

Biblical Principles

for Biblical Discipleship/Counseling

Excerpted from the **Self-Confrontation** manual
and the **Handbook for the Ministry of
Biblical Discipleship/Counseling**



Biblical Counseling Foundation (BCF)

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES FOR DISCIPLESHIP/COUNSELING

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INTRODUCTION

Most people agree with the statement found in *Job 5:7* which says, “*For man is born for trouble as the sparks fly upward.*” For centuries, mankind has been searching for explanations and solutions to the complex problems of living in a fallen world.

Man’s search for ways to explain and to “cope” with his problems has produced many often conflicting theories such as: man is basically good and is able to live up to this potential; man has been victimized by his conscience, leaving him insecure and in need of resocialization; man is just a high-level animal who has been conditioned by his environment and needs to be reprogrammed; man’s basic problem is a lack of self-esteem and an inability to love himself. All of these theories invite preoccupation with self and often, confusion and defeat.

The Bible itself states that the truths contained within it are entirely sufficient to enable a person to live a life pleasing to God (*II Peter 1:3-4*). It provides all the needed principles and guidance to make one adequate for every good work, that is, guidance for handling every situation of life in a godly way (*II Timothy 3:16-17*). The laws, testimonies, precepts, commandments, judgments, and principles in the Old and New Testaments provide the only authoritative guide for man’s thoughts, speech, and actions dealing with his relationship to God, others and self (*Psalms 19:7-14; Hebrews 4:12*).

The promises and authority of God contained in His Word offer the basis for a vital and abundant life. The Scripture contains the solutions to every problem of attitude, relationship, communication, conduct, and behavior (*based on II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:3-4*).

To have lasting victory in facing, dealing with, and enduring any situation of life, you must understand the problem from God’s view, recognize your biblical hope in the midst of the situation, make a plan to change biblically, and put the plan into practice. These four essential elements are explained in God’s Word as follows:

1. **BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING.** Gaining God’s perspective on any difficulty is important for those involved in facing, dealing with, and enduring problems biblically (*Proverbs 3:5-6; Isaiah 55:8-9; Romans 5:3-5, 8:28-29; James 1:2-4*). You must begin to look honestly at yourself in light of God’s Word (*Matthew 7:1-5; Luke 6:42-49; I Corinthians 11:31*). Scripture tells us that out of the heart come anger, bitterness, resentment, and all other evils that are defiling (*Matthew 15:18-20*). The way you respond to life reflects

the condition of your heart (*Mark 7:21-23*). God, the Holy Spirit, examines your heart thoroughly (*I Samuel 16:7; Jeremiah 17:10*) and convicts you of your need for change through the Bible (*John 16:8-13; Galatians 5:16-17; Hebrews 4:12-13*).

You must not integrate man's theories with biblical truth in order to face your problems and live a victorious life. As a matter of fact, Scripture promises us that when we seek to place God's Word on a level with man's thinking, serious consequences occur (*Proverbs 1:22-32, 14:12, 30:5-6; Isaiah 5:20-21; Romans 8:6-8; I Corinthians 3:19-20*).

2. **BIBLICAL HOPE.** In His Word, God has promised that He will not let you be tried or tempted, suffer "stress" or anxiety, or face any problem beyond your endurance. Instead He will provide ample help and direction in every situation as you deal with the problem His way (*I Corinthians 10:13; Hebrews 4:15-16*).

As you view your problems from a biblical standpoint, you will begin to understand that the peace and joy promised by God do not depend on your financial situation, work environment, the behavior of your spouse, or on any other external circumstance. You can gain great hope as you learn from Scripture that God's peace and joy can be yours as you depend solely on your relationship with God through Jesus Christ (*John 14:27, 16:33*).

3. **BIBLICAL CHANGE.** In order to live in a victorious way, you must be deeply committed to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the authority of God's Word. You must be committed to "*walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God*" (*Colossians 1:10*).

You must learn how to lay aside (or "put off") the old self-centered patterns of living. Instead, you are to "put on" biblical patterns of thought, speech, and action (*Romans 6:6-7, 12-13; Ephesians 4:22-32; Philippians 4:6-9; Colossians 3:5-17*). Among these blessings are lasting peace, joy, and righteousness (*Romans 14:17*).

