**SALTS COURSE**

**Counseling**

**Introduction**

This set of notes is limited in scope to provide a brief summary of various issues that will be confronted in counseling. It should be noted that in the present environment it is becoming increasingly difficult to counsel according to biblical principles as the state has chosen to legislate against many biblical principles. It is unwise to offer any counsel unless the participant is agreeable and we recommend considering preparation of a disclaimer form to be signed by participants. This may provide some protection.

It is strongly recommended that a witness of your choosing be present and certainly never counsel a member of the opposite sex alone.

**Emotional and Spiritual Problems**

The key to resolving all problems, but particularly those relating to emotional and spiritual problems is found in our relationship to God and His Word. Christianity presents a unique understanding of humanity through the prism of God’s grace.

1. God made man - in His own image. He made him “very good” Genesis 1:26-31

2. Man fell in sin through disobedience. Genesis 3:1-9

3. Christ paid the penalty for the Fall of man, which was death. 2 Corinthians 5:21

4. Man by faith in the sacrifice of Christ on the cross is now -

• a total person-fully restored in the eyes of God! Colossians 1:22; Ephesians 1:4

• complete in Christ. Colossians 2:10; Ephesians 3:19

• has supernatural power and guidance. Acts 1:8; Romans 8:9-17

• has a unique relationship with God. 1 John 4:9-10

• has a new godly perspective on life. Philippians 3: 10; John 14:2 an eternal viewpoint.

• a unique attitude to the past. He has died to the past and has become a new creation in Christ. Romans 6:1-14.

All effective counseling is based on this work of God on our behalf.

This begins a brief discussion on various aspects of difficulties people have that may desire biblical counsel.

**The Offended Person**

You cannot give a satisfactory answer to an offended person. They accuse, but do not understand. Matthew 18:7. *Woe to the world because of offences, but woe to the man through whom they come*.

Matthew 24: 10.

In every offence there is the seed of disloyalty. There is seldom any betrayal without there first being offence. Judas was offended at the waste of oil, the waning popularity of Jesus, his loss of position in what he thought was the coming kingdom. He had his own set of expectations that were disappointed, providing the seed of offence.

Proverbs 18:19 - *an offended brother is more unyielding than a fortified city*.

Romans 16:17 - *watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way...keep away from them.*

The evidence of love is always loyalty.

Genesis 37:12 - Joseph and his brethren - *here comes that dreamer*.

**Hurt People**

Proverbs 18:14 - *a crushed spirit, who can bear it?*

Hebrews 12:15 - *the root of bitterness - causes trouble and defiles many*.

Our attitude decides whether stress makes us better or bitter!

The prodigal’s brother, Proverbs 22:24-25

1 John 2:16 - lust of flesh, lust of the eyes and pride of life.

don’t blame others, Matthew 7: 1, unforgiving and self destructive

Colossians 3:5 *put to death whatever belongs to your earthly nature...*

Luke 4:18 *Jesus came to heal the brokenhearted, set the prisoners free and release the oppressed.*

*Whom the Son sets free is free indeed.*

**Hurt and Bitterness**

Hebrews 12:15 - *beware of the root of bitterness for it will trouble you and many be defiled thereby.*

Two areas of bitterness, hurt and jealousy.

a) Hurt and being easily offended go together.

Matthew 24: 10 - *many shall be offended and betray one another.*

Matthew 18:17 *Woe to the world because of offences but woe also to the one who causes them.*

Proverbs 18:14 - *a wounded spirit who can bear it?*

b) Jealousy

A sin nature response to others. Ecclesiastes 4:4-6; Galatians 5:19 (NIV)

Is totally ruthless and uncaring.

A common motive for murder. Cain and Abel, Genesis 4:3-8

Is hard to combat. Proverbs 27:4

Is as cruel as the grave and a very hot fire. Song of Solomon 8:6

Is an enemy of honesty. Joseph’s brethren were jealous and then lied to cover up their crime. Genesis 37:1-11

Rachel and Leah - two sisters who struggled with acceptance and security.

**Dealing with Bitterness, Hurt and Jealousy**

1. Recognise it as a sin nature response. A change of attitude must occur.

2. It is carnal and grieves the Holy Spirit. Romans 8:5-8

3. Answer in writing the following questions.

a) How many names leap to mind when the question of hurts is raised?

b) Make a list of those who have hurt you.

c) Make a list of the things they did to hurt you.

d) Forgive them.

e) List the things you have done to hurt them.

f) Ask God to forgive and cleanse you.

**Rejection and Anger**

All of us understand a feeling of rejection; it is one of the fruits of sin. Rejection causes all sorts of anti-social behaviour through the emotions and patterns of thinking. It is part of the carnal mind and must be changed. Romans 8:5-8.

Rejection can bring strong feelings of rage, depression, bitterness, hate, resistance and rebellion.

1 John 4: 18 - perfect love casts out fear.

The following are some clues which may assist in recognising rejection.

a) I wish you had never been born, you will never amount to anything; you’re just like your father (mother).

b) Physical violence and battering. 1 in 3 Australian homes suffer from this malady.

c) Sexual molestation. Incest. The body is accepted but the person is rejected.

d) Wrong sex or a change of life baby.

e) Conditional love, preferential treatment and favouritism.

f) A child’s position in the family. Oldest, middle and youngest.

g) Ejection from the home and broken homes.

h) Premature death of parents.

People suffering from rejection need to experience God’s acceptance through conversion. To know the Father’s love and that He loved them even before they were born. Romans 8:31-39; 1 John 3:1.

**Anger**

There are two fundamental categories of anger – righteous anger and soulish anger. Here we address only the second category.

