

# **Counseling God's Way**

## **II. God's Way in Counseling**

### **Lesson 6 - The Holy Spirit in Counseling**

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[Matthew 10:8](#)

In our study in God's Word in counseling, we are looking at Psalm 19:7-11 and following. We've seen some amazing terms describing the character of the Word of God: perfect, sure, right, pure and clean. There is great character with the Word of God. No wonder it's able to do what it can do.

If we were to contrast for a moment the character and descriptive phrases of psychological theory, by comparison we could use terms like: imperfect, unsure, incorrect, impure, unclean and untrue. This is at the very least, in part even at the best of psychological theory. And when you put it that way, we know the Word of God is perfect, sure, right, pure and clean. Well, the wisdom of man, at its best would be imperfect, unsure, incorrect, impure, unclean, untrue, at least in part. Hardly designed, I would say, to make us race out to hunt it down and integrate it into our counseling from the Word of God. And yet that is what the Church is doing. We're not paying attention to what God is saying in His Word, about His Word, and we've been enamored with the wisdom of man.

At this point another umbrella cliché comes up often and it's another very popular one. You've maybe heard it. Maybe you've said it. I've said some of these along the way, maybe all of them. I haven't kept track and I don't use any of them any more. But I hear them all the time. I've taught an all-weekend seminar and maybe went over ten or twelve of these umbrella cliches and I've actually run into people the very next week and in a twenty minute conversation they used every single one of them on this subject. I mean that's how they dominate the thinking in the church world.

Here's one. It comes something like this—“Yes, Bob, we agree with you that the Word of God is great. It's very important to us too. We're so glad we have it. But you're being kind of rough there, aren't you, on psychological theory? I mean, after all, you've got to be careful that you don't throw out the baby with the bath water.” That is a heavily used cliché.

There are applications of these cliches that are valid. And of course, you know the most valid one. If you've got a baby at home bathing it, you better apply this cliché. When you get rid of that filthy bath water, rescue the baby first. And there are maybe other valid areas—say in the arena of our culture won't endorse spanking children any more. Why?—for many reasons, but one reason is child abuse. “Hey, we'll just get rid of all child abuse. No more physical discipline.” Well, you could say that's throwing out the baby with the bath water. The baby is the value of godly physical discipline. The dirty bath water is the ungodliness of abusing children physically.

It's not that these things don't have any application, but they do not validate using psychological theory in Christian counseling and discipling. That's the point. But this is a biggie, “Don't throw out the baby with the bath water.”

The thinking goes like this: Yeah, sure in psychological theory there's a lot of dirty bath water. There's a lot of foul thinking and theorizing. And let's call it dirty bath water. And we certainly want to chuck it out. We don't want to keep it around church life and use it in ministry. But sift through there. Be careful. There's a baby in there. There're some good things in there. Don't just chuck it all out. You'll throw out the baby with the bath water if you set aside the entire arena of sociological, anthropological and psychological input.

Well, let's think about that a little bit. If there is a baby in that bath water—listen, I've been sifting carefully through that dirty bath water for twenty-five years. Go ahead and throw it out.

There's no baby in there!" Let's give them every possible benefit of the doubt. Let's say there's a bouncy healthy baby sitting there in that hundred thousand gallon tank of filth. Let's say there is a baby there, a real healthy baby. Let's say there is some good stuff there. Ah-ha, you see, that's what I'm saying. If you're going to toss it all aside and you throw that baby out. Oh, no you don't! If there's a baby there, that same baby is already sitting right here. It's in here, in the Bible. If there's anything good there that man needs, it's already here in the Word of God. Why? It is because God has granted us everything pertaining to life and godliness. Why? It is because the Scriptures are able to make us complete, thoroughly equipped unto every good work (2 Timothy 3:17).

