

Counseling God's Way Leadership Seminar - Part 3

by Bob Hoekstra

Counseling God's way involves focusing on Christ and the simplicity of His teachings, rather than relying on complicated human theories.

Duration: 50:44

Scripture: Jeremiah 2:13, Romans 12:1-2, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 3:3, Ephesians 6:10-13, Colossians 2:8

Topics: "Spiritual Warfare", "Christian Counseling"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the foundational truths for counseling found in the Scriptures, focusing on the identity of believers in Christ as new creations and the importance of renewing the mind to align with God's perspective. It also delves into the spiritual warfare believers face and the dangers of forsaking the Lord for worldly counsel. The sermon warns against being led astray by human philosophy and empty deceit, stressing the need for counseling according to Christ and His Word.

Transcript

Let me just read each of the scriptures that remain on the outline and just make a very brief comment to conserve our time. We were looking at foundational truths for counseling. We looked at Romans 5, 6, 7, and 8. There are, of course, elsewhere in Scripture, sections of Scripture on foundational truths like 2 Corinthians 5, 17.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. Old things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new.

This kind of raises the entire arena of who we are in Christ. So many people naturally, from natural human thinking, try to shape their identity on who they are. Try to shape that by self-introspection, as it were, and our history and all that we've gone through in the past, accumulated up until now.

It's certainly understandable why the world thinks like that, because they know nothing of a whole new life in Christ. The only life they have is the life they've lived, and that's why the counseling theories, the psychological, sociological, anthropological counseling perspectives focus in on self. The Scriptures focus in on who we are in Christ, and here's one of the great truths.

We are new creatures in Christ. That's why a focus, say, on our past, which is very predominant in the counseling theories of man, isn't really productive, nor is it exemplified in the Scriptures, because we have a new life. We were born again, you know.

Our history is our new life with the Lord, and not only a new life with the Lord, but the life we are finding in Him and developing and walking in today. Today is the day of salvation, both for the unsaved to get saved, as well as the saved to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We're growing in today, the realities of today, and we're new creatures in Christ.

The old life has gone before the Lord. There's a whole new resource, a whole new relationship, and there are many places in Scripture that the Lord speaks of who we are, like, you're the vine, you're the branches, I'm the vine. What an insight that is.

I'm the true vine, you're the branches, and really the Lord reveals His identity to us in the Scriptures, not for self-aggrandizement or self-occupying reasons. He gives us this revelation of who we are in Christ to nurture our relationship with Him. And again, the counseling theories of man are very much isolated in selfism.

In the Scriptures, the counseling approach is relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. And of course, the world cannot add this, they know not of it, but we have no other life apart from Christ. Colossians 3, 4, He is our life.

And to grow in life, we grow in the giver of life, and who He is and what He's done, and who He's making us to be in Him. It's a good reminder, though the world has no other way but to focus in on self, really we want to focus in on Christ and how we are related to Him. Disciples, new creatures, branches in the vine, such truths as that.

Here's another great foundational truth, Romans 12, 1 and 2, the renewing of the mind. Oh, this is gigantic. I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed, you know, really changed by what means. The renewing of your mind, learning to think as God thinks, learning to view things the way God views things. And of course, that's where the Word of God comes in.

That's where we find out what God thinks about issue after issue. That you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. To be in the Word of God, having our minds made new by a new heavenly perspective from God's viewpoint revealed in the Word, this is a huge part of our ministry one to another, reminding people of this, you know, and often when we struggle, we, well, I keep thinking about, I keep thinking this instead of that, well, the place where that is adjusted is in the Word of God, you know.

That's why it's so critical to be taking in the Word of God. This is God's heavenly mindset right here. And any other mindset is going to be earthbound and sooner or later, usually sooner than later, self-centered.

God's mindset, as it were, perspective is heavenly, viewing it from God's perspective and then living down here, adopting His perspective, His declarations, His truth, His mind. Ephesians 6 is next, another huge foundational truth, and that's spiritual warfare. A lot of people who are seeking a word of counsel, they're seeking it because, whether they know it or not, they're seeking counsel because they're inundated in warfare.

And this planet is a war-torn planet, and it's not just nations against nations. The war rages on every level. It's philosophies against philosophies.

