

Counseling God's Way

V. Major Threats to Counseling God's Way

Lesson 22 - Turning to Worldly Counsel

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[Matthew 10:8](#)

Worldly Threats to Counseling God's Way. We've looked at the primary, basic threat and that is forsaking the Lord as our Wonderful Counselor. If we were not doing that, if we were not turning away from Him, if we were not indicating that we don't think He's enough, that He's not wonderful enough, we wouldn't have to worry about this second major threat, because the second major threat is turning to worldly counsel. If we felt the Lord was the Wonderful Counselor we would not be interested in the counsel of the world. But we have been turning, just like Israel turned from their fountain of living waters, we've been turning from our Wonderful Counselor, forsaking Him, drifting from Him, neglecting Him and His Word, underestimating Him and His Word. And of course that leads people to the second thing: turning to worldly counsel, allowing the infiltration of worldly wisdom of psychological theory and even the things that spawn like the twelve-step self-help movement and self-help literature and all of that, just to come rolling into the church.

It is related to our first heading: Turning to Broken Cisterns. See when Israel forsook the fountain of living waters, they went to dig up some place to gather water, something to live by, religiously speaking. They hewed for themselves cisterns. That is, man-made water systems. Broken cisterns though, that can hold no water. They are flawed systems or defective systems, there at the end of Jeremiah 2:13. There are holes in the systems of thought.

If you have never read Richard Ganz (G-A-N-Z), He wrote a book called *Psychobabble*. We've used it at times for one of our texts at different campuses. He gives some of his testimony and I have heard some of it in person. We won't get into it here, but it's beautiful and rather extended. But he was a godless theoretician in a psychiatric wing of a big hospital in New York, an agnostic Jew, who was wise in the wisdom of man. And he said he was sitting one day with all the big moguls, the brain trust, talking about patients and who is going to try what theory with which one. And he said right in the middle it this thought came across his mind: "This stuff is all a bunch of baloney." He was an absolute chief baloney slicer. And he saw what he was dealing with.

It wasn't long—he was off on vacation. It was one of the little *L'abri* outposts in Europe that Dr. Schaffer had started and he found out that *Yeshua* was *Meshiach* and gave his life to Christ and came back. And then his story of entering that hospital again and starting to witness and see patients saved and lives made whole. You know what happened? He got fired. They told him, "We're just here to theorize on these people. You're making whole new creatures, this will never work, you know." They gave him a choice. Shut up or leave. Either keep your religion out of the workplace or go. And he said, "Well, that's an easy decision. I'm out of here." Of course they had to give him thirty days' notice, so he had a beautiful closing evangelism program. There are holes in the systems of thought and broken cisterns that can hold no water.

There is a major tragic deception taking place in the church world today, even in the body of Christ. Not just bizarre charismania, but the wisdom of man. In fact, when I was pastoring in Irvine, one of our men in the church was getting very troubled emotionally. His doctor sent him to a psychiatric hospital. And I went to visit him there. And they gave me the card and do you know who operated it? TBN. This was in 1983. It's only gotten worse since then.

It's amazing you think that people that talk about the Holy Spirit all the time would be totally apprehensive to human wisdom. But no! Which is kind of a tip-off that a lot of that Holy Spirit talk is carnal involvement, carnal hype. Because the carnal message of psychology doesn't seem to conflict with it at all, see. When a person really filled with the Spirit wants to walk by the Spirit, they're going to be increasingly sensitive to psychological theory as being not according to the mind of Christ.

There is a major tragic deception taking place in the church world. And by that I mean all of Christendom. All of the organizations and religious operations and church buildings, denominations, that identify themselves with Christ. Somewhere in that is the church, the body of Christ. In some churches it's almost all the body of Christ and little, very little religious Christendom. Some churches it is almost all religious Christendom, hardly a believer in the place. And in some places it is nothing but the world using the name of Jesus for religious ends.

One of the reasons I left pastoring a local church—I pastored a total of twenty-five years in two different churches. And really thought I'd do that until the Lord came, even if I lived to be as old as my dad, 84. But the Lord burdened me so heavy with this issue and I began to teach and warn our own flock and equip them. And word began to get out what was going on there and pastors everywhere wanted to hear on this subject. And the more I began to travel a little and teach I realized that there is a desperate need out there. Desperate need! Even good men that aren't trying to compromise the message need to hear a word. Because they've never had an opportunity it seems, because the whole church world is so sold out to the wrong direction. It is almost like wherever they got trained they didn't get warned on this or shown the true and living way of the Wonderful Counselor.