Personally, I have been convicted to set aside all of that theoretical input, the whole bit of it. And I don't think I'm losing a baby if it's there. And I don't even care to debate whether there is one or isn't really. The fact that there's dirty bath water there is something that needs to be checked out. And we don't have to stop and sort and sift, because if there is good there, since God has given us everything that pertains to life and godliness, it will be in here. It's in pure living water that you don't have to sort anything out! Like: "Oh, this is good." "Oh, that's okay, use that page," You know? The Bible is good and we just take it all. It's all good.

Another way to evaluate this, if I could draw an infinitely large circle to include all of God's truth and wisdom, and then I could draw a little representative circle that would appropriately and proportionately encircle man's wisdom and so-called discovered truth. What if that little circle overlapped that big circle at a point, where they were saying the same thing? What if they did? And for the sake of argument, again, let's say it does. What if we take the little circle of man's wisdom and truth, so-called, and say, I am going to set that aside. I'm not going to draw on that for life and godliness or for ministry and counseling. Does that leave a little gap in God's big circle? No way! It just meant there was some overlap there. And if there is some overlap there is no shock. Somebody will say, "See they've got something." Well, man is made in the image and likeness of God, fine.

I have a real comforting illustration on that anyway. A broken clock is correct two times every twenty-four hours. So what? You don't grab it and set your whole life by it. "Look, it's right!" That's the way I see those theories. So what if they're right sometimes? Am I supposed to be overwhelmed and awestruck and oh, we've got to weave that into the Word of God. Why?

Don't throw out the baby with the bath water. I say, don't worry about it. Just chuck it all out. If there was a baby there, you'll find that baby where it should be found. Right here in the Word of God, that's what we want to counsel with. We won't look at it just to conserve our time. I mentioned we have far more Scriptures than twelve weeks of study will allow.

In John 5:39-40 ESV, Jesus said,

You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they [the Scriptures] that bear witness about Me, yet you refuse to come to Me that you might have life.

When we minister the Word, let's keep bringing people to the Lord Jesus Christ that they might find life. Let's not use the Word of God just to get principles and procedures and ideas and ways to make things work the way we like them, or make them better or whatever. Let's keep bringing people to the centerpiece of the Word of God.

Jesus said, (John 5:39 ESV) "[Yeah] you search the Scriptures...you think you have eternal life..." in that many will search the Scriptures, but for their own reasons, either to get this principle and to prove that point, or to validate their own preference. But the Lord nailed them. He said, "You are unwilling to come to Me that you might have life."

When we go to the Word let's do it to take people to the Wonderful Counselor. In Him alone will they keep finding, initially and then day by day, the life they need.

Then the concluding verse, Isaiah 55:10-11, is likening the Word of God to rain and snow that comes down and it waters and brings forth life and it doesn't return void. And the Word of God is like that. When water goes out it germinates those seeds and life comes forth. Well, that's what the Word of God does. It doesn't return void.

I was reading that verse one day and I was stirred to begin praying that the Lord would give us a tropical rain forest of spiritual fruit as the Word of God rained upon the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. That's what we need. I love to see travelogues or documentaries about rain forests. You know they are just so lush and well, how about having a spiritual environment in the church like that? So much of the Word just raining on us so everywhere you look there is just growth. Everywhere you look there is greenery, heavenly life, just smothered in life. Well, the Word's like that. It's like rain or snow that comes down, waters and brings forth seed.

That's why we ought to use it in our counseling. We want to see lives fruitful, abounding in life. Let's get the Word of God into them.

How does God counsel us? It is through His Word. But that immediately necessitates the second of the four aspects of God's way in counseling and that is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is required in counseling God's way. It's just theologically or Biblically logical. If God is the counselor and Jesus isn't here and the Spirit is ministering things of Christ, we'd better have the Holy Spirit involved in our counseling. The fact that the Word of God is how God counsels, requires the work of the Spirit.

Let's see that in a number of ways. First, the Holy Spirit, He is another Counselor like Jesus. Remember Isaiah 9:6, Jesus is the Wonderful Counselor.

In Isaiah 11:2, Jesus is described there, the Messiah prophetically.

The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him,  
The Spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
The Spirit of counsel and might,  
The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.

