

# 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) Fearfully and Wonderfully Made-DVD, with Dr. David Menton:** "The question is not when does life begin, but when does a person begin?" Dr. David Menton explains from anatomical science and biology the truth of Psalm 139:13-16, which says that God weaves us together in the womb. This illustrated lecture also reveals that amazing and intricate design of the womb and the processes of fertilization, implantation, embryonic development and birth itself. Dr. Menton shows that each of these is a series of miracles (irreducible complexities) that cannot be explained by chance and random processes. Even more important, as Dr. Menton explains with grace and sensitivity in the wrap-up of the video, is the second "birth" process of salvation explained in John 3.

**3) Freedom From Resentment, by Robert Jones:** Everyone experiences hurt in relationships, but most of the time we are able to forgive and forget. But sometimes we experience a major hurt that lingers in our minds and leads to bitterness. We feel trapped by the resulting hostility, ongoing broken relationships, and inability to move on. Can you escape the sorrow and soul impoverishment that bitterness brings? Robert D. Jones explains how a relationship with Jesus, a man of sorrows and familiar with suffering, can free you from bitterness. Then he outlines practical ways to live out the gospel in difficult relationships. Healing and freedom is possible, even for long-lasting hurts.

**4) Undistracted Widow, by Carol Cornish:** Writing from a biblical perspective, Carol Cornish helps readers to discover how God is working in the midst of the deep distress of losing a spouse. She provides the reader with direction in finding true and lasting comfort in Christ. Cornish, who lost her husband of 38 years to lung cancer, encourages widows to use their widowhood for God's glory. Ministry to widows needs to be a priority for Christian communities, and Cornish equips churches, families, and friends to come alongside those mourning the loss of a spouse. *The Undistracted Widow* includes sections to help widows find renewed identity and purpose. Cornish helps readers trust in God, manage emotions, learn from both biblical and contemporary widows, rethink the past, present, and future, and prepare for what's next. Pastors, churches, and others will benefit from practical appendices. Any woman who is grieving the loss of her husband, or who knows of someone in mourning, will find this to be a valuable resource.

**5) How to Survive In a World of Unbelievers, by John MacArthur:** How should Christians conduct themselves in an increasingly secular society? Jesus answered this troubling question on the eve of His death with some of the most poignant, powerful teaching in His entire ministry. During those hours He taught His apostles and, consequently, all believers throughout history, *How to Survive in a World of Unbelievers*. Respected pastor, teacher, and author John MacArthur, plumbs the depths of Jesus' final words of encouragement to us, based on John 13-16. By studying this valuable book, you will find answers to these and other difficult questions:

- How can you remain pure-hearted and spiritually sound in a church seemingly full of hypocrites?
- How do you help your children stay morally pure when they want to "fit in" with school friends who prefer objectionable activities?
- How can you keep your family anchored to Christ in a society that is drifting far away from His teaching on family issues, such as divorce, homosexuality and abortion?
- How do you retain your Christian ethics when your boss asks you to lie or cheat?
- How can you keep your life focused on glorifying Christ in a society that proclaims self, pride, and personal achievement as marks of success?



