

Avoiding the Drift into Worldly Counsel

I. INTRODUCTION

Biblical counseling is unique in the contemporary Christian counseling community not only because it uses the Bible, but also because it begins with the Bible as the _____ and develops its definitions and methods from those truths.

My goal is to help you better understand what it means to think presuppositionally. To go _____ the definitions and methods of counseling and challenge the beliefs upon which they are founded.

I.e. - Freud's concept of the UNC

II. FIRST THINGS FIRST

There is no _____, which leads us to raise the question, "What _____ is this definition or method based upon?"

- **Col 2:8** - "elementary principles of the world"
- **Mt 12:30** "He who is not with Me is against Me..."

There are only _____ starting points, belief or unbelief in God. That starting point is chosen by _____.

Examples:

- the _____ of man – creation **or** evolution
- the nature of man – sinful **or** _____
- the final authority – God and His word **or** man and secular psychology
- the greatest _____ of man – salvation in Christ **or** education

They are accepted by _____ and then built on. Dr. Greg Bahnsen said;

"Even laws of thought and methods, along with factual evidence, will be accepted and evaluated in light of one's governing presuppositions... All chains of argumentation, especially over matters of ultimate personal importance, trace back to and depend upon starting points which are taken to be self-evidencing..." (*Always Ready*, by Greg Bahnsen, Ed. by Robert R. Booth, p 77)

Both Christians and non-Christians evaluate and define life based on the convictions of their _____ which are accepted by faith. We call those "presuppositions." Solomon reflected this:

Prov 4:23 - "Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life."

James illustrates how these basic convictions/presuppositions _____ what we do, say, and think.

Jas 3:11–12 - "**11** Does a fountain send out from the same opening both fresh and bitter water? **12** Can a fig tree, my brethren, produce olives, or a vine produce figs? Nor can salt water produce fresh."

Jesus demonstrates presuppositional convictions - the Rich Man and Lazarus in **Lk 16:19-31**.

"**29** 'But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.' "**30** 'But he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!' "**31** 'But he said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.' ""

It was unbelief not _____ that was the key.

The issue was not the _____, but the unbelief by which the facts were interpreted. **Rom 1: 18, 21**

III. WE ARE WARNED TO GUARD OUR THINKING

Colossians 2:3-8 - "**2** Christ... **3** in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. **4** I say this so that no one will delude you with persuasive argument. **5** For even though I am absent in body, nevertheless I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good discipline and the stability of your faith in Christ. **6** Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, **7** having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude. **8** See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ."

A. _____ Is The Source – **vss 2-3**

"**2** Christ... **3** in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

1. "Wisdom"

Pr 4:11–12 "**11** I have directed you in the way of wisdom; I have led you in upright paths."**12** When you walk, your steps will not be impeded; and if you run, you will not stumble."

I.e. Ventilation

2. "knowledge"

Pr 1:7 "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom and instruction."

I.e. To define idolatrous dependence on another person as "co-dependency" lacks _____ understanding of what is taking place. It replaces the sin of the fear of man with victimization. It deflects the primary focus from the person's relationship to _____ to their relationship to another person.

Every piece of fruit on a tree will be affected by the _____ from which it grows, so will every practice of counseling be impacted by the beliefs out of which it grows.

Paul understood that we are in a _____ for men's hearts - **2 Co 10:3–5**

"3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh,"

"4 for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses."

"5 We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,"

"Speculations" are ideas, theories, and concepts based on " _____ reasoning," or ones "imagination."

"Speculations" include "every lofty thing," every proud or self-righteous philosophy designed to suppress and discredit the _____ of God.

B. Don't Be _____ With Persuasive Argument – **vs. 4-5**

"4 I say this so that no one will delude you with persuasive argument. **5** For even though I am absent in body, nevertheless I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good discipline and the stability of your faith in Christ."

"persuasive argument"

One reason we are deceived and have no countering argument is because we measure these arguments using _____ yardstick.

We need to measure with God's yardstick – the _____ of God.

I.e. Reflective counseling - Carl Roger's belief in the inherent _____ of man.

"stability."

C. Walk in Him – **vs 6-7**

"6 Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him"

“received” carries connotations of “something which was delivered by _____.” (NIC Com. On Eph. and Col, by Simpson and Bruce, p 226).

“walk in Him.” Cp. **Eph 4:1** - “Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling ...”