There, the Spirit is linked to the Wonderful Counselor. God guided us in His wisdom and knowledge by the work of the Holy Spirit.

John 14:16-17,

And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, [Key phrase: another Helper] that He may abide with you forever, 'the Spirit of Truth.'

This is one of the titles of the Holy Spirit, "the Spirit of Truth." Jesus is praying to the Father, that the Father would give another Helper. Another of the same kind is the inference from the language, a Helper.

We've made an English word out of this Greek word. We say *parakletos*, referring to the Holy Spirit. This noun is coming originally from the verb *parakaleo*, which is the verb "to call" and the preposition "along" or "beside." He is called alongside to help. Helper. This is sometimes translated Comforter, because it's a coming alongside comforting kind of ministry. He is Helper, Comforter, Intercessor, Consoler, and Encourager. The Amplified, RSV and others translate it here and elsewhere, Counselor. He'll give you another Counselor. This is one of the two New Testament Greek words that can be translated counsel, counselor or counseling. *Parakaleo* is to counsel by comfort.

Along the way, next week I think, we'll come to the other one. *Nouthateo* from which Dr. Adams coined the phrase *nouthetic counseling*; this is counseling by confrontation. You bring those two words together and you have the full picture of New Testament counsel. Counsel by comfort, counsel by confrontation, counsel by grace, and counsel by law. And we'll look more at that as we go along the way. It is a critical issue in itself.

The Father will give you another Counselor. Jesus, the Wonderful Counselor was leaving. "Don't worry, the Father will send another one just like Me, also God, and the One who was upon Me empowering My ministry here. You know, so don't panic. My ministry as Wonderful Counselor will still be available by the work of the Holy Spirit."

John 16:13-14,

However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is mine and declare *it* to you [unfold it, and open it up for you].

The Holy Spirit guides us into all the truth. Takes the things of the Lord Jesus Christ and discloses them to us. The Holy Spirit takes the realities of our Wonderful Counselor and makes them our possession to walk in. This is why counseling God's way must be by the Holy Spirit. He is another Counselor just like Jesus. Look at the Spirit, the Holy Spirit and the truth of God's Word. We just read in verse 13, the Spirit of truth guides us into all of the truth. One of the titles of the Holy Spirit, He is the Spirit of Truth.

Of course, the American church, many have wanted to make Him the spirit of goose bumps. Or the spirit of hyenac laughter. How about the Spirit of truth? The Holy Spirit inspired the truth of the Word of God. He is true. He ministers the truth of God and brings the reality of Jesus Christ to bear on our lives. He'll guide you into all the truth, the truth of the Word of God. Guidance and counseling are so closely linked together.

The Spirit and the truth of God's Word, remember from John 8, the Word is for discipling and liberating. The Spirit must be involved in that, guiding us into that.

John 17:17, the Word and sanctification. The Spirit of the Lord must be involved in that unfolding, enlightening, and sanctifying use of the Word of God. It is critical that the Holy Spirit be fully involved in the counseling ministry. Yes, the Word of God is the critical avenue. God speaks to us His counsel, but not by human ingenuity. Not by my best intellect grasping most

deeply what God has said and then taking it and by my soulish, self-resourced energy, making it work. No, that is not counseling God's way. Yes, the Word of God, but by the work of the Holy Spirit, revealing things in the Word, guiding us through the truth of the Word, and bringing to bear upon us the liberating power of the truth of the Word.

Now let's look at the Holy Spirit in counseling as we counsel and are counseled. Remember in Isaiah 61:1 Jesus said, “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me...” and He began to describe how He would minister. The Spirit of the Lord was upon Jesus to minister the counsel of God.

You know, if we want to counsel in a similar Christ-like way, how are we going to do it? We have to do it by the work of the Holy Spirit. It's not like learning every answer to every struggle, question, or perplexity and get a chapter and verse. And then think we've got the counseling thing nailed. You're missing something. What? God counsels through His Word and I've got all the answers to all the questions? Let me ask you, who is the dynamic behind all of that, you or the Spirit of God? You just easily check your reference list and bop, bop, boom, it's done. Now there's nothing wrong with finding reference points in the Word of God from lists, nothing wrong with that at all. But who are we depending on? Who are we getting the confirmation for what that person needs to hear? Who are we trusting to work through that to touch that life? Sure God counsels through His Word, but not by the letter. Not by just procedures and formulas.