## Food for Thought

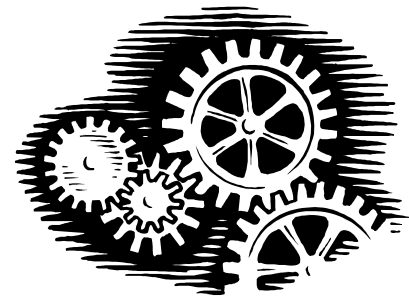
By Pastor Blake Shaw

Plantar Fasciitis! Have you ever heard of it? Toss those two words around for a while and people might start calling you a doctor. Trust me, if you have ever had Plantar Fasciitis, you will never forget the experience. Plantar Fasciitis is a painful inflammation of the plantar fascia, the connective tissue on the sole/bottom surface of the foot. The severity of the pain of Plantar Fasciitis is such that simply getting out of bed and putting your foot on the floor can almost put a person to his knees. Two years ago I experienced Plantar Fasciitis. The inflammation began in mid-December right as the high school basketball season was getting under way. I had refereed about 10 junior high games and then spent a weekend refereeing six high school basketball games. I limped my way through a handful of other high school games, embracing Tylenol and aspirin as my dearest companions. One wintry evening in January while refereeing a game, I made a quick turn to change directions, quickly pushing off the already inflamed foot. Much to my chagrin, I felt a sharp pain shoot through my foot. It felt like a knife had been shoved into my heel. I knew something bad had happened. Thankfully the game was in the second half so I finished the game and limped out of the gym. The next week, the doctor's exams showed a torn plantar fascia, thus requiring surgery. My refereeing season was all but done, though I refereed five more games. Every step I took during the day hurt; I limped around wincing with each step. The surgery went well and over the next couple of weeks I traveled around on crutches. If you have spent time on crutches then you know what happens: Hands hurt, arms hurt, the back hurts, etc. Yeah, I know. Old age has caught up with me. After the crutches were set aside I still needed to wear a very fashionable and specialized boot—a boot that looked like it belonged on Star Wars, not in a church office. Wearing the boot, I also made adjustments to how I walked, putting more pressure on my good foot. Then the hips and knees began to hurt. So it was a joyous day when the doctor said that I could wear my normal shoes.

So what's the point of sharing this? Am I simply seeking to obtain sympathy from you? No way. Not that sympathy is bad, but there are several points I would like to note to challenge you with. First, the Plantar Fascia tissue is not something that is well known. In fact, it's really a no-name part of the body, unless of course, you get Plantar Fasciitis, and then it is on your mind all the time. Second, this seemingly insignificant part of the body becomes pretty critical when it is hurt. In fact, when this insignificant part was hurt and was being treated, many other parts of the body began to struggle as well. The effects of pain that the "insignificant" experienced were far reaching. Third, when the seemingly insignificant was damaged (tore) and the foot (another unattractive, often ignored part of the body) was recovering from surgery, other parts of the body began to suffer as well. Fourth, it took time for the foot to heal.

My guess is that you know Scripture good enough to know where this analogy is taking us. God's Word speaks of believers as being the body of Christ.

**THE COG**  
**COMMUNITY OF GRACE**  
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Romans 12:4 says, "For as in one body we have many members and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another..." Let those words sink in. "...members of one another." As believers in Christ, we are called the body of Christ. First and foremost Christ is the Head of the body. What the Head of the body says is final. The implications of the body concept are many but let me spell out a few:



1. Individualism is not a biblical concept. This worldly idea that: "My faith is my own, so I just live my life and mind my own business and expect others to mind theirs," is simply unbiblical. When you were saved you became part of the body of Christ. Biblically, autonomy and individualism became a foreign concept.

2. Every part of the body is critical. If the whole body is to do the job for which it was created, every individual must do its part. God makes this very clear in numerous passages of Scripture, such as 1 Corinthians 12-14. Ponder this principle for a moment: If you are living in sin, living for self, doing your own thing, not only are you living like someone who doesn't know Christ, but you are also making it such that the body of Christ is not functioning the way Christ intends for it to function.

3. When one part of the body hurts, the rest of the body hurts. That truth is not supposed to turn you and me into some morbidly introspective person or into having some self-defined pity-party where we think, "Yeah, what's wrong with Christians. I'm hurting and why aren't they here ministering to me." But instead, this truth should challenge you to think about whether you are actually ministering to the hurting. (Side note: One of the greatest things you can do when you are hurting is go and minister to someone else because it takes your gaze off your world and puts it on the world of someone else). I really wonder how many believers in Christ would be seeking counseling if other believers were doing what Christ intends for the members of His body to do.