4. **BIBLICAL PRACTICE.** You must take action to put God's principles into practice in your everyday activities. If you hear the Word and do not put it into practice, you deceive yourself and your problems become worse (*James 1:22*). But if you become a doer of the Word, God has promised that you will be blessed (*James 1:23-25*).

The first 105 biblical principles listed in the following pages provide a scriptural base for facing, dealing with, and enduring the tests and trials of life. They are excerpted and updated from the *Self-Confrontation* manual which contains 24 lessons. Each lesson is based on a portion of these biblical principles. Starting in Lesson 9, which is the first lesson dealing with a particular type of problem, the principles are arranged under the four basic elements mentioned above.

Biblical principles 106-137 provide scriptural guidelines for the biblical discipler/counselor. They are excerpted from the *Handbook for the Ministry of Biblical Discipleship/Counseling*. This reference book provides guidance on how to restore those who have fallen and how to train a disciple/counselee to live victoriously in Christ.

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES FOR LIVING

(FROM THE *SELF-CONFRONTATION* MANUAL)

YOU CAN CHANGE BIBLICALLY (PART ONE)

(Lesson 1)

God's plan for you to change in a biblical way centers on His Son, Jesus Christ

(Principle 1)

Because God's standard is one of perfection (*Leviticus 19:2; Matthew 5:48*), you cannot meet it by your own efforts (*Psalms 143:2; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:23*). You cannot save yourself (*Proverbs 20:9*) nor depend on any other human being to redeem you (*Psalms 49:7*). You need to recognize your helplessness to meet God's standard (*Isaiah 64:6; Romans 3:9-12*) and need to repent of your sin (*Luke 15:7; Acts 2:38, 3:19, 17:30-31, 26:19-20; Romans 2:4; II Peter 3:9*). By God's grace and mercy, you recognize your lost condition and believe wholeheartedly and sincerely on the Lord Jesus Christ to receive the gift of eternal life (*John 3:16, 36; 5:24; 11:25-26; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5-7; I John 5:11-13*) and forgiveness for your sins (*Mark 16:16; John 3:16-18, 8:24; Acts 2:38, 4:12; Romans 10:9-13; Ephesians 1:7*).

YOU CAN CHANGE BIBLICALLY (PART TWO)

(Lesson 2)

You are to establish a biblical pattern of life

(Principle 2)

You are to be rooted, built up, and established in the Lord Jesus Christ and are not to be conformed to the world (*Romans 12:1-2; Colossians 2:6-10*). You must practice God's Word to grow into maturity (*Matthew 7:24-27; II Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 5:12-14; James 1:22-25; I Peter 2:2; II Peter 1:4-11; I John 2:5*).

You are to prepare yourself to help others

(*Principle 3*) Practicing God's Word begins with judging yourself and removing sinful obstructions from your own life (*Matthew 7:1-5; I Corinthians 11:28-31; Hebrews 12:1*). Then, you have the privilege and responsibility of restoring others to victorious living (*Matthew 7:5; Romans 15:14; II Corinthians 1:3-4; Galatians 6:1-5*).

MAN'S WAY AND GOD'S WAY (PART ONE)

(*Lesson 3*)

The Bible is sufficient

(*Principle 3*) Since God's Word is the only authority for faith and conduct and is the sole, legitimate standard by which all aspects of living are evaluated, you are to rely on no other source. God's Word provides hope and gives direction for change in your deeds (thoughts, speech, and actions) and is sufficient to equip you for every good work (*Psalms 19:7-11; Proverbs 30:5-6; Colossians 2:8; II Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12; II Peter 1:2-4*) and to develop a Christlike attitude of servanthood within you (*Matthew 20:25-28; John 13:12-17; II Corinthians 3:5-6; Philippians 2:3-8; I Thessalonians 2:13*).

(*Principle 4, revised from Lesson 3 for Lesson 17*) Whether you are a parent or a child, God's Word is to be your only authority for faith and conduct and is to be the only legitimate standard by which you are evaluated. You are to rely on no other source, since God's Word provides hope and gives direction for change in all areas of your life (thoughts, speech, and actions). Scripture is sufficient to equip you to be the kind of parent, or the kind of child, you ought to be (*based on Psalms 19:7-11; Proverbs 30:5-6; Colossians 2:8; II Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12; II Peter 1:3-4*). As you are obedient to God's Word, a Christlike attitude of servanthood will develop within you toward your family members and others (*based on Matthew 20:25-28; John 13:12-17; Philippians 2:3-8; I Thessalonians 2:13*).

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