Matthew 5:21-26

V. 21. Do Not Murder. Life is precious to God, taking a life is to destroy a human being made in the image of God.

Three Aspects of Anger

1. Relationships. Everyone who is angry with his brother shall be liable to a court proceeding.

2. Whoever calls his brother “idiot’ (raca). This moves from inner feeling to name calling. Raca=utter contempt. To put down, to curse, intending to pull another down, i.e. when Hagar despised and taunted Sarah. Cursing and condemnation remove the blessing of God. He has blessed - we should not try to remove the blessing from people.

3. You fool! This word comes from the basis of malice. The person is despised and regarded as morally worthless and reprobate.

Jesus links anger with murder.

**The Keys to Overcoming Anger**

1. Recognition. You cannot blame others as Adam did. *‘God, it was the wife you gave me’.* You begin finding answers when you take responsibility for your attitudes.

2. Examine the cause. It may be your health, it may be unforgiveness. Examine your motives honestly.

3. Repent means to have another mind. You have been wronged - go the extra mile. God wants everyone to change - 2 Peter 3:9. *Cast all your care upon him* ­1 Peter 5:8; Philippians 4:6

Forgive as you have been forgiven by Christ - Matthew 18:35

Confess your anger - 1 John 1:9; James 5:16.

**Dealing with Guilt**

“What if” or “It might have been” are thoughts that can plague the mind in regard to the past.

No matter how sheltered or permissive the past has been, there are always regrets accompanied with a feeling of guilt. “If only I ...”

You must deal with the past before you can experience freedom in the future. You can’t break sinful habits until you have a new beginning in God.

Sinful habits have a domino effect, if you do it once, you might as well go all the way as often as you like. Satan delights in this kind of logic. He wants you to think that you have gone too far, that since the past cannot be reclaimed, you might as well give up.

James Stalker, the Scottish Preacher wrote, *“The great tempter of men has two lies with which he pleas us at two difference stages. Before we have fallen, he tells us that one fall does not matter, it is a trifle, we can easily recover. After we have fallen, he tells us it is hopeless - we are given over to Sin, and need not attempt to arise.”*

He explains that both these notions are false. ONE SIN DOES MATTER! Even one sin can cause loss which can never be fully recovered. A vessel can be broken and mended, but it will never be the same.

In the practical sense we cannot have a new beginning since the past can’t be relived.

But in deeply profound spiritual sense you can have a new beginning. God offers two precious commodities:

1) Genuine forgiveness, a blotting out of all sins past, present and future.

2) The assurance that the past need not control the future.

God’s promise to a nation of violence, deceit and sensual corruption. *“Come now and let us reason together,”* says the Lord, *“Though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they are red like crimson, they will be like wool.”*

**The Consequences of Guilt**

Guilt feelings can be like a millstone around your neck, keeping you tied to your sins and wedded to the past failures. Sometimes your conscience may trouble you, rehearsing the sins of the past in vivid detail, or there may just be a vague feeling of guilt.

1) Physical illness is often caused by suppressed guilt.

2) Unresolved guilt causes depression.

3) Guilt is often the cause for lack of faith in God (1 John 3:2 1).

4) Guilt causes people to punish themselves e.g., some parents whose children have gone astray do not want to be free from guilt. They believe they must pay for their children’s behaviour.

5) Guilt often causes people to do good works as a way of atoning for their sins.

**Principles for Handling Guilt**

Christ has set us free from guilt. Steps toward finding freedom.

1) Identify the cause of your guilt feelings.

Note: Some people experience false guilt, bringing torment on themselves for matters beyond their control. Sometimes it is more a question of an error and/or judgment.

2) God’s remedy for sin is complete. Christ’s death on the cross includes a sacrifice for all our sins - past, present and future.

**Rejection**

Rejection stems from man’s sin and God’s subsequent rejection and expulsion of man from the Garden of Eden. This rejection is a powerful force in life, that has been overcome as God has accepted us in the beloved.

Three things that are the fruit of rejection:

**1. Fear**

Fear of putting yourself in a situation where there is the possibility of rejection. A fear of intimacy rooted in rejecting experiences and is based in a wrong fear of God.

There are 2 kinds of fear in Scriptures: Romans 8:15. *Phobas* - from which we get; phobia. A phobia is an irrational fear of a given object or situation a spirit of slavery leading to fear, bondage and to rejection. This is a fear of fleeing, of defensively detaching, of simply cutting yourself off emotionally in relationships.

The second is found 2 Timothy 1:6 is fear relative to man, *“I have not given to you a spirit of fear, but power, love and of sound mind.”*

This fear has to do with a timidity or cowardice in our relationship with others.

**2. Rebellion**

Rebellion, in the first instance, is directed against God and is expressive of man’s ultimate stupidity. It is our self-righteous anger at God for rejecting us on the basis of sin.

On the secondary level, rebellion, by its very nature is directed against authority.

Rebellion can only be dealt with effectively by going to the source, our antagonism to God and secondarily, rebellion against God’s appointed authorities.

**3. Self pity**

This is self-inflicted sin. We nurse and we re-open our perceived hurts, convincing ourselves that no one has experienced tragedy as we have.

Self-pity makes us apathetic, our wills become more and more passive, atrophied, incapable of action.

**Power and Control**

For Christians, the need to exercise power and control over others has been removed. This revelation requires surrender to the Lordship (power and control) of Jesus.

For the self-centred person the attitude is one of *I must be in control, I must manipulate and exploit, before I am manipulated and exploited. I must victimise, before I become the victim again. I must make sure that I don’t get hurt, therefore I must control.*

**Counselling**

**Practical Aspects**

Counselling is personal ministry and as such allows for profound changes in the counselee’s life. It is best carried on in the pastor’s study away from the distractions of a person’s home as you need to be able to be in charge of the session. The person is also better prepared as they have come to a specific place for a specific purpose.