4. Even the insignificant parts of the body are critical to the perfect functioning of the whole. When the plantar fascia was hurting and then torn, many things about the rest of the body stopped, or, at least, did not function at a hundred percent. Next time you think that you are not that important to the body of Christ, remember the plantar fascia.

My friends, we are members of one another. As such, we have a biblical mandate to do things such as: Be devoted to one another; Honor one another; Accept one another; Greet one another; Serve one another; Bear one another's burdens; Submit to one another; and encourage one another. One of the most heart-breaking realities about the church today is how few professing believers actually obey God in these areas. For the next year or so, we will be focusing on the "one anothers" of the New Testament. You will have the opportunity to hear from a variety of people in our church body throughout the year. Our challenge though is that you would take the things you read and not just agree with them (or disagree) but that you would begin to obey your Master-Jesus Christ - and begin to practice the things you read.

All counseling begins with relationship. It really does. Even if you go to a psychiatrist or psychotherapist there is some type of relationship. With true biblical counseling there is relationship as well. In fact, a core distinction of Biblical Counseling is the intensity and the level of relationship between the person seeking counseling and the person doing the counseling. It is the type of relationship that makes true Biblical Counseling totally distinct from other forms of counseling. In Biblical Counseling we believe that the best and most effective counseling relationship is one in which a true, caring relationship is developed. In counseling training we introduce the concept of "Involvement" as a key element of effective counseling.

Think with me for a moment. You have probably heard the story about the Good Samaritan, found in Luke 10. If you know the story, you remember that Jesus was answering the question put before Him, "Who is my neighbor?" In the story Jesus tells about a man who was going down a road and was attacked by robbers. He was beat up by the robbers and left "half-dead." What happens next is interesting. First, a priest comes upon the man who is laying half-dead on the road and the priest passes by, refusing to help. Then, a Levite does the same thing. Of all people who should have stopped to help, shouldn't it have been two very religious men? Yes. But they didn't. Their heart was exposed. They could say all they want about their religiosity and their love for God but the truth about what they really believe and about their love for God was exposed as they left the man to die. The story continues with the scandalizing part when a Samaritan comes along. If you know about the Samaritans and the attitude that the Jews had towards them, then you know that Samaritans were bitterly hated. Amazingly in this story, it is the Samaritan who comes along and stops, and with compassion takes care of the wounds of the man who had been robbed. But the Samaritan doesn't just stop with taking care of the physical

wounds. He gets much more involved. He takes the injured man to an inn where the man can rest. He also provides the finances for the man's care. Jesus used the Good Samaritan as an example of involvement in someone else's life, but there is no greater example of involvement than the Lord Jesus in coming to earth.

Biblical Counseling is about "involvement" in people's lives. Please notice that the Samaritan was moved with compassion. That's just like Jesus Christ. He had great compassion for people who were hurting, who were lost like sheep without a shepherd, who were wore down with the weighty religiosity of the Scribes and Pharisees. The Good Samaritan also teaches us that true involvement means more than just praying for someone. Can you imagine the Good Samaritan saying to the injured man, "I'll pray for you," and then just walking on? That wouldn't have helped. Instead, the Samaritan got involved. It was costly. It cost him time, energy, his own plans/agenda, and it cost him financially. For Biblical Counseling to truly be effective and biblical, then perhaps the Good Samaritan is the one to emulate.

And guess what: You don't have to have a Bible degree, or a certification in Biblical Counseling, or some license from the state of Montana to be involved in people's lives. Biblical Counseling starts with involvement. "But," some may object. "Surely counseling someone requires more than just getting involved in a person's life. Certainly, there are many counseling issues, aren't there, that require a professional?" In short, and we'll complete this thought next month, Biblical Counseling goes beyond getting involved in a person's life. We'll see what it takes to biblically counsel someone in the months ahead, but let me state this: Pastors, churches and the laity have been brainwashed into believing that only psychologically trained professional counselors are competent to deal with serious problems. As we'll note next time - evidence does not support this statement.