There is a major, tragic deception going on in the church world. Yes, it is subtle often in its issues. But it is a deadly delusion. It involves shifting our attention, our hope, our focus from the Lord Jesus Christ our Wonderful Counselor. Shifting our love, our allegiance, our confidence, our expectations from God to man. It is shifting them from Christ to self; shifting them from the Holy Spirit to the resources of the flesh; shifting our love, allegiance, attention, confidence, expectation from heaven to earth. It is shifting such important issues from God's wisdom to man's wisdom. And maybe at the bottom of all of it is this shifting of allegiance, confidence, hope and faith from the revealed truth of the Word of God to the speculative theories and myths of man.

I don't even know how to state it in terms that begin to do justice accurate to the breadth and depth and degree of this major deception.

Could this be part of the last apostasy prophesied in the Word of God? Oh, absolutely it could be. I'm not saying it absolutely is, but it absolutely could be. I mean, it just fits. All the way from the doctrines of demons to the day coming when people would not have any time for truth. They just want what works, what makes you feel good, what will get a crowd, what will get money, what will get you a big name in the religious world.

Personally it pounds on my heart like a sledge hammer every week, sometimes days upon days. And I believe it is an ache on the heart of God. We are His people. He doesn't want us off into contaminated thinking and behaving and theorizing. He wants us just gulping streams of living water. That is all He wants. And He is that fountain. And here we are turning to broken cisterns, out digging up someplace to collect something that looks like water that we might live on. And the cisterns are broken. They can't hold anything anyway.

In 1 Timothy 1:3-4 is a warning to stay away from myths and fables.

As I urged you when I went into Macedonia—remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine, nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification, which is in [or by] faith.

We are not to teach strange doctrines, other doctrines, things foreign to the Word of God. We are to stay away from them, not integrate them, but expose and avoid them. We are not to pay attention to myths or get all excited about invented theories and imagined systems. It causes disputes. Or it could be translated, "speculation," which of course leads to disputes. It sure fits this matter of unverified theories instead of absolute truth.

See the administration of God or godly edification is in faith. It is by faith. The way God redeems lives, reclaims lives, builds lives, sets lives free, makes lives whole, is all by faith. Trusting in God and trusting in His revealed truth. Not in ideas and theories and applications and programs and support groups and on and on, with strange doctrines, myths, speculations. They are things from Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung and others. We are to stay away from these things. Things like psychoanalysis. The theory that the way you help people is you analyze their psyche. You dig into them and you get them thinking and opening up. It is a deadly theory. It is a myth that that's the way you help people. That is the way you bury people. That is the way you get them totally self-absorbed. That is not a great hope, it's a great curse.

And the counselor asks the one who comes for help, "What's going on in your life? What are you struggling with?" And they share it. And the counselor says, "What do you think about that? What do you feel about that?" Well, this and that. "Well, tell me what is really going on down inside." Just driving in, you know. "Let's get inside you." And everybody is trying to get in touch with something in there, the little child within or the sleeping giant within. How about the carnal, fleshy sin within? What are we going to find in there if we aren't looking for Christ?

He is our hope of glory. Not self-analysis. And boy when people start opening up on what is going on inside, what is the trend? You go, "Wow, we better find out what caused that." Well, the way you find out what caused that is you go to the Word of God. "Oh, no, no. We go back into your history. What have you gone through? Tell me about your traumas, your fears, your dreams. Tell me about your mom. Tell me about your dad. Tell me about your grandparents, your playmates. Let's find out who messed you up like this. We all know it wasn't you. Who did this to you? What forces shaped you like this?" And it is in and back, which are the two opposite directions of the kingdom of God. The Scriptures make it obviously clear, the directions of the kingdom are forward, looking upward. This kind of counsel is inward, looking backward. They minister questions. They serve up questions. They produce questions, not answers. It really is the wrong direction.

Philippians 3 and Colossians 3 give the two directions of the kingdom of God.