**Goal of Christian Counselling**

1.Counsel given should be with the aim to see lives conformed to the image of the Christ. In the light of Romans 8:29 and Ephesians 4:13, the counsellor should constantly be asking this question, *‘How can I best help this person draw upon the resources offered by the Holy Spirit to reflect the nature and character of the Lord* *Jesus Christ?”*

2. A second goal of our counsel should be growth and maturity. Our goal should not be the immediate personal happiness of the individual receiving counsel, rather the will of God, according to His word.

**Qualities of Christian Maturity**

Some of the qualities of maturity that are needed in the life of a Christian counsellor.

1. Ability to face reality. A mature person is willing to face the issues and not avoid them, e.g. sin, circumstances, people, personality quirks, etc.

2. Capacity to adapt to change. A mature person is flexible and is willing to change.

3. Able to make decisions. A mature person does not postpone decisions (procrastination) or follow another’s decisions without thinking.

4. Acting not reacting, i.e. a responder. The immature person reacts to problems, people, pressure, etc. The mature person acts positively. We should choose to act according to God’s Word.

5. Taking Responsibility. The mature person recognizes that he is 100% responsible for his own actions and does not blame others. The mature person does not relegate his responsibilities to others, but accepts them as his own.

6. Positive attitude. The mature person sees the good in everything. He doesn’t dwell on the question “Why did it happen?” but asks “What should I do now?”

7. Control of emotions. The mature person is self-controlled. Galatians 5:23, 2 Timothy 1:7, 2 Peter 1:6, Acts 24:25.

8. Consideration of others. The mature person is not self-centred, but considers others—their point of view, their situation, their ‘side of the story’, etc.

9. Governed by God’s love. The mature person will be guided by the characteristics of God’s love, as outlined in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8.

**Types of Personal Counselling**

Each person coming for counselling has a different need and we need to be able to discern and address that need.

1. **Spiritual Counselling**

When the person’s need relates to their inability to appropriate the scripture to matters such as doubt, unbelief, confusion, insecurity, guilt, fear, etc.

Examples of counselling instruction: A person may need to receive Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord; be baptised in the Holy Spirit; be released from satanic bondage; grasp the power of faith; give praise to God; undertake prayer and fasting; study the Word of God; repent of sins.

Avoid: dispensing with an issue by using a cliche like “trust in the Lord and your problems will disappear”.

The tendency for people to look for ‘instant cures’— a ‘zap’ from God, instead of a ‘walk of obedience’.

1. **Supportive Counselling**

When a person is struggling to focus faith on the greatness of the Lord on their behalf we can undergird, hold up, stabilise troubled people, help the person gain strength and stability to cope.

Examples of the need: the death of a loved one; break up of a marriage, engagement or a relationship; rejection; disappointment; crisis in life.

Keys: Be a shoulder to lean on. This means reassuring, affirming, comforting, guiding and sustaining. Encourage person to face his problems through the relationship he has with the Lord; encourage a change in the person’s environment, encourage activity as often people in such circumstances stop activity and need to continue.

Avoid: dependency on counsellor; always point people to the Lord.

1. **Educative Counselling**

Provide information showing the person how to find information on his own in future.

Examples: premarital guidance; marriage and family counselling; biblical questions; requests for advice; work; handling of finances; approaching change of life

Keys: encourage questions; don’t just tell people what to do, but show them how; have person practice what you tell them; reinforce good responses by praise.

Avoid: dependency on counsellor.

1. **Preventative Counselling**

Anticipates problems before they arise; prevent worsening of existing problems.

Examples: youth with increasing sex drive; High School students; young people facing marriage; preparing to retire; facing surgery.

Keys: be alert to potential problems and dangers; confront the people with dangers; educate in sermons, private talks, discussions, seminars, etc.; know suggested solutions and ways to avoid problems; be alert to relevant scriptures and scriptural principles.

1. **Confrontational Counselling**

Forces the person to face and deal with some sin or difficult situation. Helps people to develop the moral strength to avoid similar problems in the future.

Examples: any illegal or immoral action; dissenting factions in the church; contrary, doubtful or heretical teaching or practices.

Keys: confront the person with evidence; support and accept them as a person; encourage confession to God and to people they have wronged (Proverbs 28:13; 1 John 1:9; James 5:16a); give assurance of God’s forgiveness; help the person forgive himself; guide the person as he makes restitution; encourage alternative and more responsible ways of behaving.

Avoid: moralising and lecturing; rejection of person because of their actions.

1. **Referral Counselling**

Provides short term support or other temporary help; refer the person to another counsellor who is an expert in a particular area.

Examples: the seriously disturbed; severely depressed or suicidal; those you are not able to help adequately; people who need medical care; people with whom you have a personality clash; people who need help in managing finances and budgeting.

Keys: be alert to local referral sources; know the procedure of referral in your church; create the expectation of referral (e.g. we may find someone else who can handle this better); help the person see the benefit of referral.

Avoid: the person may think the referral is a rejection; referring too quickly; not referring when you have neither the competence, training or time to handle the problem.

**Essential Qualities for a Christian Counsellor**

**1. Prayerfulness**

Prayer is vital bringing God’s wisdom and understanding. James 1:5, 3:17.

a) Through prayer we are able to draw upon the Lord’s counsel and strength. Romans 8:26-27.

b) Praying with the counsellee both before and after the counselling session. There are times when you may need to stop and pray during the counselling session.

c) Prayer may give the Holy Spirit the opportunity to work supernaturally in the person’s life.

