

# The Necessity of Individualized Counseling

George Scipione

## Engaging the Heart

- I. There is a problem in the U.S.A. that impacts Biblical Counseling.
  - A. Pragmatism is a part of us. What works is assumed to be true because....well it works!
    1. The 12 steps to... sobriety. AA is a perfect example.
    2. People always ask what BC's success rate is!
  - B. Jim Newheiser's ***Parenting is Not a Formula*** is an attempt to address this problem in a specific area.
  - C. Jay E. Adams's ***Insight and Creativity in Christian Counseling: A Study of the Usual and the Unique*** is an attempt to address this issue. See his Introduction.
  - D. Some just want a formula for each problem they will counsel and a neat step by step procedure to address it with all individuals with that issue.
- II. The American penchant for individualism does not fit well with the Bible's concerns which are God's!
  - A. Americans love "individual psychology" which makes Adler smile. God is concerned with the church. Most epistles are to churches not individuals. Of course there are some epistles to individuals and individuals do count with God. He elects individuals not a mass of humanity. But He is King of the Church!
  - B. Americans want individual concerns addressed first. God wants the 1<sup>st</sup> Adam/2<sup>nd</sup> Adam issue addressed first and foremost.
  - C. Yet, key passages do deal with individuals. Ezekiel 18 stands out. For our purposes, remember Proverbs 18:13. We need data, data and more data!

## Exposition of the Word

- I. Paul's example is helpful.
  - A. Paul is multi-cultural.
    1. He is 100% Jewish. Philippians 3:3-11.
    2. Yet, he is very adaptable in evangelism, 1 Corinthians 9:19-23.
    3. This is but a reflection of Jesus's counseling in the book of John. He always is the bottom line. However, He adapts to the individual: the individual disciples, Nicodemus, the woman at the well, the official whose son is sick, the crippled man by the pool, the blind man etc. Jesus says He calls His sheep by name! See John 10:4-5; 16.
- II. You need to understand and to distinguish types of people, 1 Thessalonians 5:14-22.
  - A. The idle: warn/admonish, 2 Thessalonians 3:6-13
  - B. The timid: encourage, Philippians 4:4-9
  - C. The weak: help, Rom 14:1-15:6
  - D. Everyone: patient, kind, no evil, Romans 12; 1 Peter
  - E. Always: joyful, prayerful, giving thanks
  - F. Avoid: quenching the Holy Spirit, despising the Word, lacking discernment between good and evil.

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- III. You need to understand and distinguish several circumstances, Colossians 4:2-6.
  - A. You must be devoted to prayer and watchfulness and thanksgiving, v 2.
  - B. You must be bold and clear in presenting the Truth, vv 3-4.
  - C. You need wisdom dealing with unbelievers, v 5.
  - D. You need to be on the lookout for opportunities, v 5. They will change constantly.
  - E. You must insure that your conversation is full of grace and seasoned with eternally lasting salt.
  - F. PURPOSE: to properly answer each individual in each unique circumstance!

## Exhortation for Life

- I. The big question is HOW!
  - A. Study and know the Bible.
  - B. Study and know people. Cf., my talk PERSONALITY at the 2012 JI of IBCD.
  - C. Study and know how to properly apply Scripture to individuals.
  - D. Study and learn from others: books, articles and personal conversations.
  - E. PRAY; PRAY and PRAY for wisdom, James 1.
- II. Grow in knowledge and wisdom.
  - A. Learn from others.
  - B. Record the lessons God gives to you providentially.
  - C. Oh yes, did I mention prayer?!