

## HOW IS BIBLICAL COUNSELING DIFFERENT FROM OTHER APPROACHES?

This is an exceptionally important question that will require a thorough answer. In fact, the issue is so crucial, so valuable, so in need of understanding, that it will require a mountain of evidence (i.e., from Scripture) to resolve the matter indisputably. The subject is one of such great weight that it is imperative that each believer give careful thought and attention to it in order to be fully convinced of the truth. Whether we realize it or not, much of one's life flows from our understanding (or lack thereof) concerning the following differences between true Biblical counseling and other forms of counsel.

### THE DILEMMA

There is a way that **seems** right to a man, but *in the end* it leads to **death**.

Proverbs 14:12

Every Christian should carefully think through and resolve the following dilemma:

Is God's Word all that we need for life, for change, for counseling—or do we need the world's wisdom to make up for Scripture's deficiencies?

### THE BELIEF

An individual's chosen ideology or theology truly determines their counseling approach. If their belief system is wrong, God help those who are guided by these falsehoods. If, on the other hand, their methodology is Biblical (i.e., *pure* truth according to God's perfect design and desire for life), then there is no limit to what can be achieved. As such, the Biblical counselor gives *utmost* value and attention to the ideas and beliefs behind what they teach and how they counsel (not just any notion will do).

However, it is vital to point out that it is not a person's *stated* belief, but their *functional* belief that really determines what they do and why they do it. What is a functional belief? A functional belief can be basically summarized as: "Actions speak louder than words." We not only look at what a person says, but, more importantly, what they *do* (see James 2:15-26).

If I say that I am generous, believe that I am generous, but I am, in fact, an awful miser who never gives anything to anyone, then these actions reveal my *true* belief concerning giving. Just because I *believe* I am benevolent does not make it so. My behavior informs us that my functional belief contradicts my stated belief. I may say one thing, but my deeds, over time, tell quite a different story.

This is significant because many Christian counselors (and lots of Christians as well) declare that God's Word is totally sufficient but, often without realizing it, their *actions* (i.e., functional beliefs) deny their stated claim. This is nothing new. Just look at these examples:

Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

James 2:17

Wisdom is proved right by her actions.

Matthew 11:19

They claim to know God, but *by their actions they deny Him*.

Titus 1:16

These people come near to Me with their mouth and honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me. Their worship of Me is made up only of rules taught by men.

Isaiah 29:13

You are always on their lips but far from their hearts.

Jeremiah 12:2

Of course, there will always be some Christians who simply and openly do not believe that Scripture is all that we need for life, godliness, or counseling. They make no bones about their overt belief that we need more than God's revealed truth and wisdom for life contained in His Word (i.e., the belief that the Bible is not sufficient).

Most inconsistencies with the sufficiency of Scripture, however, come in a more subtle form of contradiction. A large Christian counseling organization tells us on their website that while "there are many different approaches to counseling," they try to make sure each therapist can use Biblical principles "within their theoretical orientation" (e.g., Freud, Maslow, Jung, Skinner, Adler, etc.).

### THE SOURCE

To gain clarity in the midst of this dilemma, we must ask: what is the *source* of one's wisdom? Can there truly be "many different approaches to counseling"? Upon whom or what does the teacher or counselor rely? If the source is bad, then what can we conclude about the resultant teaching?

*They feast on the abundance of Your house; You give them drink from Your river of delights. For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light.*

Psalms 36:8-9

...so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness *that comes through Jesus Christ*.

Philippians 1:10-11

My people have committed two sins: *They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.*

Jeremiah 2:13

“All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord stands forever.” And this is the word that was preached to you...Like newborn babies, *crave pure spiritual milk*, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation.

1 Peter 1:24-25; 2:2

Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? *Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him.*

1 Corinthians 1:20-21

*For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom,* and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength.

1 Corinthians 1:25

*They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them. We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood.*

1 John 4:5-6

...to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water *through the word.*

Ephesians 5:26

Blessed is the man who does **not** walk in *the counsel of the wicked* or stand in *the way of sinners* or sit in *the seat of mockers*. But His delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.