**2. Personal Relationship with the Lord**

The effectiveness, as a counsellor, is directly related to the closeness of our walk with the Lord. John 14:21 and 23.

a) Jesus is called COUNSELLOR: Isaiah 9:6. Any worthwhile counsel comes through Him.

b) Daniel’s faithfulness to God in his personal relationship enabled him to excel as a great counsellor; Daniel 1:8-9, 17-20, 2:17-23.

**3. Faith in God’s Ability**

A counsellor must always trust in the Lord. John 15:4-5, Ephesians 3:20. Jeremiah was inspired and encouraged by the fact that God is *GREAT in counsel and MIGHTY in deed*; Jeremiah 32:17-20.

**4. Knowledge of God’s Word**

The Word of God is essential in counselling, 2 Timothy 3:16-17

a) Study God’s word daily for His wisdom.

b) Acquaint yourself with the wisdom of Proverbs. Proverbs 1; 1-6, 3:13-18. Consider the application of Proverbs 15:1-2.

**5. Be a Careful Listener**

Careful listening is important in grasping all the relevant details before being able to give the appropriate advice.

a) In certain situations it may be helpful to jot down on paper relevant points. Often the solution to the problem unfolds.

b) Don’t rush the counselling session. The people we counsel need to feel that they have had sufficient time to talk out their problem. They also need to see that we genuinely care about what they have to say.

c) Listening carefully also means ‘hearing’ what is **not** being said.

d) Try to discern the reasons why certain things happen and thus deal with the cause, not just the symptoms. Study Isaiah 11:2-5.

**6. Empathy**

The World Book dictionary defines empathy as *“The quality or process of entering fully into another’s feelings or motives.”* Refer to Jesus our High Priest. Hebrews 4:15-16.

**7. Being Sensitive**

Try to understand counsellee’s point of view. People’s feelings can be easily hurt. Avoid offending people through being abrupt and harsh. People need to be gently led, not whipped or driven by our words. Study 2 Timothy 2:24-26.

**Impartiality in Disputes between Individuals**

a) When counselling, particularly marital problems, don’t take sides. Instead, try to show both parties their respective responsibilities in a relationship.

b) If only one party, in the marriage is willing to receive counsel, then endeavour to counsel that person in a way that will work towards restoration.

**Desirable Attitudes and Attributes**

1.Always be patient and kind.

2. Smile when greeting the counsellee. Be friendly and make the person feel welcome.

3. Quickly deal with any wrong attitude in yourself. Don’t resent infringements on your time and life, but wisely learn to handle people’s demands upon your time.

4. Be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to anger. James 1: 19-20.

5. Don’t make hasty judgements.

6. Avoid having prejudices and bias which may influence your thinking and hinder your effectiveness. Try to see people as God sees them. 2 Corinthians 5:16.

7. Don’t argue with the person and never lose your temper.

8. Always try to see the good side in every person.

9. Be positive. Don’t allow other people’s negativity and injustices to affect you.

10. Know how to hand all your cares over to the Lord.

11. Don’t become emotionally involved with people’s problems.

12. Respect confidentiality at all times. The counsellee needs to know that you can be trusted with the information shared.

13. Be ethical when counselling people from other churches or counselling people that others are counselling.

14. Be morally upright. Use wisdom in counselling a member of the opposite sex and where possible have a third person present.

**Acknowledgement**

*Effective Counselling* - Gary Collins

*Effective Biblical Counselling* - L.I. Crabb

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**Biblical Counselling**

**The World in the Church**

Most counselling offered today in Christian circles is humanist psychology with, at best, added Bible verses. This is inadequate and our counselling needs to be philosophically anchored in the Bible.

Christianity had been the essential world view of the west for centuries, but over the past two or three centuries, in particular, and in general, since the Renaissance the Christian world view has been challenged by a humanistic world view. This world view has permeated every area of life, eventually getting to the church; affecting the theology and also the practice of helping troubled people.

The church in the past 50 or so years has imported humanistic counselling practices with little question as to their biblical integrity. The result is an essentially humanistic philosophy of counselling gilded with Bible verses. Any approach to helping people that does not begin with the Sovereignty of God, proceed to man’s fallen state in sin and deal with sin through repentance and faith in the shed blood of Christ, will be inadequate and humanistic. Worldly ideas can achieve apparent success but their eternal fruit will be poor. Every human endeavour will in the final analysis be judged by *“what think ye of Christ?”* - Jesus said, *“without Me you can do nothing.”* John 15:5.

Thus as we explore counselling we must be constantly referring back to the scripture, allowing it to guide our thoughts, for we dare not act independently of God. This section of notes is based in the work of Jay Adams, *Competent to Counsel.*

**The Holy Spirit and Counselling**

The Holy Spirit is called the *paraclete*; the counsellor. Christian counselling must be carried out in harmony with the regenerating and sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. The characteristics that counsellors want to see in people’s lives are actually the fruit of the Holy Spirit; Galatians 5:22-23

*“Not only is it futile to attempt to generate these qualities apart from Him,…but…is at bottom rebellion against God grounded upon humanistic assumptions of man’s autonomy.”*

The Holy Spirit uses the ministry of the Word, the sacraments, prayer and the fellowship of God’s people to affect change in lives. It is the Word of God that is the chief weapon in the counsellor’s arsenal.

**Nouthetic Counselling** (Jay Adams)

The Greek *nouthesis* means to confront - in terms of counselling it relates to the concept of allowing the word of God to speak to a person’s circumstance - to confront them with God’s truth. It is the word the Bible, particularly Paul’s writings, uses to describe the bringing of the truth of God’s word to a person’s circumstance. In Colossians 1:28 the NKJV uses the word *warning* to translate *nouthesis* and speaks of a person to person interaction.