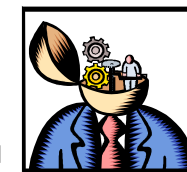
**The Biblical Counseling Committee:**  
 Chairman: Pastor Blake Shaw  
 Vice-Chair: Dr. Dan Gannon  
 Members: Ty Typolt, Pam Gannon, Brad Wright,  
 and Pastor Kelly Jennaway

Q&A  
*continued...*

With this increased awareness, we will desire to handle problems biblically. With a Biblical Counseling committee chaired by Pastor Blake, we are organizing counseling supervisory and educational systems, and providing accountability and training to those gifted to come alongside the pastors/elders as lay counselors. Currently some of those individuals are pursuing NANC certification, which requires increased accuracy in handling the Word of truth. Lay counselors must be full of goodness and knowledge (Rom. 15:14), and must understand and demonstrate progressive sanctification, so they can present God's word specifically to fellow sinners, that the Spirit may effect change in the heart.

As the counseling ministry meets internal needs effectively, our plan is to expand to reach out to the hurting in the surrounding community, obeying the admonition to be "salt and light" (Mt 5:13-14). As in the Faith Baptist Church model in Lafayette, Indiana, counseling can be an evangelistic tool, bringing Christ's word to the unsaved who desperately need Him. Counseling and training could also be offered to other churches to strengthen their members, benefiting the entire body of Christ. God is glorified as non-believers find redemption in Christ, other believers grow and churches are strengthened. In this way, we can pass the torch to the next generation. We can help enable them to more fully understand how to glorify God by committing to His Word as sufficient, using His counseling purpose and methods as wisdom, and displaying His heart of love for a lost and dying world.

**Q: Why is Biblical Counseling in a Local Church?**  
**Part 2 (continued from Edition #5)**



**A:** In Part One of "Why Biblical Counseling in a Local Church", we talked about the fact that God's Word is sufficient for EVERY spiritual problem that man has. We saw that much of the counseling today attaches a unique label to our desires, thoughts and behavior; so that people are deceived into thinking they need a unique solution. But as Solomon so wisely said, "There is nothing new under the sun." When we break down the contents of any psychological label into biblical categories, (e.g.: fear, anger, despair, foolishness) we can see that man's struggles have not changed, and God has still given us "all we need for life and godliness through the true knowledge of Him" (2 Peter 1:3).

In Part Two of this topic, I want to address the question: "Once assurance in the Word's sufficiency is settled, how is Biblical Counseling to be accomplished?" I want to address the reason, methods, and structure of the conviction that Biblical Counseling should be implemented through the local church.

Why must counseling be implemented through the local church? First, counseling is inherently theological. In Matthew 28:18-20, Jesus gave only one command: "Make disciples." Therefore the church's goal should be to see new believers added and to see them become disciples. The Lord's desire for His people, the church, is spiritual maturity (see, Eph 4:11-16; Col 1:28). In Ephesians 4:11-16, Paul makes it clear that the Lord desires strong Christians. Verse 12 speaks of being perfected or matured. Verse 14 indicates that the Lord is displeased if we remain as baby Christians. Verse 16 talks about being "built up" in love. Christians should continually be growing stronger spiritually. At the core, all counseling issues relate to salvation or progressive sanctification and are thus under the auspices of the local church. Even when someone is struggling with a clearly physical issue, their response to life's challenges is a spiritual response and Biblical Counseling can provide compassionate help from God's Word.

A second reason that counseling must be implemented through the local church is that the local church body life assists a struggling person to change and grow (Heb. 3:13). In following the biblical commands for 'one-anothering' in the process of sanctification (1 Thess. 5:11, 14), other believers can surround the counselor and counselee in redemptive community as Godly role models, to give advice and accountability.

A third reason that counseling must be implemented through the local church is that in a church body the person receives consistent messages from the pulpit and other like-minded believers. Confusion results if counsel is different than what is heard from other respected sources. A struggling person is helped by consistent voices all speaking the truth of God's Word.