Psalms 1:1

The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes. The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever. The ordinances of the LORD are sure and altogether righteous. They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb. By them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.

Psalms 19:7-11

When men tell you to consult mediums and spiritists, who whisper and mutter, *should not a people inquire of their God? Why consult the dead on behalf of the*

*living? To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, they have no light of dawn.*

Isaiah 8:19-20

Such “wisdom” does **not** come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil...But *the wisdom that comes from heaven* is first of all **pure**; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.

James 3:15, 17

**Key to Remember:** *A counselor is only as good as the source they trust in, rely on, and apply to the lives of others.*

How pure is *your* supply for truth and wisdom?

Why is an uncontaminated source so critical for life?

*Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.*

Proverbs 4:23

Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?...Since we have *these promises*, dear friends, *let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit*, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

2 Corinthians 6:14-15; 7:1

What are the effects on the individual who drinks from a polluted well?

The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are bad, *your whole body will be full of darkness*. If then the light within you is darkness, *how great is that darkness!*

Matthew 6:22-23

Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to your care. *Turn away from godless chatter and the opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge*, which some have professed and in so doing *have wandered from the faith*.

1 Timothy 6:20-21

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and *who correctly handles the word of truth*. Avoid *godless chatter*, because those who indulge in it *will become more and more ungodly*.

2 Timothy 2:15-16

What is *the only* way to ensure purity?

How can a young man keep his way *pure*? ***By living according to your word.***

Psalm 119:9

## THE ONE

The existence and reality of Biblical counseling rests on the fact that there can be *only one* approach to counseling, ministering, loving, helping, and equipping others—the *Biblical* one. The Bible is both *the* source and *the* standard for life, love, and change.

This exclusivity may seem “elitist” to some, but the Biblical counselor is no more elitist than Christians are elitist concerning the Bible, truth, love, God, salvation, etc. Are we not exclusive in our belief that there is *only one way* to heaven—through the grace and mercy of Jesus (Jn 14:6; Rom 6:23; Eph 2:8-10)? Is this not what necessarily separates us from all other belief systems?

Is absolute truth “elitism”? Yes! Is insisting that  $2 + 2 = 4$  exclusive? Of course! Don’t we expect our mathematicians, chemists, pharmacists, and doctors to be absolute in their approach to and application of truth? Do we not require them to discriminate between truth and error as well as to restrict themselves to the truth...the absolute truth?

Hopefully, we desire and demand the same of our pastors and teachers. Should we not equally expect this of all Christian counselors?

Notice that God is exceedingly exclusive when it comes to truth, how to change, and what to use in the process of change:

Sanctify them by the truth; ***your word is truth.***

John 17:17

Jesus answered, “I am *the way* and *the truth* and *the life*. No one comes to the Father *except through me.*”

John 14:6

They are not just idle words for you—*they are your life.*

Deuteronomy 32:47

My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, ***Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*** I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by *fine-sounding arguments.*

Colossians 2:2-4

*All Scripture* is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be *thoroughly equipped* for every good work.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

Are these Scriptures not exclusive? Are God and His Word not sufficient? If only we were as “elitist” as God wants us to be when it comes to truth and change.

Not only is the Biblical counselor’s belief and methodology solely Biblical (as much as humanly possible), but it also necessarily rejects outright all godless and worldly “theoretical” approaches, otherwise known as “fine-sounding arguments” (e.g., Freud, Maslow, Jung, Skinner, self-esteem, self-love, emotional needs, etc.). Therefore, by sticking to what we know is *always* true—and totally sufficient—Biblical counseling avoids so much error, corruption, and man-centered ideology that dominates the therapeutic industry.

A large, well-known ministry is a perfect example of a not-so-subtle contradiction of stated and functional beliefs when it comes to truth and Scripture. In their literature and on their website they proclaim their rejection of the theories of man in their “psychological counseling” (this alone is a self-negating statement!). Yet, most of their books, programs, and counsel are indistinguishable from *pop-psychology* which clearly spring from—you guessed it—*the theories of man*. This organization is known for their fondness for notions like self-esteem, self love, and psychological/emotional needs—*notions which are exactly the same* as the trendy teachings currently embraced by the world.