*Nouthesis* is difficult to translate to English and words such as *admonish, warn* and *teac*h are used. There are three elements in this concept.

1. It always implies a problem, something to be overcome, presupposing the need for change. Such nouthetic confrontation arises out of a condition that God wants changed - it is to effect personality and behavioural change.

2. It is verbal confrontation concerning the person’s shortcoming that aims for confession, repentance and the development of biblical traits. This confrontation is an occasion of discipline.

Humanist counselling seeks to discover the whys and wherefores of behaviour, whereas biblical counselling seeks what; what has been done - what needs to be done to rectify and how should one behave in future.

Why usually leads to blame shifting, the point to be grasped is the person accepting full responsibility for their behaviour.

3. The motivation of nouthetic confrontation is for the benefit of the person.

*“I did not write these things to shame you but to confront you nouthetically as my beloved children.”* 1 Corinthians 4:14.

The aim is to change those things in the person’s life that cause them hurt and harm. Punishment is not part of the aim and goal of nouthetic confrontation.

**The *nouthesis* of Scripture**

*“All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is useful for teaching, for reproving, for correcting, for training in righteousness.”* 2 Timothy 3:16.

This demonstrates the nouthetic orientation of the scriptures - God works in our lives nouthetically through the Holy Spirit.

Paul says, *“…the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart, and a good conscience, and a sincere faith.”* 1 Timothy 1:5.

This authority is authoritative - there is great strength in God’s love bringing His order to our lives. In counselling we must take care as most failures are caused by:

1. Being too sympathetic to the complaints and excuses of the person.

2. By jumping to conclusions before hearing all sides of the issue and hearing from God.

3. By becoming too emotionally involved.

4. By being too overbearing in the use of authority.

**Dealing with Sin**

*“He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper: but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.”* Proverbs 28:13.

Man’s problem is sin and the remedy is straightforward - don’t endeavour to make it complicated. James suggests that much sickness is caused by sin and his instructions were to *“call for the elders of the church…”* Humanist psychiatry has no answer and the church must not cower before usurpers, but fulfil its biblical mandate.

Whilst confession to God is imperative, confession, particularly to a wronged party, is significant in the restorative and healing process. In this process ensure that sin is not minimised.

Nouthetic counselling could lead to dependence, thus it is important to stress self-discipline. Often best not to finish the work during a session but allow for ‘homework’ when people can work on the issues with God. Ensure people record their progress and a means of seeing progress and also for giving thanks to God for His grace toward them.

Take care not to generalise as each situation will have its unique distinctives. Take care of each situation as it arises, for the person is able to cope with one thing at a time. You will be aware of many other root problems, for example, but take care not to overwhelm the person. Allow for each sin to be thoroughly dealt with so the person can move on effectively to the next aspect of growth.

**THE HOMOSEXUAL CONDITION**

Most people think of homosexuality simply in terms of the sexual act. In our society, the underlying structure once provided moral guide-lines which would not even entertain the idea of this expression of sexuality; has now moved into a more subjective approach *‘if you ‘love’ the other person it is alright*”. This has provided the climate whereby ho­mosexuality, although still not readily understood, has become more acceptable as a life-style. In re­cent times however, this approach has been sub­jected to question with the onslaught of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.

Traditional Christian thought has drawn a clear distinction between homosexual orientation and its expression in homosexual activity. Whilst this has been a useful and significant distinction, it has still been used with the objective of defining what can and can’t be done, whilst avoiding the real is­sue and providing a more positive approach.

The real question which we should be asking is: ...

**What Is The Type Of Personality Structure That Underlies The Possibility Of Homosexu­al Behaviou**r?

The latest scientific research has clearly esta­blished that a homosexual orientation does not depend on a genetic predisposition or on a hor­monal imbalance. However, many claim to be ‘born gay’ and are quite genuine in their convic­tions. The question quite rightly posed is: “Why the apparent contradiction?” Upon closer exami­nation, what is really being said is, that as long as they can remember they have been ‘that way’, that from earliest memory there was something ‘different’ about them. I propose that, whilst there is a multiplicity of factors involved in the causation of homosexual orientation, the real roots lie in the difficulties experienced in the parent-child relation­ship, particularly in the early years of life.

The homosexual - whether man or woman ­has suffered from some deficit in the relationship with the parent of the same-sex; and that there is a corresponding drive to make good this deficit - through the medium of same-sex, or ho­mosexual relationships.

To place this concept within a Biblical perspective, we need to examine God’s intention and pur­pose with regards to the family. Historically, until about 180 years ago, the family unit was much larg­er than exists today. Then it consisted of grand­parents, all their male offspring with their spouses and perhaps some single female offspring, and all the grandchildren all living together as one family. Then came the Industrial Revolution, and with it came into existence what is known as the Nuclear Family of Father, Mother, and Children. Then in the 1970’s came the Sexual Revolution and with it has come into prominence the single-parent fami­ly. Certainly, what has been happening has been a breaking down of the family structure. Yet it is this structure which God has purposed in which children are to be raised. The Bible clearly outlines an authority structure which places responsibility for the children with the parents.

The way a child perceives his parents, with the consequent bonding and relationship that is established is critical to the way that child in later life as an adult, perceives God and establishes a relationship with Him.

Within that family structure, any lack in relation­ship between the child and the parent of the same sex does not always imply wilful maltreatment by the parent in question. Hurt experienced in its re­lationship with the parent can often be quite unin­tentional or accidental. However, in each situation, something of a traumatic nature, whether ill treatment, neglect, or sheer absence, has in these particular cases led to a disruption in the normal at­tachment.