I praise God for those in the church world who are calling us to Biblical counseling. But let's not trade off psychologically infiltrated counseling with letter-of-the-law legalistic counseling, and just say, hey, it's Biblical. Biblical isn't Biblical unless the Holy Spirit's involved. It's unbiblical to just throw thoughts and ideas and chapters and verses at people with no exhorting them to “walk in the Spirit” with us not depending on the Spirit, or with us not being led by the Spirit. As we counsel and are counseled let's do it the way Jesus did. He said, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me to proclaim good news, to set captives free, and to comfort the brokenhearted.” How did Jesus do it? By the Spirit and that is how we're to do it. He's the Wonderful Counselor. If we want to do it like Him, it's got to be by the Spirit.

Ephesians 5:18 says, “...be filled with the Spirit.” Be filled! Those who are counseling, and really those who are seeking counsel, need this, need to be filled with the Spirit. Their lives need to be overflowing with the presence and comprehensive work of the Spirit of God, taking the truth of God's Word and changing their lives with it. For those giving and seeking counsel, we want to counsel like Jesus, let's do it filled with the Spirit.

John 16:7-8 says, “...the Helper [the Counselor, the Holy Spirit]...And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.” This is often critical in the counseling ministry, for those who share counsel, those who receive counsel, need these convictions. They need to be convinced by God of the reality of sin, the availability of righteousness, and ultimate accountability, and judgment before God.

We need conviction of sin to counsel God's way. And the root problem is sin and the root sin is not believing in Jesus, these verses say. It is sin because they wouldn't believe in Jesus. It's often an important convicting issue of the Spirit in counseling.

Man wants to turn everything into a disorder or a disease. “Hey sin! You're inferring I'm doing something wrong! You're inferring I'm accountable to someone. Hey, don't look at me when I beat my wife around. I just have a rage disorder.” Oh yeah? You're into the sin of brutality. That's what it is. Let's call it what it is. How can you get help calling it what it isn't? The Spirit convicts of sin.

But also it says, “of righteousness because I go to the Father.” The Spirit convicts. There’s a way to stand righteous in Christ before God because there’s One who went there before us. In His [Jesus] name we can stand before the Father. There’s hope there and people need that hope of righteousness and righteous access.

Verse 8 says, “...and of judgment.” It is because Satan and all who are without Jesus are going to be judged and condemned. There’s a reality of judgment that’s often critical to bring to bear in a counseling situation. Especially where there is rebellion, self-centeredness, or hard-heartedness.

The Word of God desires everyone to learn to live under the grace of God. And you know my passion, some of you, for the grace of God. We have a whole course here on it. And it’s my favorite theme in the Word of God to teach about Jesus Christ, the grace of the Lord Jesus.

But the law, conviction of sin, and the need for righteousness, and the inevitability of judgment, that’s what tutors us to the grace of God. And often in counseling situations, people can’t rely on, walk in, depend on, or draw on the grace of God because they won’t face these issues of their own rebellion. God gives grace to the humble, not the rebellious, self-sufficient, “I’ll do it my way, thank you.” This is often an important part of counseling, *Nouthateo*. Bring that truth of God right up in their face! This is right. What you’re doing is wrong, you know. That’s the heart of nouthetic counsel, counsel by confrontation. That’s a critical part of Biblical counseling, but it’s for the rebellious.

It says in 1 Timothy 1:8-9 that the law is for the rebellious. And often people who are seeking counsel are in rebellion. What do you do, lay the law on them? Absolutely, Amen! It’s even the grace of God that would provide a remedy that can take them from rebellion to a candidate for overflowing grace. And it’s the law of God that softens those hard hearts.