The worst part is that few notice or question the incongruity of this popular ministry, and many others like it, when it comes to the Word of God—even though we are repeatedly warned in Scripture of this kind of destructive deceit infiltrating the body of Christ through false teachers:

But there were also false prophets among the people, just as ***there will be false teachers among you***. They will *secretly* introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves. **Many** will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute.

2 Peter 2:1-2

Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.

Matthew 7:15

For such men are *false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ*. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. *It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness*. Their end will be what their actions deserve.

2 Corinthians 11:13-15

Not only are we commanded to live *solely* in “the light,” to have “nothing to do” with these false teachers, but we are also told to *expose* their falsehoods, “deeds of darkness,” and duplicity:

*Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. Therefore do not be partners with them. For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord. Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.*

Ephesians 5:6-11

### THE WORLD

Sadly, in spite of the clear warnings from God's Word, the quest for worldly wisdom is now the norm, not the exception, among believers. Worldly ideas are seen as helpful, even equal with the Word of God (cp. 1 Cor 1:25). "All truth is God's truth"...or so they say. But is this really true? Is this logical? Is this wise? Or, could this idea be horribly, horribly wrong?

*Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.*

1 John 2:15-17

If it is God's will that we be sanctified (1 Thess 4:3), if we are called to be set apart from the world, how then can we use the wisdom of the *world* to be set apart from the world?

All of the world's "basic principles" and theories regarding life conflict with and distort God's Word, deceiving many and leading them down the dark, yet wide, road to destruction.

See to it that no one **takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.** *Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules?*

Colossians 2:8, 20

When we were children, *we were in slavery under the basic principles of the world...* Formerly, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those who by nature are not gods. But now that you know God—or rather are known by God—*how is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable principles?* Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again?

Galatians 4:3, 8-9

How can the world and its corrupt and enslaving principles enhance God's Holy Word? Why would *believers* try to improve upon perfection by including what is forbidden and polluted? What does Scripture say about this notion?

*Do not conform any longer to the patten of this world.*

Romans 12:2

*What is highly valued among men is detestable in God's sight.*

Luke 16:15

For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, *to suit their own desires*, they will gather around them **a great number of teachers** to say what their itching ears want to hear. *They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.*

2 Timothy 4:3-4

My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, *namely, **Christ**, in whom are hidden **all** the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*

Colossians 2:2-3

I beg you that when I come I may not have to be as bold as I expect to be toward *some people who think that we live by the standards of this world. For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world.* On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

2 Corinthians 10:2-5

Notice that you and I, as believers, are called to “demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God.” We certainly need more of this and less conformity to popular worldly ideas.

### THE TRUTH

*Truth is supreme...*because it is equated with God's Word, with life, with freedom, and with God Himself. More specifically, for the counselor, it is absolutely required for change (sanctification). It reveals how to change and, most importantly, *why* we should change and *what to change into*. The apostle John was passionate about truth:

*But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light*, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God.

John 3:21

Jesus said, *“If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”*

John 8:31-32



Jesus answered, "I am the way and *the truth* and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

John 14:6

If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—*the Spirit of truth*. *The world cannot accept him*, because it neither sees him nor knows him.

John 14:15-17

Sanctify them by *the truth*; ***your word is truth***.

John 17:17

In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. ***Everyone on the side of truth listens to me***.

John 18:37

And as if all this were not enough, the answers to two relatively simple questions will give us more than we need to resolve our quandary:

- List the *absolute truth* psychology (*man's philosophy* regarding life and man) has given us concerning who man is, what he should *be* (the goal), what he should *do* (purpose), how he can change, what his problems are, what the solutions are, relationships, love, and God. In contrast, how many absolute truths has God's Word given us concerning these same things?
  
- How many falsehoods, misleading ideas, destructive beliefs, lies, erroneous concepts, and relative, ever-changing "truths" has psychology (man's wisdom) given us concerning these same things? In contrast, list the lies, etc. that God's Word has given us pertaining to all of these things?