A fourth reason that counseling must be implemented through the local church is that the church is a body with members having different gifts and functions (Rom. 12; 1 Cor. 12; Eph. 4). Other church members are able to provide comprehensive care, meeting needs with their giftedness—financial, material provisions, friendship (Eph 4:11-16).

Finally, counseling must be implemented through the local church because the church possesses a biblical structure which assures doctrinal purity and accountability systems, with ecclesiastical oversight. When a Christian doesn't live a pure life and refuses to change, the Lord requires the church to discipline that individual to encourage restoration in order to maintain the purity of the church. (Mt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 5.)

The biblical mandate then, is that the local church takes responsibility for counseling its members.

However, there continues to be a hesitation in churches to take on the task because they do not feel adequately equipped and may not desire to become so. Many para-church organizations

have arisen because the church abdicates its responsibility in the area of counseling. This is problematic in that a fee based, free standing system may have little doctrinal oversight, and may exclude many in need of counseling/discipleship because they can't access it or afford it financially. It is also not as effective for those needing intensive accountability from the body.

How can the local church implement Biblical Counseling? 'Counseling' could be defined as 'intensified discipleship' and therefore should be part of a discipleship ministry. Discipleship is simply believers helping each other to grow in Christlikeness, and can involve a variety of methods: pulpit ministry, Sunday school, small groups, various Bible studies, topical studies, AWANA, music, missions, and one-on-one meetings. True discipleship, expressed in any of these forms, is the producing of reproducers, training a person to 'obey all that Christ commanded' and having them go and train another to do the same. As David Powlison describes it, the church could be viewed as a fenced field, within which ongoing discipleship interactions normally occur. In the field with one another, we inquire a lot (Pro. 18:13); we teach a lot (Col. 1:28); we encourage a lot (Heb. 10:25); we pray a lot (Col. 1:9-11); we weep a lot (Rom. 12:15); we love a lot (1 Tim. 1:5); and we open up our lives a lot (1 Thess. 2:8).

But what happens to those who stray outside the fence, get enslaved by sin, struggle with being sinned against, or struggle in their experience of life's pain and tragedies? More intensified discipleship (counseling) is then important to restore the sheep to fruitful joyful service in the field (2 Pet.1:8). The Bible teaches that Jesus had a priority to restore one who wanders:

--Matt. 18:12 says, "What do you think? If any man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go and search for the one that is straying?"

--Paul likewise said in Gal 6:1, "Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness ..."

--James added, (5:19) "My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth and one turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins." When we are called by God to admonish (*noutheteo*) the ones we love, we do it with: humility (Phil. 2:3-5); gentleness (Gal. 6:1); graciousness (Col. 4:6); patience (1 Thess. 5:14); compassion (Col. 3:12); tenderness (Eph. 4:32); thankfulness (1 Thess.5:18); boldness (1 Cor. 16:13); and love (1 Cor. 16:14). We assist growth of individual members in progressive sanctification--encouraging obedience, Godly problem solving, peacemaking, and maturity which can result in strong marriages and families. Counseling in this way glorifies God by assisting people with a critical problem needing more intense discipleship than can practically be provided by other ministries.

Many in today's churches still believe in and avail themselves of secular methods of dealing with life's problems. However, note Isa. 30:1 "Woe to the rebellious children," says the Lord, "Who take counsel but not of Me, and who devise plans but not of my Spirit." Why should they go to broken cisterns when there is the fountain of living water (Jer. 2:12)? Factors influencing their choices may include exposure to worldly philosophies, paucity of help inside the church, or unawareness of available resources.

Here at GBC, our shepherding authority preach and counsel the flock biblically, and train other small group leaders to incorporate Biblical Counseling concepts in the various discipleship venues. Biblical "preventative" courses on marriage, parenting, and finances are offered. Our Resource Center encourages doctrinally sound material. All these methods increase the expectation, capacity, and awareness for us to rely upon God's wisdom rather than worldly wisdom.