This in turn implies that certain drives or needs that are normally met through the child’s re­lationship to the parent are left unfulfilled and still require fulfilment.

It is important that no parent of a homosexual should necessarily blame himself or herself on ac­count of this disruption of the relationship. Alloca­tion of responsibility can be particularly complex. Sometimes there will be direct culpability, i.e. a fa­ther makes little time for his son, or belittles him or ill-treats him. A divorce may damage a child’s rela­tional capacity without the parents wanting this to happen - although the parents must accept some responsibility, as any hurt experienced by the child is a consequence of their actions. However, sometimes separation from the child may occur for good reasons i.e. employment, prolonged illness, or hospitalisation.

**Causation of Homosexuality**

Any incident that happens to place a particular strain on the relationship between the child and the parent of the same sex is potentially causa­tive. At the same time, the effect may not always be actualized. A child may genuinely get over a hurtful situation. Or alternatively, other damage may result rather than a disruption in the child’s re­lationship to the same sex parent.

Whatever the particular incident may be, it is something that has been experienced as being hurtful by the child. Difficulties arise when such hurt is accompanied by an unwillingness to relate any longer to the love-source that has been exper­ienced as being hurtful. This implies then, a ­con­tinuing defect in the child’s relationship with that parent, and subsequent behaviour by that parent will be completely irrelevant. Even if love is of­fered, it cannot be received.

It must be emphasized that this relational de­fect may not be evident at the conscious level, an adjustment may be made leaving few or no signs of disturbance. This is why family relationships in families of homosexuals seem good; indeed at the surface level they are.

Homosexuality is not an independent entity or condition caused by difficulties in the parent-child relationship. Rather, the homosexual condition is it­self a deficit in the child’s ability to relate to the par­ent of the same sex, which is then carried over to members of the same sex in general.

God has placed within each one of us needs for love, affirmation, security and identity. They are placed there in us so that ultimately we are drawn into a personal relationship with God, Who is the original source for all these things. They are in­tended to be met within the family. Indeed, in the very early years of life, a child’s only concept of God is the parents. Only as he grows older he is able to look further than the natural realm to have some idea of God. However, if these needs or drives are abnormally left unmet, the fact is that they still need to be fulfilled. Then, as the child grows into an adult, he will begin to look to other sources in or­der to have these needs or drives met and this will involve a rejection of God and His provision, as well as a rejection of his parents, in particular, the par­ent of the same sex. These ‘other sources’ can be as simple as a preoccupation with certain interests or hobbies, or a career; or more extreme such as drugs, alcohol, criminal activities, or sexual relation­ships. This can include homosexual behaviour.

Needs for love and dependency on, and iden­tification with the parent of the same sex are met through the child’s relationship to the parent. If the relationship is disrupted, the needs that are normally met through the medium of such a rela­tionship remain unmet. This has two ­­consequences:

1 . A resistance to restoration of that relationship which is then generalized to all members of the same sex. This is what marks the abiding effect in the person’s actual relational capacity, that long outlasts the initial occasion of the hurtful event.

2. A corresponding drive towards restoration of the relationship. It is this that is involved in the homosexual impulse, that is that this impulse is essentially motivated by the need to make good earlier deficits in the child’s relationship; i.e., the unmet needs of love and identification which the person was unable to receive, whether it was offered for not.

**The Healing Process**

The healing process involves:

1. Undoing the root cause(s) of the disruption in the parent/child relationship which were ex­perienced as being hurtful.

2. Meeting the unmet love needs from the parent/child relationship, i.e., restoration of missing growth.

**Areas of Ministry**

1. Authority problems

Outworkings include defiance, hatred, and com­petitiveness.

**The Male Homosexual**

A resistance to restoring of relationship from the parent of the same sex will be marked by hostility ­either hidden or plainly obvious, towards the same-sex love source which will then be general­ised towards all other members of the same sex, i.e., male. Such other persons would include au­thority figures as obvious father substitutes, and also homosexual partners. This will happen, partic­ularly in cases where the father had actually been hostile towards his son, i.e., physical or verbal abuse. However, this is not necessarily always the case - if a father is apathetic or indifferent towards his son, this is seen as being hurtful and naturally anger is experienced.

All figures of authority (including homosexual partners) will invariably be identified with the father who has been hated and feared. This is the un­derlying cause for many male homosexual relation­ships being so unstable. When the needs for love, security, and identity, which for so long have been essentially unmet, and are now being partial­ly met, will also be marked by the emergence of the underlying hostility felt towards the fath er, which is then transferred to the homosexual part­ner.

In many situations where the hormsexual condition is simply marked in the person’s relational capacity, authority figures can include civil authorities, i.e., police, and can be the underlying reason for criminal behaviour in some instances. Authority figures can also include Pastors, which can be at the root of some divisive behaviour within the Church.

**The Female Homosexual**

Whilst the female homosexual can experience hostility towards her mother, which is then carried over to all females, this is not nearly as marked as it is with the male homosexual. This is because, in our society, the male is seen to have the authority and holds positions of power. Within our society this has a twofold effect:

a. another woman is not generally seen to be an authority threat;

b. men are seen as being a threat.

With regards to the female homosexual, her problems concern relationships with the same sex. There has been no problem in establishing relationships with the opposite sex. However, due to the imbalance in her relational capacity bonding with the opposite sex, is seen as being oppressive in the absence of a compensating relationship with the same sex. This is probably at the root of the feminist movement. It is interesting to note, not all feminists are lesbian, yet the same authority problem is experienced.