John's simple truth is pertinent here: "No lie comes from the truth" (1 Jn 2:21).

Clearly the psychological theorist does not deal with absolute truth—he never has and never will. Yet, their monumental problem of believing and teaching falsehoods is merely the tip of the iceberg. The biggest tragedy is that *they have rejected the necessary absolute truth of Scripture and the Truth Himself, Jesus Christ, Who is the Word of God* (Jn 1:1, 14; 1 Jn 1:1; Rev 19:13)!

Consider, then, what kind of "truth" psychologists rely on for changing lives. Consider the destruction a lie believed does in one's life.

Hopefully, we see the Bible, in contrast, as bursting with inexhaustible absolute truth. Scripture does not contain just any kind of truth, but the precise and required realities of life that cut right to the heart of *every* matter having to do with life (Col 2:2-3; 2 Tim 3:16-17; Heb 4:12-13; 2 Pet 1:3-4), that is *truly* life (Jn 10:10; 1 Tim 6:19). Therefore, we can be at ease while confidently relying on God's Word to transform our lives and overcome any difficulty.

What comparison is there between the shifting ideas of sinful man, the ever-changing teaching of those with a heart that is "deceitful above all things" (Jer 17:9) and the solid, proven, pure, precise, enduring, all-powerful, life-giving truth of the Word of God? It is up to you to decide what you believe, what you want to apply to your life, and to *whom* you want to entrust your life.

This is what the LORD says:

*"Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength and whose heart turns away from the LORD. He will be like a bush in the wastelands; he will not see prosperity when it comes. He will dwell in the parched places of the desert, in a salt land where no one lives. But blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose confidence is in him. He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit."*

Jeremiah 17:5-8

### THE GOAL

We proclaim *him*, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, **so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ.**

Colossians 1:28

The Biblical counselor's mission is to: *Unearth and undo the worldly lies and ungodly desires of the heart that have been learned and lived, while replacing them with the precise truth and priceless love that can only come from God and His Word so that we may be more like Him and less like the world.*

Perhaps nothing reveals the distinction of Biblical counseling more than its goals—how they are diametrically opposed to the objectives of all other counseling.

## THE WORLD'S GOAL

- happiness
- to be more like the world
- to improve how you feel...especially about yourself
- to rely on yourself more
- to love yourself more

## GOD'S GOAL

- holiness
- to be less like the world and more like God (i.e., holiness)
- to improve the condition of your heart and therefore your relationships with Jesus
- to rely on yourself less and on God more and more
- to love yourself less and to love God and others more and more

How well do the goals of the world fit in with God's design and desire for us as revealed in the following verse?

And he died for all, that ***those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him*** who died for them and was raised again.

2 Corinthians 5:15

The purpose of godly change is to know God and conform to His image—for the glory of God, out of love for God. The world's wisdom, however, has absolutely no ability, know-how, or desire to achieve any of the goals that God desires for us, especially in the midst of trials and tribulations (i.e., when most people pursue counseling). So then, at the pivotal moments in life when godly change is needed, the world and its goals/wisdom *will always drag us away from God and His ambitions.*

The purpose of counseling should *not* be to change one's feelings, level of negative experiences, amount of happiness, or to simply resolve a problem. And, believe it or not, the *primary* goal should not be to change one's behavior. Yet, these particular ambitions are the best motives or goals that the world/psychology has to offer.

Biblical counseling does not set out to merely solve the problems in a person's life. Its goal is to transform the heart and equip the individual so that not only is their problem resolved, their behavior changed (for the long term), their experience improved dramatically (more and more over time), but that they become more like Jesus and able to reflect His glory.

And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, *are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory*, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 3:18

And this is my prayer: *that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ--to the glory and praise of God.*

Philippians 1:9-11

How do you suppose the pursuits in the above Scriptures stack up against the goals of all other counseling approaches? What does your answer tell you?

Will the reliance upon the world's ideology (and, therefore, its goals) help or hurt our pursuit of fulfilling God's goals?

Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises [i.e. God's Word], so that through them you may *participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.*

2 Peter 1:4

Religion that God our Father accepts as *pure and faultless* is this...*to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.*

James 1:27

How can we avoid and escape the pollution and corruption of the world by pursuing its goals?

Can we change hearts with little or no use of Scripture? If so, what would the goal look like? What will the net effect be? Compare the need for and the goal of God's Word:

Teach me *your way*, O Lord, and I will walk in *your truth*; give me an *undivided heart*, that I may fear *your name*.

Psalms 86:11

Search me, O God, and know *my heart*; test me and know my anxious thoughts. *See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

Psalms 139:23-24

But *your hearts must be fully committed to the LORD our God, to live by his decrees and obey his commands.*

1 Kings 8:61

Oh, *that their hearts would be inclined to fear me and keep all my commands always, so that it might go well with them and their children forever!*

Deuteronomy 5:29

***If you remain in me and my words remain in you***, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. *This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit*, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

John 15:7-8

Obviously, God's glorious goals clash with **every** worldly *theory* on how to change and what to change into. Therefore, can the believer ever rely on any ideology of sinful man to achieve God's holy purposes? Is this not a primary source for deceitful and destructive beliefs to begin with? Why then do so many dedicate their lives and ministries to such an endeavor?

### THE ANSWER

His divine power has given us **everything** we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, *so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.*

2 Peter 1:3-4

The answer is in God's Word. The answer *is* God's Word. All the answers we need for life, love, godliness, change, and how to change are abundantly found in Scripture.

Therefore, the single most important distinctive of a *true* "Biblical counselor" (although there are many who use that title) is their view of the Bible. More specifically, it is what they *functionally* believe concerning the sufficiency of Scripture (i.e., whether God's Word is abundantly more than we need to live life, change our hearts, overcome any problem such as worry, fear, despair, anger, relationship problems, etc.—see "God's Word"). With such a view of Scripture, the Biblical counselor's time and effort is consumed with studying, probing, knowing, and applying the abundant life and truth of God's perfect Word—*not* the "wisdom" of man.

Do not deceive yourselves. If any one of you thinks he is wise by *the standards of this age*, he should become a "fool" so that he may become wise. *For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God's sight.* As it is written: "He catches the wise in their craftiness"; and again, "*The Lord knows that the thoughts of the wise are futile.*"

1 Corinthians 3:18-20

So, if a person has immersed themselves and invested heavily in relying on "man's wisdom," then logically, and by definition, they cannot truly believe in the sufficiency of Scripture. They are seeking to add man's wisdom (from a confirmed erratic, corrupt, error filled, and godless source) to God's perfect Word. Therefore, for them there is no other conclusion than that *the Word of God is not enough* for life, godliness, relationships, and overcoming problems (cp. 2 Tim 3:15-17; 2 Pet 1:3ff; Ps 19; Jn 17:17; Heb 13:20-21; 2 Cor 9:8).

The Bible is either sufficient for life, godliness, peace, joy, love, power, wisdom, truth, and overcoming problems or it is deficient. If it is not sufficient, where and how—specifically—does

sinful man, who has rejected the Spirit of truth and possesses a heart “full of evil” and “madness” (Ecc 9:3), make up for God’s perceived lack? Hopefully the answer is obvious.

Clearly, the dilemma that every believer is faced with—including you—is this: is the Bible *all* that I need for life and godliness and, therefore, all that I need to overcome my problems? Or is God’s Word lacking, imperfect, and incomplete thereby forcing me to make up for its weaknesses and faults with man’s wisdom? The truly *Biblical* counselor *functionally* believes the former, while all other counseling is some variation of the latter. What is *your* answer?

### YEAH, BUT...

Countless Christians study, believe, and rely on the wisdom of the world essentially because of one phrase: “All truth is God’s truth.” But what if this clever idiom is incorrect? What if it is a deadly lie? To be thorough, it is our duty to explore this contention.