The Holy Spirit brings those convictions. The Holy Spirit is the critical agent for counseling.

In Galatians 5:16 -23, it’s a long section. We won’t take time to go through it, except to comment on it. I think it’s quite familiar to most of us. It’s about the contrast between the deeds of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit. Oh how that comes strongly to bear in counseling situations so often. So often, people describe what’s going on and you’re listening and you’re going, “Oh my goodness, all I hear are deeds of the flesh.” You know, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry and sorcery.

We are talking about the *pharmakeia* aspect here, drugs. And boy, what a subtlety of the enemy to make medication our hope! Now we’ll get to medication later. Medication is part of the common grace arena of God’s providential and merciful work. It’s not automatically ruled out. The big arena we’re warning about is philosophical psychology, which, by the way, dominates the psychological field. We’ll talk more about that but that’s the warning area. True medical aspects are not prohibited by the Word of God, but we’ll get to that too. That’s a whole issue in itself, this *pharmakeia* thing. The answer is in the drug? Medication isn’t forbidden for Christians. We’re not Christian Science counselors.

Someone said to me one day, “Counseling God’s way, man that sounds like Christian Science taken into the counseling room.” I said, “Wait a second. The reason you think that is you are not considering the difference between common grace things like medication, aspirin, that fall on the

just and the unjust alike.” You know, Jesus said if the sick need a physician... Luke was the beloved physician.

And we are not forbidding that medical arena. It is the philosophy that we're warned to stay away from the predominate influence of psychology which is philosophical thinking. Who is man? Why is he here? How do you help him? Where is he going? That's philosophy. That's not medicine. That's not science. Science shows creation the way God made it. Philosophy is man's guesses at what the unseen is all about, inside man and beyond.

So the hope that everything is in the pill or the medication or the prescription, that's a false hope. And this includes even the witchcraft involvement, kind of like magic and all of that. And they you prescribe medications and people get on drugs. Some of these great theoreticians like Freud were into cocaine. So you've got a man on drugs suggesting that the hope might be drugs. And the church is saying, “Hey, we can use that.” Yeah, somewhere there's a baby in there, you know!

Then you step a further step out and you've got Jung, who was demonized. He said he learned all of his theories from Philemon. You say, four hundred theories from a two page book? He said Philemon was his spirit guide. Jung is the most popular theoretician in the American church world because he's a spiritist and people think therefore he's spiritual. The man was demon possessed.

From *pharmakeia*, from drugs, witchcraft, to doctrines of demons is where the counseling of the church has come. It's astounding. It is flabbergasting, really. It's time to blow a trumpet. Someone said to me, “What do you think one man can impact?” Nothing, but God using one can do great things. And He might use one other and one other. And even in Elijah's day He had 7,000 others and Elijah thought he was the only one. So man, I don't mind working alone with God! I'd rather stand alone with God than with the cheers of the popular church world. Not to be nasty. Not to be self-righteous. Not to be you're wrong and I'm right, but just to say, hey, brothers and sisters, let's get back here, and here is back to Christ. Let's get back to the Wonderful Counselor.

Now regarding the deeds of the flesh or the works of the flesh, this is so often what people are caught up in. In Galatians 5:20, it goes right from “sorcery” to “...hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, and dissensions.” We might think that you don't put those on the same list with adultery and idolatry. Oh yes you do, if you're God. It is all the same. It's of the world, the flesh and the devil. It's all destructive. It all is related to the flesh resource or the flesh wanting to use it. And often people need to see the difference between the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit. How are you going to live a life out of your own resources? Here's what you'll produce listed in verses 19-21, right here. I can tell you, you'll fit here somewhere, if there's an option. But by the work of God in your life and the light of the Word of God, you can live a life characterized by the fruit of the Spirit. In other words, a character of life that only the Holy Spirit can produce in and through a person. These are critical passages for counseling. Critical passages and it's all about the Holy Spirit being involved.