Same sex authority problems - Directly re­quire resolutions of the same sex relationship,

Opposite sex authority problems - Re­quire no change in the opposite sex relation­ship as such, but only a restoration of the com­plimentary relationship that has been missing.

**2. Identity**

An identity is the end product of a process of identification. Relating to a parent of the same sex is important in this process. Any disruption in this relationship will, in turn, affect the identification process. The blocking of the capacity to receive love implies the blocking of the ability to identify with the love source, i.e., the parent.

Aversion to the parent of the same sex implies an aversion to identifying with that parent, i.e., a dis-identification from that parent of the same sex. This then becomes a dis-identification - an aver­sion to identifying with the same sex. An extreme form of this is transexualism. There is little differ­ence between homosexuality and transexualism. There may be some difference in degree, but none in the nature of the problem. In both instanc­es the normal process of receiving love from, and hence identifying with the parent of the same sex, has been blocked by hurt, usually in the early years of childhood.

The difference between the two conditions lies in the subjective awareness of the fact of dis­identification. Only in certain instances do we find a specific awareness of not being psychologically a member of one’s own anatomic sex, which is a suf­ficiently strong sense of aversion to lead to the de­mand for reclassification from one’s anatomic sex. It is logical for a person who experiences a sense of gender dislocation to press for re-assignment in accordance with this sense of self-awareness. It would be wrong to regard this as imaginary or illu­sory. Rather it marks an accurate and realistic rep­resentation of how that person feels. However, where there is no specific awareness, this is usual­ly expressed in effeminacy in the male homosexu­al and quasi-masculinity in the female homosexual.

The important point to note is that, this isn’t an identification with the opposite sex, but rather a dis-identification (or rejection of identity) from the same sex.

**The Male Homosexual**

Where there is a lack in a sense of identity, according to the homosexual condition, there must be a corresponding drive to make good this need. As male homosexual relationships’ most promi­nent feature is in the area of sexual expression, so the underlying motivation is within the area of a search for identity or completion of identity. The male homosexual’s longing for masculine love is, in fact, a desire to attain masculinity - to resolve and complete the identification process with the parent of the same sex that had been blocked in a greater or lesser degree.

The homosexual believes that he may absorb strength through contact with a man of strength and thus, through contact with masculine men, be­come masculine himself.

It is important to note that, simply because a man has a desire to have sex with another man, does not imply an inability to establish a sexual relationship with the opposite sex. It must also be noted that, once sexual expression is seen as a process by which this need for identity is fulfilled, it be­comes a habit. Therefore, whenever the man ex­periences insecurity, pressures of work, or pres­sures of family life, he may only be able to see a sexual relationship with another man as a form of coping and getting through those situations.

**The Female Homosexual**

As with the male homosexual, so the female ex­periences a corresponding drive towards complet­ing her femininity. However, sexual relationships receive less prominence as a means toward achieving this goal. Identify needs are attempted to be fulfilled by other means; i.e., emotionally de­pendent relationships.

**3. Dependency needs**

Childishness in the psychological make-up of the homosexual is another feature that deserves comment. If a normal channel of attachment has remained blocked since childhood, the person is in certain respects a psychological child; i.e., there is incomplete growth within certain areas of their personality structure. It someone behaves like a child, might this not imply that they still have the actual needs of a child of that age and that something has occurred at that particular age to prevent further maturation?

Two characteristics ...

a. Dependency needs are childish in that they relate to actual deprivation in childhood.

b. Are only likely to become apparent within the context of a really deep renewed relationship which is seen to be fulfilling those needs of love, security, identity, and affirmation. Two main features of childishness are:

1) possessiveness - this marks the urgert desire to retain the restored relationship - a relationship that is so much needed in that these needs have for so long remained unfulfilled and

2) jealousy - stems from the fear of renewed loss or deprivation of those needs. Jeal­ousy is likely to involve hostility towards the love source, and thus may link itself with that of the same sex-parent. The ha­tred that may sometimes re-emerge in the dis-identified person indicates how great a hurt was experienced within their child­hood.

**4. Inferiority**

Not all feelings of inferiority are the product of dis-identification, but where dis-identification has occurred there is a marked sense of inferiority, whether fully conscious or not, the sense of per­sonal worth which the child normally receives from its parent’s love, cannot be received if the child’s capacity for the relationship with that parent has been damaged and they have cut themselves off from that parent. Whether or not love is offered, it can no longer be received. If love cannot be re­ceived, then neither can a sense of self-worth.

**5. Depression**

Consequently, a sense of loss exists with the child cutting itself off from the parent of the same sex, and therefore not having those needs for love, security, identity and affirmation met, may manifest itself in a state of depression. This is a quite frequent occurrence within the homosexual scene. Suicidal thoughts or attempts may occur. Some statistics estimate that as many as one in four homosexual women and one in ten homosex­ual men may attempt suicide.

Since the loss is one of relationship as an adult, the restoration of a relationship with another person which is seen to be fulfilling these needs, may result in the lifting of the depression, and con­versely the healing up of the relationship - which implies the renewal of the loss - may result in de­pression of a greater magnitude or some other manifestation in response to the loss.

**Understanding the Transvestite**

Transvestism is the act of dressing in the clothes of the op­posite sex to achieve sexual arousal and climax. Like any deviation, transvestism is a surface symptom or manifestation of a deeper emotion­al and spiritual condition.

**Characteristics of a Trans­vestite**

Typically, the transvestite is male, exclusively heterosexual and has an aversion to homosexu­ality. Most transvestites are married and have children. Transvestites have no desire for a sex change, and value their male organs. Most trans­vestites cross dress in secret, only a small per­centage of transvestites go out or continuously live ‘cross-dressed.’ (Note: The transvestite is not to be confused with the ‘drag queen’ homo­sexual who cross-dresses in parody of the oppo­site sex; nor is the transvestite to be confused with transsexuals, those who wish to change their original gender into that of the opposite sex through surgery.)