Philippians 3:14, "Forgetting the things that are behind, I press ahead for the upward call of God in Christ Jesus," verses 12 through 14 point forward and upward.

Colossians 3:2-3, "Seek the things above, not the things that are on this earth." This is a heavenly mindset, not an earthly one.

It is so sad to take people in and back. In me dwells no good thing. Take me to Christ, please! Take me back, I can't live there. Today is the day of salvation. Not only initially, but everyday thereafter. Where God works is today. People think that you are nothing but a product of everything you have experienced on earth up until now. You might build a theory that is convincing in the world. That doesn't apply at all to those of us who are in Christ Jesus. We are not a product of everything we've experienced up to now. We are new creatures made new in Christ. Colossians 3:3, you died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. Don't take me inside.

Don't take me back in my human life. Take me to Christ for that heavenly life. Show me that real life that I can draw on today.

Sure things back there might be on the mind today. And if they are then they're not back there, they are today. Just don't go digging back there. If you remember something back there, God wants to deal today with it. Maybe someone you wronged that you are to go and say “I'm sorry.” Or someone wronged you and you need to offer forgiveness. If the Spirit convicts you that's something God is doing today. Not back there, today! But to go digging for things—“We will never get this ironed out until we can explain every facet of what brought this to pass.” What a trap! You talk about jumping into an ocean of spaghetti knotted together where you can't find the beginning or the end—and it's all the flesh. And you think you're going to find a life in that?

It's like handing people a shovel and saying, “Hey, let's go dig in the graveyard and find a life for you.” You have been buried with Christ. Let's be looking upward. God's work is this very next step, as I look upward. That's the kingdom developing. That's the work of God. It's the very next thing I say now with the Lord. It's the next thing I do. It's the next person I relate to. Today is the day of salvation. God help us from this psychoanalytical theory that has swallowed up Christians.

One man at Irvine went off for counsel, his marriage was troubled a bit. They gave him a woman counselor, an absolute no-no. She counseled he leave his wife temporarily to get in charge of his life, find himself and develop a life and then build that marriage back together. That was absolutely foolish counsel. Nowhere in the Word of God would that be validated. He did it and of course before you know it he's filed for divorce and he's running around with another woman. And now eleven years later, the only real difference is, instead of going to the therapist once a week, he goes three times a week. In and back, it's endless. It's endless. It's like a bottomless pit. What a trap!

Is the enemy clever? Let's see—life in Christ and hope is forward and upward. “Okay let's see, let's find a reasonable overwhelming way to take people inward and backward and we'll rob, kill and destroy as we do it.” It is astounding.

The amazing thing is, if you offered a study like this throughout the general church world in America, the remnant of a few who would be excited and interested would break your heart. No, no we're totally scheduled up with our therapist, we don't have time for something like this. Plus, it is going to contradict everything we are trying to build.

I don't despair in it. My heart is broken and heavy every time I think on it. I don't despair in it. God rescued me from the pits. I was sure going the wrong way. And everywhere God sends me, I see God rescue others. So in that sense I am encouraged. And who knows how many more He will rescue in the days ahead. And who knows how many more He will send out. Who knows how many more pastors will share the truth with their own congregations. I love to share this with pastors, because pastors who are sensitive to the Word of God, not trying to protect a vested interest or keep the party line for their seminary or their denomination, they receive this word gladly. We get calls from pastors all the time who are teaching these things diligently to their congregations. So I'm encouraged. But I tell you, it absolutely is a David and Goliath issue.

There is a dear attorney friend who sends wonderful books out to pastors all the time. I was his pastor for three years. I can see him praying right now. “Oh, God use Davids, those burdened on these issues that so many care not about. Use Your Davids to slay this mighty giant, this Goliath of psychology in the American church.” That's a great prayer. Look how God answered that prayer once long ago.

There is no human way in the odds you could ever figure to have a major impact. But whether you have little or large, you have what God allows you to have and what others will open up to. But I do not believe that it has to stay in those proportions and that Goliath can fall. Oh there will always be some. Even if he falls, they will just lie down with him and they won't leave him, you know. "We were raised on this, we will die on it." Well you've been dying on it all your life.

