

## Counseling

### **The Nature of Counseling**

What is counseling? It is important to supply a definition of counseling at the very beginning so we know what we are talking about. This is the definition I use in this book: *Counseling is a conversation where one party with questions, problems, and trouble seeks assistance from someone they believe has answers, solutions, and help...*

### **What Counseling Requires**

Counseling does not require any of the trappings of professionalism. Though we often picture counseling as a very professional activity, it is not required that you be an expert in order to do it. Indeed, if what I stated above is true, most of the people doing counseling (i.e., teachers, parents, coworkers, friends, church members, etc.) lack any formal expertise to do it. As much as we often cherish the trappings of professionalism, like formal offices, distinguished degrees, and state licenses, none of that is required to do counseling—or even to do it well...

### **Counseling Is Theological**

Understanding that counseling requires some vision of life is crucial to understanding the theological nature of counseling. The reason is that such a vision of reality is always theological. God defines what it is to be a human being, and he describes that in his Word. God knows what is wrong with us and diagnoses the problem in the Bible. God prescribes a solution to our problems—faith in Christ—and reveals him to us in the Scriptures. God authorizes a process of transformation and shows us what it looks like in the pages of the Old and New Testaments...

### **Theology and Secular Counseling**

The twentieth century witnessed the ascendancy of a theological vision of reality characterized by a disavowal of the authority of God in counseling. This approach to counseling was marked by a nearly complete rejection of the Godward nature of counseling practice. This was a distinct change from the preceding centuries, which had been characterized by religious dominance regarding counseling. By the 1900s, Christians had been largely excluded from counseling work and were on the defensive about that task. Secular counseling practitioners failed to appreciate that they were engaging in theological work and did not appreciate that efforts at instructing people about how to live in God's world are eminently theological. The problem is that they were engaging in faithless, God-disavowing theology that hurts rather than helps people.

(A Theology of Biblical Counseling: The Doctrinal Foundations of Counseling Ministry by Heath Lambert, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, Kindle, 2016, 13, 15, & 17 of 345, Text Modified)