In 1 Corinthians 2:12-13 are very strategic verses, for this day and age. “Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God...” We Christians have received not the spirit of the world. That's the spirit that Freud and Jung and all the rest walk in and all the unsaved. Theirs is the spirit of flesh and the influence of the enemy. That's not the Spirit we've received. That's the spirit we've been freed from. But we've received the Spirit who is from God, the Holy Spirit, for what end or for what reason? It is “...that we might know the things

that have been freely given to us by God” (1 Corinthians 2:12). One reason we've been given the Holy Spirit, among many great reasons is that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.

The necessities of life, things man must have, they are the freely-given things of God. To put it another way, they're the gifts provided by the grace of God, the freely-given things of God like forgiveness, new life, hope and power to transform. You can't buy those things. You can't conger them up on your own. They're the freely-given things of God. They come in Christ with the grace of God. And the Holy Spirit lets us know these things, understand them, rely upon them, stand in them, and live by them.

Verse 13 says, “These things we also speak...” We have plenty to say as the children of God, things to speak about. The church has become so intimidated by the world.

They say, “You know, if you've got a mild case of disappointment, discouragement, or day dreaming, we might be able to help you here at the church. I'm not saying we can. We might be able to, but if you've got anything serious, I mean, like a disorder or a bad habit that you can't get free of, you know, I'm sorry, you'll have to go out there where the experts are. I mean, you know, we aren't experts, we're just Christians. But here take this card. Dr. So-and-so, he can help you. He understands man and you're blessed because he's a Christian too. And he'll give you Christian psychotherapy and he can help you if you have any serious kind of problem.”

That's the way the church has been functioning. We're intimidated. It's like we have nothing to say. Hey, we can teach you a few hymns, but we can't change your life. I mean, let's be practical. That's not right!

“These things we also speak.”

We've got plenty to say. We can sit and talk with people about the freely given things of God. Things Freud couldn't even imagine, let alone produce. Things Jung, even in his deepest pits of demonic insight, couldn't think of or come up with, the freely-given things of God. We've got plenty to talk about to help people.

“These things we also speak, [but notice] not in words which man's wisdom teaches.” We've got plenty to talk about when it comes to man's needs and God's remedies. But we are not to be speaking about them in words which man's wisdom teaches.

I think it's sad. I think it's quite heart breaking, the way the church is picking up the vocabulary of the world when we talk about man's problems and what are the right remedies. And everywhere you go in the church now, people are talking about dysfunctionality, or co-dependency, or self-esteem, or victimization. None of these terms came out of Biblical study. None of these terms came out of Biblical theology. Relating truth with truth to get the big picture of God and life and what's wrong and how it can be made right. None of those came through the path of the Word of God.

We've got plenty to talk about, but let's not use words which man's wisdom teaches. Well then, what do we do? What kind of words do we use?—“But which the Holy Spirit teaches.” See that? “These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Spirit teaches.”

Think of it for a minute. Think of the unbelievably glorious vocabulary God has. I hate to see the church acting like the world needs to coach God in His vocabulary. He didn't know how to tell

His kids about what's really it, you know, so the world tells us now. It's dysfunctionality, that's the issue. And a support group is the hope. Co-dependency is the problem and making a life for yourself, that's your answer, you know. In all these things, my goodness, what's happened to us? Think of the great vocabulary God has. None of these words really fit. They're weak. They're anemic. They don't precisely hit it. They don't offer hope. When God talks about the problem, He talks about things like sin, condemnation, alienation, separation, spiritual deadness. I mean, God just nails it. Rebellion, self-centeredness, I mean, God just hits it right on the head! Then He talks about preparation for hope and help. And He talks about humility, conviction, contrition, repentance. Boy, God just nails it.

Then He talks about the remedy itself—salvation, justification, sanctification and someday glorification—all along the way the possibility of transformation. He talks about identification with Christ. He talks about resurrection from the dead. Wow! What a Counselor! What a vocabulary, so why go into these anemic, earth-bound terms? It doesn't fit. It doesn't pay heed to the Word of God. “These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.” See, that's the issue. God wants to compare spiritual with spiritual. People have spiritual problems and God, by His Spirit wants to compare spiritual remedies for that. People are in spiritual death and God wants to offer spiritual life, not psychological jargon.