Like there was at the Reformation. Did that set aside Roman Catholicism? No, not at all. In fact, Rome is coming back. They're back. They're coming to the church. They're signing together. And you look at who's signing and you go, he signed? He knows the Word of God, why did he sign with an apostate church? "Oh we are going to get back to mother church. We are all going to be one."

There'll always be those who will not let go of the lie and always compromise the truth. But there could be multitudes that want to come out of that stuff before Christ comes back. But personally I don't care if it's ten or ten million. I don't want it to change the course that God has put my heart on. We are not doing it for proportions and numbers. We are doing it for the sake of the Lord and for the love of the truth. And for the love of souls that are just getting ripped off every way you look. Psychoanalysis—what a myth! What a strange doctrine to bring into the church.

The subconscious mind, that's is another one. People are controlled by the subconscious mind. You know, things they aren't thinking that are in there that control their lives. Again, you might build a case like that for a dead world that has no life. And you know, the enemy is just using what has happened to pull them around by the chain. Okay, maybe so. But it has nothing to do with new life in Christ. The whole thing in Christ is learning to think and walk with the mind of Christ, not unlocking the subconscious. "You know, if we could just get into what you're thinking when you aren't thinking, we could set you free, make you whole." It's a myth! It's a trap! It's a distraction. It's a substitution. If I need help, and you are going to counsel me, I will tell you this, "Please share with me the mind of Christ." Show me how I should be thinking. Share that new mind with me—that is what I want to hear! Don't try to delve into me to find things I don't think about that dominate my life because I don't flush them out in the open. That is so humanistic. It is making my un-thought realm of my mind more powerful than the mind of Christ. It is not right.

In 1 Corinthians 2:16 it says, "But we have the mind of Christ." And we can learn to think that way as we are in the Word of God and the Spirit of God is teaching us how the Lord thinks on things. Everything now is mental illness. It is never called ungodly thinking anymore. Everything is sick behavior, it's not called sinful behavior.

Dr. William Playfair wrote the book, *The Useful Lie*, a profound book. The useful lie is this that people's problems aren't sins, they are disorders and pathological problems or physiological disorders. And everything is redefined from sin to sickness. *The Useful Lie*. Oh, it is being bought hook, line and sinker, through the world and even in the church.

Now this doesn't mean that those who want to counsel God's way deny the physiological side. It's not that we say nobody can ever have a chemical imbalance. We are just saying that everyone doesn't have one, you know. Sure, we're body, soul and spirit and the body can affect how you think. You know, if you get physically sick you don't think clear or feel good. That's fine. God made us that way. There is nothing wrong with that. We can acknowledge that. And counseling God's way doesn't even rule out medication, but it sure says that medication is not man's hope. And it has almost become man's hope. Everyone has an imbalance and everyone gets a

prescription. That is how you counsel today. Prozac is the great deliverer really. Not the Holy Spirit. Not the fruit of the Spirit, but the moderating impact of this mind-altering drug. It is scary!

We can acknowledge the medical side. True medicine, again would just reveal how God made creation, chemicals, and man, and all of that. Nothing wrong with that, though I tell you, it baffles the mind of man even when he tries to get into it. But we don't deny that aspect.

This is not Christian Science brought into the counseling arena. It's not that at all. It's just the sorting out of the difference between sin and true sickness, between philosophy and science and especially between the truth of God and the guesses of man. That's what it's all about.

And sure those who have some understanding of physiological things—If you're counseling someone who's in bizarre behavior, there's nothing anti-biblical to say, "The sick need a physician. I think you should get a physical exam." There's nothing wrong with that. That's not anti-biblical.

But the problem they face is going to be one of two things, physiological or spiritual, Biblically speaking. It is physiological or spiritual or a combination of the two. You know what it is not going to be?—psychological and that imaginary third area has usurped the whole treatment of man these days. How? It is by sending people to psychiatrists—who are philosophers—but who also have an MD degree. Which means what? They can prescribe medication. They are the new high priests. It is witchcraft, it really is. Drugs, sorcery, it is witchcraft. And these great high priests of psychotherapy, they're the philosophers who can give drugs.

