

LECTURE #16

THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION IN COUNSELING

INTRODUCTION

If you will practice true biblical counseling and help others in the manner that God requires, you must overcome the fatal danger ignored by many so called, biblical counselors.

- I. The fatal danger ignored by Biblical Counselors today is the peril of abandoning the _____ prior to or during the counseling process (Galatians 1:6-12).**
- A. Do not merely _____ that the people you are counseling understand the Gospel (Galatians 2:19-21).
- B. Your counselees may misunderstand the Gospel due to inadequate and unbiblical _____. They may have been taught the following types of things:
1. “God loves you and has a _____ plan for your life.”
 2. “You know that you are a Christian because you walked the aisle, prayed a prayer, and asked Jesus to come into your _____.”
 3. “God promises you heaven if you just _____ to Christ.”
- C. Listen carefully to those whom you are ministering in order to _____ correct their misunderstandings of the Gospel. They may often say the following kinds of things¹
1. “The gospel is a personal message found within _____.”
 2. “The gospel is Jesus Christ living in my life _____ and in every _____.”
 3. “The gospel is you loving the _____, loving _____, and _____ yourself.”
 4. “The gospel is loving the Lord with all your _____.”

¹ These comments came from [The Christian Booksellers Convention](#) and were reported by “Christians United for Reformation” on a special tape cassette the same year.

5. “The gospel is the good news that Jesus Christ is alive today and he can help us in all _____.”

6. “The gospel is ... uh...I don’t know...in order to be saved we need to accept _____ and do right...we need to make frequent _____.”

D. Beware of the strict _____ that awaits leaders who load heavy burdens upon their followers and while failing to lift their hands to give them biblical _____ (Luke 11:46-47). Remember that biblical counselors must emphasize the indicatives and not just the imperatives found in Scriptures.

II. Overcome the greatest danger often ignored by many biblical counselors by articulating the central truths of the _____.

A. Explain the Good News to those whom you seek to help.

The Gospel is the _____ that Jesus Christ, the _____ Son of God came to earth, lived a perfect life of _____, _____ upon the cross at Calvary for sinners, and _____ again from the dead. Through his work, Jesus Christ _____ provides both _____ from one’s sins and presents one as _____ before God the Father. **The Gospel is what Jesus Christ has done for _____, not what _____ have done for Him.**

B. Lead unbelievers to Christ and remind believers to _____ in the grace of Christ.

1. Teach them to grow in their respect for God as the One who is infinite in His _____ (Lev. 11:44-45, I Peter 1:15).
2. Help them understand that, outside of Christ, they are sinners in the hands of an _____ God (Ps. 51:5, Romans 3:10-23, 6:23).
3. Admonish them to find their sole hope in the person and _____ cross work of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:22-41, 5:29-32, 8:32-40, 10:34-48, 17:1-33, Romans 1:14-17, I Corinthians 15:1-11, Hebrews 1:1-14, I Peter 3:3-12, Revelation 5).
4. Instill within them the necessities of _____ and _____ (Ezekiel 18:30, Acts 16:31, 26:20).
5. Help them understand the _____ of following Christ TODAY (James 4:14, Luke 16:19-31, Hebrews 3:7-13).

III. If necessary, forego, the ‘counseling agenda’ and invest the needed time and energy required in order to lead those whom you are helping so they may gain an appropriate understanding of the doctrine of _____.

A. Listen carefully to those whom you are ministering in order to gently correct their misunderstandings of the doctrine of _____. They may often state the following messages.²

1. “I do not know what it means to be justified. I just know that I’m born again.”
2. “I have no idea what justification means. I’m caught off guard with that one. Who cares. All I know is I’m saved.”
3. “Justification means just as if I never sinned. It means starting over after being born again.”
4. “Justification means spreading the Word through music and books, spreading the good news of Jesus Christ, and knowing that He will deliver you from any kind of discomfort or disease.”
5. “Justification means that I’m saved without doing anything.”
6. “Justification means that God has provided another standard other than perfection in order to make us right so we may do his will.”

B. Explain the doctrine of justification to those whom you seek to help.

Justification is that act whereby God, on the sole basis of Jesus Christ’s redemptive work, _____ sinners not only as _____ but also as _____ before God. The righteousness that God requires of those whom He adopts as His sons is therefore a _____ righteousness rather than a _____ one (Genesis 15:6, Habakkuk 2:4, Romans 1:16-17, 3:21-31, 4:22-25).

C. Help them memorize “*The Grace Declaration*” during the session.

“God, solely for His own glory, justifies sinners by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone according to the exclusive authority of the Holy Scriptures.”

God, solely for His own glory—Salvation is to the praise of God’s honor.

Justified—Christ’s righteousness is imputed to the sinner and the sinner’s sin is imputed to Christ.

By—This very important preposition shows where the sole credit must go.

Grace alone—The sole credit is God’s unmerited, unearned favor.

Through—This preposition shows the instrument that God uses to draw men to Himself.

² Ibid.

Faith alone—The instrument that God uses is “faith,” a gift from God. The value in faith has to do with the “object” of faith.

In—This preposition leads a person to the one that has provided the righteousness that God requires to justify men.

Christ alone—One’s justification is dependent upon the person and redemptive cross work of Christ alone.

According to—These words point men to the sole authority for all ultimate truth claims having to do with the authentic and genuine Christian faith.

Exclusive authority of the Holy Scriptures—Men’s standards for truth is the Bible alone.

Homework Suggestions:

Train believers to adhere to the truth that “there is not longer any condemnation for those who are in Christ” (Romans 8:1ff).

1. After reading the following passages, summarize the gospel message in fifty words or less. (Acts 2:22-41, 5:29-32, 8:32-40, 10:34-48, 17:1-33, Romans 1:14-17, I Corinthians 15:1-11, Hebrews 1:1-14, I Peter 3:3-12, Revelation 5).
2. Does God grant us salvation as a result of your effort to cooperate with Him (Titus 3:4-8, Ephesians 2:8-10, Romans 1:16-17)? Answer: NO! Salvation is solely of Grace!
3. Assign recommended books.