It's race against race. It's in-group against in-group, you know. This is a strife-torn world, and of course behind all of that is not just that man's having trouble living in peace, it's that there's an enemy, and he's very formidable for us.

He's no match for God, but he's very formidable for us, and he loves to, you know, attack us with flaming arrows that would be thought provocation, like Ananias and Sapphira, you know, the devil put in their mind to put on this great charade of their astounding sacrificial generosity, and it was a sham. The enemy provoked that. They could have resisted that in the Lord, you know, rejected that, "No, we're not going to play a game." That's not the Lord's way, but they didn't.

Ephesians 6, verse 10, "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might." Put on the whole armor of God, and it's all listed later, His truth, His righteousness and such. Put on the whole armor of God, in other words, count on these realities in your daily life that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Our enemy is very clever, very clever.

"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood." That's the great problem in human theory of counsel. It's just a horizontal level on a human plane and trying to manipulate those circumstances or play some kind of mind games where we kind of get on top of it all. No, we're not wrestling against flesh and blood.

Here's what wrestling is, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age. By the way, it's out of the darkness of this age that all the human theories of man on counseling came. You have God's way to approach counseling, then you have man's theories.

Man's theories are impacted by the one who wants to destroy us. He's not going to offer us any help. And it's out of the darkness of this age.

Again, spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. That's why it seems like there's something working against us often. Sometimes people that don't know much yet about spiritual warfare in the scriptures say things like, "It's just like I'm being resisted or something." The light's starting to come on.

You're not only being resisted, the enemy of your soul would love to torment you and destroy you. Verse 13, "Therefore take up the whole armor of God," again, count on all these truths of what's available, the righteousness in Christ, the truth of His Word and all, "that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand," verse 14, "stand therefore." Four times the word "stand" is used, twice "alone" and two times "withstand and stand against." Christ has won a mighty comprehensive victory at the cross and in His resurrection. The way we walk victoriously is to learn to stand in the victory that He has already won.

Spiritual victory is not an accomplishment to achieve. It's a gracious gift to receive. And this chapter makes that very clear as well as many other places.

First Corinthians 15:57, "Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Many a troubled soul seeking counsel is embattled in the spiritual realm of the enemy's attacks. And these can be exposed by spending time together with saints of the Lord or those in the world that need to come to the Lord, explaining this spiritual battle. Christ has won the victory and He wants us to just stand in that, count on that.

We don't have to win the victory ourselves. It's already won by the Lord Jesus Christ. Major threats to counseling God's way, Jeremiah 2.13 gives us a pattern to apply to a lot of issues of life in Christ, but certainly to counseling.

Jeremiah 2.13, "For my people have committed two evils." And here they are. First, "They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters." Here's the second evil, "And hewn themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water." Israel had committed to them the fountain of living waters, the creator of all who wants to become the redeemer of those who will believe in Him. They had the living God as their ever-flowing supply of spiritual reality and vitality.

He was the rock from which they could spiritually drink. He was the fountain of living waters. And of course, you bring that into the New Testament.

Jesus said, "The ministry of the Holy Spirit to you is just like unto the same thing." But here's what happened. God's people committed these two evils. They forsook the Lord.

They turned away from Him as the fountain of living waters. In fact, they got caught up into all the idolatrous systems all around them, the wisdom of man, how you actually create a life or a religious life. And when they forsook the Lord, they had to dig for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water.

And that described all of the nations around them and their idolatrous approaches to life that they enticed Israel into. So forsaking the Lord and then substituting the things of man for the place of the Lord were the two evils of Israel. We're told in 1 Corinthians that these things were written for our instruction.

They not only are historically true accounts that actually occurred, but they're written so we can learn from them. And I think the application of Jeremiah 2.13 to this study of counseling God's way is that too many of God's people, and even leaders in too many places, and too many of the children of God in general, are forsaking the Lord as our wonderful counselor. I'm not saying that it means that every one of these Christians is denying the Lord as their Savior, but many are basically behaving as though He is not the wonderful counselor.

And to the extent that we believe that He is not such a wonder of a counselor, and believe that in Him all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, we say they do not reside, then where does that leave us? We start turning to worldly counsel. It's the very same pattern that the Lord chastised and called to account Israel of old, and it certainly has an application and implication. When you and I do not really believe that the Lord is a wonder of a counselor, all sufficient in wisdom and knowledge, we're going to be looking someplace to fill in what we think is missing.