And again, it's not saying that medication is evil. The aspirin falls on the just and the unjust alike; it can work just as well with one as the other. It's the common grace of God. That is fine, but our hope isn't there. The answer to everything isn't there. It takes the wisdom of God if you are going to even touch in those areas. And godly people who know the physiological side can work together with spiritual counselors if there might be a physiological problem. But it is even harder to track those things down. Even there the Lord often throws you on Himself.

My wife's had migraine headaches from the time I started to travel and speak. What a coincidence! She never had them in almost fifty years of life before that and she's had them continually since then. Now we have prayed for her, laid hands, and anointed with oil. We sought the Lord. She has gone to doctors and even the doctors are totally baffled. There may be a physiological cause. They can't find it. Where are we you left to? The Lord. "Lord, You would have to heal her directly, or if You are going to use an instrument, we haven't found any wise enough." But I tell you, we don't believe our hope is the prescription. It is in the Lord Jesus Christ. And maybe someday there will be someone God will use to show a physiological cause. We may find out when we get to heaven, it was nothing but spiritual warfare all the way along. Who knows? Only the Lord does.

But it is not, "Oh no, medication!" It is just that's not our hope. And the world and the church are turning like that to it now. In fact, there are no tests anymore. It's usually a prescription by trial and error, when a troubled person comes in.

I'll tell you a story. Man in our church in Irvine, when I was pastoring there with the saints, had a troubled marriage. His wife wasn't a believer. She wanted him to go to her therapist. Well, he was so clear on these issues. "Are you kidding? There's no hope there. Let the dead bury the dead. Let the blind lead the blind." But she persisted and he said to me one day, "You know, I was thinking of going to my wife's therapist." He says, "You know me, Bob. I don't think there's

an ounce of hope there. I just want to show my wife. I'm willing to do whatever, you know. I don't have all the answers. I want to see this marriage...." I said, "I don't have any trouble with that at all. That person may need you to visit them, you know."

So he made an appointment. He goes to this therapist, a lady. And she says, "Tell me a little about yourself and the marriage." And he talked a few minutes. And it's less than fifteen minutes and she goes, "Thank you. That's enough. I can see what the problem is." He goes, "Oh, what is the problem?" She says, "You are clinically depressed." He scoots up on the front of his seat and says, "I beg your pardon. The joy of the Lord is my strength." And he was a man of joy too, in spite of his difficulties at home. She said, "No, no, no. I know these things." And she starts writing. And he goes, "What are you writing there?" She says, "Well, I'm writing you a prescription." He leaped to his feet. He said, "I've been here fifteen minutes. You've never met me before. You know nothing of my medical history. You haven't taken one test. And you're prescribing medication for me?" It scared her to death. Nobody had ever been such a heretic in front of her. Now, she knows he's deluded as well. She was not a high priestess to him.

And I'm not saying everyone out there in the counseling field, in the world or the church, is doing that. But that it is the tendency, prescription by trial and error. "How you feeling? Try this." You come back next week, "How're you doing?" "Oh, not much better?" "Well then, let's try this." The hope is in man's theories and man's medical products. Again, we are not closing our eyes to the reality of the physiological, but any way you look at it you need God at work in it.

Strange doctrines in the church. Here's another myth. Here's a major one. Here's a biggie. This is one of the strangest doctrines that ever hit the church. We can call it the myth of self-love. Matthew 22 shows us how it gets into the church, by twisting and perverting the Scriptures. By the way, men who have written in the church on this self-love issue that we've got to learn to love ourselves, usually bring it into the church by taking a verse, a passage like this in Matthew 22 and then distorting it.

Matthew 22:36-40,

Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.'

A term for God's revealed word in those days—"all the Law and the Prophets."

Now, so often, to bring this self-love myth into the church, this passage is read and then here's what follows: "Now we all know we don't love ourselves the way we should. So how can we love others the way we love ourselves? We don't even love ourselves right. So we've got to get out there and start learning how to love ourselves. So we can then love others the way we have now learned to love ourselves and then we can get around to loving God, the tougher project."

That is the thinking. That is the popular exposition of this passage in the church world today. I first heard it in 1967 when I was a youth pastor at the Evangelical Free Church in Orange, California. Took the high school group to a Christian retreat center and a part-time professor at Fuller Seminary, where I was attending at that time before I went out to Dallas. We had this passage or a parallel one and that was the bridge in, "You've got to learn—you know that we don't love ourselves the way we should." You can tell that to almost any group of people in the

American church world—they are probably discouraged, frustrated, lack of fulfillment, and immediately they go—"he's right!" You know, they interpret all of that frustration as a lack of self-love.