To “walk in Him,” means that our counseling definitions and _____ are to be rooted and grounded in His “wisdom and knowledge.”

"7 having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed..."

That means in counseling our definitions and methods need to _____ out of and be consistent with the Word of God. It is the application of God’s truth to these aspects of our counseling that “_____” roots us in Scripture and distinguishes it as Christian counseling, and enables us to help our counselees to be “built up in Him and _____” in their faith.

Do not miss the unbroken _____ connecting our being rooted, built up, and established in Christ to instruction in the Word of God.

D. Do Not Be Deceived – vs 8

"8 See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ."

Two origins:

1. “according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world”

“philosophy” - is any theory about God and life that is not according to God’s word.

“Empty deception” any thinking that is in opposition of God’s word. (*Always Ready*, by Greg Bahnsen, Ed. by Robert R. Booth, p 12)

Compare the secular psychological and psychiatric communities’ offer today.

Eph 4:17–18 “**17** ... walk, in the futility of their mind...**18** being darkened in their understanding

Their approach is meant to bring glory to _____ as they revel in their rebellion against God. Our calling is to "destroy(ing) speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God...taking every _____ captive to the obedience of Christ," **2 Co 10:5**

2. The only other source of ideas is that which is "according to _____."

"according to the elementary principles of the world rather than according to Christ." These two sources of thought are _____ to and exclusionary of one another.

IV. CONCLUSION

There is a connection between the source of a person's thinking and the end product and everything in-between. If you begin with the "elementary principles of the world" all your definitions and methods will be _____ with those ideas. The leading psychologist and psychiatrists understand this.

Carl Rogers said, "Neither the bible nor the prophets, neither Freud nor research, neither the revelations of God nor man – can take precedence over my own direct experience." (*On Becoming A Person*, p. 241)

Might we have that kind of confidence and allegiance to God and His Word.

Fill-ins for “Avoiding the Drift into Worldly Counsel”

I. INTRODUCTION

Biblical counseling...Bible as the **FOUNDATION** and develops
My goal...To go **BEYOND** the definitions and methods

II. FIRST THINGS FIRST

There is no **NEUTRALITY**, which leads ...“What **BELIEF** is this definition

There are only **TWO** starting points...That starting point is chosen by **FAITH**. the **ORIGIN** of man –

- the nature of man – sinful or **GOOD**
- the greatest **NEED** of man

They are accepted by **FAITH** and then built on. Dr. Greg Bahnsen said;

Both Christians and... based on the convictions of their **HEART** which

James illustrates how these basic convictions/presuppositions **DETERMINE** what we do,

It was unbelief not **EVIDENCE** that was the key.

The issue was not the **FACTS**, but the **unbelief**

III. WE ARE WARNED TO GUARD OUR THINKING - Colossians 2:3-8

A. **CHRIST** Is The Source – Col. 3:2-3

I.e To define...person as “co-dependency” lacks **SPIRITUAL** understanding...relationship to **GOD**

Every piece of fruit on a tree will be affected by the **ROOTS** from which it grows,

Paul understood that we are in a **WAR** for men’s hearts - 2 Co 10:3–5

“**Speculations**” are...based on “**FALSE** reasoning,”

“Speculations” include... discredit the **KNOWLEDGE** of God.

B. Don’t Be **DELUDED** With Persuasive Argument – Col. 3:4-5

One reason...arguments using **THEIR** yardstick... God’s yardstick – the **WORD** of God.

I.e. ...Carl Roger’s belief in the inherent **GOODNESS** of man.

C. Walk in Him – Col. 3:6-7

“**received**” carries connotations of “something which was delivered by **TRADITION**.”

To “**walk in Him**,” means our counseling definitions and **METHODS** are to be rooted

That means...need to **GROW** out...counseling that “**FIRMLY**” 7 roots us...and **ESTABLISHED**” in

Do not miss the unbroken **CHAIN** connecting our being rooted

D. Do Not Be Deceived – Col. 3:8

Their approach...bring glory to **MAN**...their rebellion...taking every **THOUGHT** captive... 2 Co 10:5

The only other source of ideas is that which is “according to **CHRIST**” 8.

These two sources of thought are **ANTITHETICAL** to and exclusionary of one another.

IV. CONCLUSION

There is a connection...definitions and methods will be **TAINTED** with those ideas.