

COUNSELING: THE DUTY AND PRIVILEGE OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

PART 1 - FOUNDATIONAL CONVICTIONS FOR BIBLICAL COUNSELING

Introduction

In 1979, Jay Adams wrote this: "When I spoke at the Rosemead Graduate School of Psychology a few years ago, the thrust of my brief opening remarks was, 'This program has no reason for existence. Not only can you not integrate pagan thought and biblical teaching, but what you are trying to do is to train people to attempt the work of the church without ordination, outside the church. That is distorting God's order of things. Counseling may not be set up as a life calling on a free-lance basis; all such counseling ought to be done as a function of the church, utilizing its authority and resources.' ...In many quarters, there is very little knowledge about and concern for the visible church on the part of Christians. Some of this is understandable (though not excusable) from an historical point of view. This appalling lack largely has grown out of a reaction to denominational liberalism combined with the lingering effects of an anti-church Darbyism that pervaded Bible-believing churches during the past generation. Both led to a basic distrust in the organized church, and provided the impetus for extra-church agencies. This bevy of para-church agencies which was spawned in turn did much to develop a do-it yourself-outside-the-church mentality. This independent mentality neatly fitted the growing professionalism of the modern counseling movement which, during the same period, developed alongside of it. A number of other factors collaborated to produce the present situation, in which young people can grow up in a Bible-believing congregation, graduate from a Christian college, enter a graduate doctoral program, and never be confronted with the biblical truth that counseling is the work of the church."¹

"Counseling"

Biblical passages (Old Testament)

1 Samuel 3:13

Job 4:3-4

Biblical passages (New Testament)

Acts 20:31

Romans 15:14

1 Corinthians 4:14

Colossians 1:28

Colossians 3:16

1 Thessalonians 5:12, 14

2 Thessalonians 3:15

¹ Jay Adams, *A Theology of Christian Counseling* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979), 276-277.

1. Counseling is the duty of local church members

2. Counseling is the privilege of local church members