Now, obviously from many things we have looked at in the Scriptures, this is a perversion of the Word of the God. But if we just limited our evaluation of that myth to just this passage, look how impossible it is to come to that conclusion. Two major problems with that teaching right in its own context. Number one, how many commandments did Jesus say are here in this teaching? Two. This self-love myth says there are three here. The third one is you've got to learn to love yourself. No, no. Jesus said there are two here. In fact, He said on *it* hang all the revealed word of God. There is nothing left to hand on an imaginary unspoken third commandment. So right there this whole myth is gone, if we just pay attention to the Word.

You know, there's a worse perversion of this context that not only adds a third commandment that isn't there, but it totally reverses the priority. If you read this passage, what do you think is the primary thing Jesus is sending out people to concentrate on? Love God! This new teaching sends people out what? It is learning to love themselves! It is astounding how popular this message is in the church. Well because there's so much carnality, so much self in the church. So we love it. "Oh yeah, oh man. I don't have to deny myself? I don't have to take up my cross? There is no cross of discipleship for self. You mean I can go on a self-love trip? Oh man, let's do it together. Let's become strong Christians together learning how to love ourselves." It's a tragic myth.

Remember 2 Timothy 3:1-2 said in the last days difficult times would come because men would be lovers of themselves. The list of characteristics of humanity in the last days starts out, with number one characteristic that men will be lovers of themselves. Self-love has always been man's problem. That's why Jesus says "If you want to follow Me it's no to self; death to self. Then come follow Me and develop a love relationship with Me."

This new teaching that you've got to get into yourself and love self, self-love has always been a problem! In the last days it is going to characterize, openly, all of humanity. People used to hide self-love. Why? They would be embarrassed. People would think they were narcissistic, egocentric self-worshippers. So people were pretending like they were other-centered and humanitarian and all that. But that's gone now. I mean, you can flaunt your self-love as an athlete, as a singer, as a politician and people will applaud you for it, because they want to learn how to do it too. That is why they idolize you. You love yourself so wonderfully, you know. That's what has happened in our culture.

I see on the news some of these self-worshipping, self-absorbed, self-possessed icons of our culture. It's repugnant to the extreme to me. I grew up in sports a lot all my life and I played all kinds of them in school and out. And I mean, to me, athletics publicly in this country is like a pathetic shame. Not that it ever was great, but it used to be more neutral. You could be involved. The Cowboys—fourteen years in Dallas that's where I got a real view of this. Oh does that city worship those people! I think I'm making a point. In the last days men will be lovers of themselves.

There are so many myths and strange doctrines in the church. We need God-centered counseling. Husband, tell me, is your wife meeting your needs? What a dumb question. What a fleshy, self-serving question. Husband, are you walking in the need to know and glorify the Lord Jesus Christ? Husband, are you serving your wife, loving her as Christ loved the church? Those are the questions. Not, is your mate meeting your needs? This needs God-centered counseling. The wife

goes in, you know, "Tell me is your husband meeting your needs?" God is the one who pledges to meet our needs. And we don't go to Him to get them met. We go to Him to love Him, serve Him and know Him and we just end up with them met. There are sad things in the church.

Rights-centered counseling. You have a "right" for this. You mean, me who is saying no to self and death to self, now to be a good Christian I've got to exert my rights? Wow. Or counseling that's left brain, right brain. The problem with you is you are only using half your brain. And you've got use this side and you've got to get that side. What a humanistic, horizontal self-hope! How about, listen, one ounce of the mind of Christ would be better than the whole half of either one sides of our brain, you know. It's a myth.

Temperament analysis counseling. Christian books on it. "Are you sanguine or phlegmatic?" No, I'm Adamic. I'm sinful apart from Christ. You know, don't classify what kind of flesh I have. Tell me how to get it on the cross! On the cross it doesn't matter what [personality] type. Just nail it. "Well, what personality are you going to be?" I would like to be like Christ, you know.

There is so much myth in the church. Lord help us!