Psychological theory is comparing carnal with fleshy, self with soulish. It doesn't get out of the circle of death and helplessness and bankruptcy. God's vocabulary is talking about spiritual things applied to spiritual issues. That's why it's so profound, so life-changing.

Last, 2 Corinthians 3:17-18. We're talking about the Holy Spirit now in the counseling ministry. “Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty.” Oh, people need to be set free. Well, the Lord is the life-giving liberator and where the Spirit of the Lord is, where the Holy Spirit is given room to work, there is liberty.

The people who come to us for help need to be set free, there needs to be a work of the Spirit of God. Sure, He'll use the truth of the Word of God, but it's the Spirit using the truth, giving it clarity, conviction and power.

How much liberty? Liberty unto transformation, verse 18—“But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

We come open faced, humbly, without hiding, to the mirror of the Word of God and seek the heavenly reflection of the Lord Jesus out of it, the glory of the Lord. While gazing upon that wonder revealed in the Word, the glory of the Lord Jesus, we are being transformed. There's transforming power in the revelation of Jesus Christ and His glory in the Word. We are being transformed—into the same image. We're being made to look more and more like Him, to think, and behave, by being conformed to His image from glory to glory. It is one area to another, one degree to another. How does that happen? It is “just as by the Spirit of the Lord.” The Spirit of the Lord is revealing the glory of Christ, stirring us to yearn to be like that. To know Him, is to be changed unto His image, humbled by it, encouraged by it and the Spirit of God reshaping us into that likeness.

Boy, there's powerful counseling right there. Just take people into the Word, encourage them to be humbly open-faced with God. Not hiding. Not pretending. Just look for the glory of Jesus in here and be willing to let the Spirit remake you more and more like Him. Boy, there's a whole

counseling ministry in itself. Just when people come, do that with them every time they come for counseling.

There is this tragic misconception in the church. We just don't have that much to offer, I guess. Oh yes, we can get them forgiven. Praise God. We know Freud can't do that. I think. He can't, can he? No, I don't think so. But you know, we don't have all that much to offer, so we've got to refer them out. Or the new way—let's train our own and bring the theories in, you know. Look what we have! We can sit down with people and by the work of the Spirit of God, let them see the glory of the Lord in the Word and encourage them to humbly, openly face that, asking the Spirit of God to change them like that. Why, there's not a theory of man that even begins to measure up to that. That's the power of the Spirit of God at work.

In conclusion, there's another umbrella cliché. It goes something like this: “Life's problems are much too complex today. Maybe in the Bible days the Bible was sufficient to help. But the Bible, the Holy Spirit and all that, life's problems are way too complex. We need a much more sophisticated answer.”

What a pathetic, heart-breaking underestimation of the person and work of the Holy Spirit. There's nothing too complex for the Holy Spirit. Okay, so life probably is more complex. Maybe even in mega-doses of complexity. But so what?! Our Counselor is Jesus and His ministry is born to us by the work of the Holy Spirit. Is anything too complicated for God? Can you imagine God sitting on the throne of grace saying, “Oh it went so well for thousands of years, but I never imagined the twentieth century would come. Oh, where will the help come from? It's like Freud delivers God now. Jung does what the Holy Spirit can't do.

We have resources and a Counselor that go out of sight. I think God wants to build our faith in that truth. Let us receive it and live by it and just start giving it away to people. That's what will make us counselors like the Wonderful Counselor.

Let's pray together.

*Lord, we thank You so much. We just love Your Word because it's You speaking and it's where we're getting to know You as You're revealed there. We love the Spirit of the Lord, teaching us, guiding us, there to fill us. He is another Counselor just like Jesus carrying on that wonderful ministry. Lord, may we counsel this way, using the means of the Word, empowered by the Spirit of God. Let that be the counsel we receive, the counsel we give. And Lord, revive us. Reform us in the church. May we not look to other directions. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.*