The transvestite regards himself as an inferior male, and in compensation, is often a perfectionist where skilled. Because of inferiority and fear of rejection, the transvestite is usually a loner, rarely developing meaningful relationships beyond mar­riage.

As mentioned, the transvestite episode is secre­tive, and is primarily an act of masturbation, with cross dressing as the key ingredient for arousal and climax. Fantasy life of the transvestite is very active, and there may be involvement with pornography and in some cases bondage/dominance, another evidence of gross inferiority.

Following an episode, many transvestites loath themselves, vowing to never again act out their urges, and will often throw out pornography, clothing, wigs, makeup, etc. However, it’s only a matter of time before the transvestite cycle repeats itself. Stresses accumulate, triggering the transvestite response rooted in unhealed wounds and unmet emotional needs. Like an addict, the transvestite inevitably recreates for his “fix” in the private, inner sanctuary of fantasy and cross dressing to find solace through gratification.

**Origins of Transvestism**

As with any deviation, the transvestite condition can be traced to childhood, where proper nurtur­ing to form a healthy identity did not occur. In family patterns of the transvestite, the father is either physically absent or emotionally remote from his young son. The proper role modeling and necessary affirmation of masculinity is there­fore missing.

Mothers of transvestites often have problems of their own: Generally, they have been found to be masculine, dominant, hostile — or completely dis­interested in their son. They are hostile toward men and masculinity in general, and their son’s masculinity in particular. Their encouragement of cross-dressing can be attributed to an undercur­rent desire to emasculate men. Such mothers will offer positive reinforcement when their son is cross-dressed. As a result, the child longs for a close, loving relationship with mother, and finds comfort in handling her clothes, and the soft fab­rics become a mother replacement. With the on­set of puberty, such attachment becomes “sexualized.” Sisters of the transvestite were gen­erally more valued, by the parents compounding the sense of rejection and worthlessness linked to maleness in the child. Many transvestite’s report that the home environment was cold, tense, and very inhibited, fostering insecurity and a retreat into fantasy.

**What Needs Are Being Fulfilled Through Cross-dressing?**

First, the creation of a second personality brings the transvestite the closeness that he has been de­nied by his family. This other “person” also ac­complishes that which he never could: that is, “she” measures up to the standards of a woman, where he perceives himself as a failure as a man.

Because of the emotional lack in childhood, the transvestite has an exaggerated self love—Nar­cissism, and the second personality gives him a love object outside of himself. Transvestites prove this love by spending much time, money, and energy on the second personality, which serves as an escape from the guilt of being so self-centred. Additionally, the transvestite often has a low sex drive and needs the additional stim­ulation and excitement his fetish of women’s clothing provide.

Basically, the transvestite is looking to meet those needs we all have for love, affection, and affirmation—only he is meeting those needs in a wrong way, a way which cannot provide lasting satisfac­tion—only a series of “fixes.”

**Can The Transvestite Be Helped?**

Yes! Nothing is impossible for God! The following are some specific pointers to help.

• Transvestism is a Life-dominating Sin Problem

Transvestism will remain intact and in control as long as SELF RULES! The transvestite has lived by his feelings since early childhood, He has learned how to meet his own needs. The scenario that is acted out is a coping mechanism that is intended to boost his self-worth and pro­vide escape from overwhelming pressures. Although he may be a Christian, he has no need of God. He firmly controls his life and resents any inroads into his private world by God or man.

No help or change can take place until he honestly acknowledges his need for God. He must admit his powerlessness to change his life and also to acknowledge that his cross dressing is sin (Deuteronomy 22:5). In fact his cross dressing and love of the second personality is a form of idolatry which must be surrendered. Surrender can be a major obstacle for the transvestite, as they find trusting God to be very difficult due to past hurts.

• The Need for Social Skills

The transvestic person is usually lacking in social skills. Because needs have long been met by self alone, others have been looked upon as unneces­sary or troublesome. Four solid Christian men should be selected from the Body of Christ as close personal friends. There should be interac­tion with them and their families through such ac­tivities as: attending church functions; dinners at home or out together, engaging in some sport such as tennis, swimming, etc., planning with them for some special church event such as a singing group performance, a short skit, a fund­raising event.

• The Need to Cling to Christ

It is only the power of Christ that can change a life. Therefore, we must stay close to the Source of that power. Christ has said, *“if you love me keep my commandments.”* There are about 144 commandments given by Christ in the New Testa­ment. It is a good idea to read the words of Christ thoroughly and to list these commandments and begin acting upon them. In your personal life it is essential to have a time set aside daily for prayer, praise and worship. The fantasy life of Sin must also be put to death by renewing the mind through God’s Word.

• The Need to Forgive

Transvestism is brought about by trauma in early life. It comes about as a result of trying to meet unfulfilled needs. The transvestic person is usu­ally harbouring many resentments, hatreds and hostile feelings. These must be brought before the Lord and confessed as sin. He must evaluate every relationship, especially family relationships, and determine that hostile attitudes and thoughts be brought into the obedience of Christ.

• The Need to View Himself as God Sees Him

It is important that we accept God’s viewpoint of ourselves. God loves us equally. We are no bet­ter and no worse than those around us. Accept God’s love! Discover in God’s Word what God has to say about you. He has some, wonderful truths that can set you free. Ultimately, the heal­ing of your transvestite condition will be a result of your growing relationship with God through Christ. Seek Him!