But in a brief way, the problem with so much of this is that it is man's wisdom, not God's wisdom. Let's just read that Scripture, 1 Corinthians 1:18-21. Man's wisdom is what it's all about in all these things, instead of God's wisdom.

1 Corinthians 1:18-21,

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written: 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

Oh, doesn't this show man's wisdom is just so vain.

In 1 Corinthians 3:19-20.

For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written: 'He catches the wise in their own craftiness,' and again, 'The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile.'

People look at these guys we have mentioned, so many of these theoreticians and they go, "Oh how wise." Well, measured to our thinking capacity, yeah, maybe they're more brilliant creative thinkers. But God looks at their wisdom and goes, it's foolish. That's not wisdom, that's foolishness.

Here is another one in verse 20, "The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise." He knows all these theories. He knew every one of these before they were ever created. And look at His estimation. These thoughts of the wise, they're futile, which means useless. Why would the church want to integrate with the Word of God things that God calls useless? And you talk like that to many pastors and Christian counselors they go, "Oh man, you are so narrow minded. Come on. This stuff deepens and broadens our message and gives us a stronger insight." Wait a minute. God

looks at all that. He knows all about it. And He says it is futile. It adds nothing to what the Lord wants to share with us.

Here is another problem. All of this worldly counsel, it's a matter of flesh, not the Spirit. We won't read Isaiah 31:1 which says, "Woe to Israel who goes down to Egypt for help." They don't seek the Lord, because the Egyptians are men and not God. They are flesh and not Spirit. The church is going to the world's help just like Israel used to go to Egypt. What's the problem with that? It's flesh, not Spirit. It's man, not God.

Jeremiah 17:5-8, speaking of all this says, "Cursed *is* the one who makes flesh his strength, and blessed is the one whose trust is the LORD."

It's a curse to put our hope in these things. It is not that they are just kind of, well interesting, but they don't work. They are a curse. That curse of hoping in man, makes lives like a shrub in the desert that doesn't bear fruit. Those who hope in the Lord, Jeremiah said, their lives become like a tree. The leaves don't wither and it doesn't cease yielding fruit even in tough drought times. That is a great passage there.

In John 6:53 and 63, Jesus said that you have no life in yourselves. The flesh has no life. John 6:53 says, "It is the Spirit who gives life. The flesh profits nothing...."

Then Galatians 3:3 says, "Are we so foolish, having begun by the Spirit are we going to be perfected by the flesh?"

How did we start out with God? By the Spirit. Now how are we going to grow and mature, have our lives made whole, and be perfected? By the flesh? Are we that foolish? We would have to say, as the church world and Christendom today, "Yes, we are that foolish." Even those who started by the Spirit, born again by the Spirit, they are going to perfect their lives by the flesh?

Whatever you say about psychological theory, you have to realize together, agree together, it comes from the flesh of man. Man's human ability to think and theorize. Is that going to perfect us now that we are born again? Are we that foolish? It seems like the major thrust of the American church on that issue is, "Yes, we have become just that foolish. We are born again, but seeking perfecting help in Christ from godless, humanistic theoreticians."

We saved this study toward the end of the course. Maybe you can see why. It is best that we didn't get into it too early. I would probably never get off of it. And there is much to say in addition to this, but oh, there's much to say on this.

What are the worldly threats to counseling God's way? Number one is forsaking our Wonderful Counselor. And it will always lead to the second problem and threat is turning to worldly counsel.

Let's pray together.

Lord, we thank You so much for being our Wonderful Counselor. We thank You for life in the Spirit and the truth of the Word of God. Lord, forgive us for our compromises and our loss of focus and putting hope in man and the wrong directions. And we pray for the church of Jesus Christ. Lord, we love Your church. We love Your people. We lift up all in Your Church who are into the integrating of myth and fable from the theories of man, that they would be drawn away from those, see the bankruptcy of it, Lord. And see that it compromises

what You have called us to. That we might all come back to the fountain of living waters. And Lord Jesus, let You be the Wonderful Counselor that You are. Forgive us for thinking any other thing. And Lord, we cry out that You would stir, in many hearts, a real reviving and reforming and reshaping on this issue. And Lord, guard us and guide us and let us be a part of that new fresh work You do to bring us back to You, to Your Word and counseling God's way. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.