If a person believes in the saying “all truth is God’s truth,” then they must also follow similar incomplete and faulty reasoning such as, “all power is God’s power” or, “all nutrients are nutritious.” It is also imperative to note that on top of this flawed and misleading logic, promoters of the idea that “all truth is God’s truth” still almost always fail miserably when it comes to discerning and distinctly informing us as to which parts are the truth and which are the lies!

Let’s take the phrase, “all power is God’s power.” If this is true, then we should have no qualms about going to the enemy for his power, right? We know he has power. So why shouldn’t we add some clout to God’s power by going to Satan? Why not pursue, study, and rely on the Devil as well as on God? Would there be any damage in such an endeavor? What will it hurt? All power is power. Does this seem like a reasonable, if not necessary, pursuit?

Think about it, *we can have more power than God!* We can have both God’s power *and* Satan’s power as well as God’s truth *and* the “truth” from the world. Who can argue with that? According to this way of thinking, it is our right—no, our duty—to pursue the very real power that our enemy uses against the saints.

Reality check: Do we *need* Satan’s power? Do we *need* the world’s wisdom? Would such a pursuit help or hurt? Why? Is God’s power more than what we need? Is God’s Word more than we need? If not, where is God or His Word deficient? If we should add to God’s infinite and precisely perfect truth and wisdom, then, by the same logic, we should also add to God’s infinite and perfect power.

What about, “all nutrients are nutritious” ? This is a fact. Therefore, we should have no qualms about going through the garbage or the sewer for nutrients. After all, if all nutrients are nutritious and all power is God’s power and all truth is God’s truth, then what harm could there be?

Would you go through the sewer for food when you had immediate and unlimited access to warehouses full of the finest food? This is, in one way or another, the mind-set of every minister, counselor, ministry, or individual that has a *functionally* insufficient Bible.

Can we really add to God's infinite and perfect Word? Do we need to? More to the point, is that endeavor harmful or helpful, wise or foolish? Can we exhaust God's power? Can we exhaust God's living truth abundantly found in His Word?

The right answers should be obvious, but, sadly, they are not. Not only do many Christians believe God and His Word to be lacking, but, as a result, they are inarguably tainted by what they immerse themselves in.

What is the final outcome of such an attitude? An insufficient Bible, reliance upon the falsehoods of man's wisdom, the spreading of worldly lies as if they were "God's truth," and, therefore, destruction upon all who are touched by this faulty and toxic mind-set.

However, with a totally sufficient God and Bible there is literally no limit to what a person can do. This is the Biblical counselor's belief, approach, and ministry. The fruit is eternal, Christ-like, kingdom focused, and pleasing to God.

### **YEAH, BUT...IT WORKS!**

This argument, too, may *seem* logical but, as it plays out, it is wickedly deceptive. What the world measures as success always falls short of God's goals. While the world confidently declares victory, God is deeply grieved.

If the standard set is simply to feel better and for someone to make us happy, then this would be deemed a success. But does this really mean "it works"? Is that the goal? Is that your goal?

A particular type of counseling may "work," but, we must ask, according to what standard? Who decides the measure of what works and does not work? We could argue that sin works for the sinner, unbeliever, and Satan—that is precisely why they do it—yet we know this violates God's standard. They are pursuing and achieving success outside of God's design and desire.

The atheist, the Muslim, the Christian, the Jew, the motivational speaker all claim success. Yet, given their contradictory beliefs, can they all truly be successful? Yes, but only if we have a myriad of conflicting ideas—or one erroneous idea—of success. This, of course, is a colossal failure, yet it is deemed as "working." Always beware when someone says something like "Yeah, but...it works!" (see "The Goal").

If a prophet, or one who foretells by dreams, appears among you and announces to you *a miraculous sign or wonder*, and if the *sign or wonder of which he has spoken takes place*, and he says, "Let us follow other gods" (gods you have not known) "and let us worship them," you must not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer. *The LORD your God is testing you to find out whether you love him with all your heart and with all your soul. It is the LORD your God you must follow, and him you must revere.* Keep his commands and obey him; serve him and hold fast to him.

Deuteronomy 13:1-4