In fact, it is from this entire kind of thinking that the predominating movement in the church world on counseling has developed, and that is the commitment to integrate the Word of God and the psychological theories of man. That is the predominating trend in the church world and even in the evangelical church world. In other words, those who believe the gospel, believe salvation in Christ, and believe the Bible is the Word of God.

That's an extremely serious development. It is extremely serious, and the Lord has already taught us through the history of Israel the serious consequences of forsaking the Lord in any of His roles toward us. It is always going to leave us out there digging our own cisterns.

If we're not going to live by the fountain of living water, we're going to be out digging something to collect to live by. But they end up broken cisterns that hold no water. In fact, some have said to me, well, what's wrong with these theories of man? Well, they're full of holes.

That's what's wrong with them. They're just full of holes, you know. They can't hold water.

They're not the source of living water, nor can they hold a life-sustaining reality at all. I think those are the two major threats to counseling God's way. Doubting the Lord is the wonderful counselor, forsaking Him in that role, and that will always lead to the second.

We're going to be looking some place to find what is going to be enough, and the scriptures do declare that Christ is enough. Oh, this is an amazing verse. 2 Corinthians 11.3, Paul wrote to the saints in the early church, "...but I fear lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted or led astray from the simplicity that is in Christ." The counseling theories of man are unbelievably complicated.

They did a survey at one of these major American associations of Christian counselors and all, and having people describe the counseling theories that they were trying to integrate with the Bible, and that they thought would work. It was staggering the number of them, and the complicated elements in the development of each one of them. There is something gloriously simple about the gospel, and about the way of Christ, and about the Word of God.

Simple, but not simplistic. Simplistic carries with it the sense of non-substantial, inadequate, you know, not enough there to it. Simple, yes, but the simplicity that's in Christ.

Here's the simplicity that's in Christ. Christ is to become our all-in-all, Colossians 3.11. He's to become all that the people of God need for all of the battles and impossibilities of life. He is sufficient in His person and His work.

Salvation alone in His name. Wholeness of life alone in who He is and what He's done. Simply put, Christ is the centerpiece that reaches out to the circumference of life.

That's the simple truth. The ways of man are not like that. And the enemy wants to corrupt us from, that is, lead us astray from the simplicity that is in Christ.

In the Word, we have something that is so simple, it's all anchored in Christ. But it is called the unsearchable riches of Christ, in Ephesians 3. The old translation, the unfathomable, the unfathomable riches of Christ. In other words, an ocean of spiritual riches, the bottom of which you can never hit.

So there is simplicity with substantiality. What a phenomenal combination. And that is what, that which we counsel from.

On the other hand, the theories of man, they are astoundingly complicated. But there is no depth or substantiality in them. And the enemy would love, he, that's how he caught Adam and Eve.

He led them away from the simplicity that was in the Lord. He just, Adam and Eve, just live at the tree of life. Enjoy the whole garden.

Just this one threat, just stay away from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Mankind has been feasting on the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil ever since. I'll find out what's good and

what's evil.

By my experience, by my own historical personal knowledge, I'll determine. In other words, I'll be my own God, thank you. The enemy would love to do the same thing with us.

Paul was concerned about that for the early church. Certainly the concern now is at least multiplied. I fear lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be led astray from the simplicity that is in Christ.

Well, why don't we just stop there. And we might read those last two verses in a little while as our conclusion, okay? Here's a question. The world says that they won't care about what you say until they know you care.

How important is personal testimony in counseling? Great questions. Personal testimony is a very significant issue in counseling. But here's the great thing.

Ephesians 4.15 says, Speaking the truth in love, that's where people grow up in Christ. The primary thing is to have God work in our hearts where we see that truth and love are His ways. And then we want to walk in them and speak and act and behave and relate to people with truth coming out of the heart of love.

And the Lord is able to impact those we minister to by that truth and love that's actually there, whether we get an immediate opportunity or not to give kind of a personal testimony or personal statement of where we stand on these things. We want people to know the truth because the truth is going to set those free. What makes us a valid instrument of that truth is that our hearts are overtaken by the love of God.

When someone comes to us for help, they not only find truth coming out of our lips, but it is embodied in love coming out of our heart. And these are not approaches to counseling. These are the embracing of reality.

These are not just techniques. They've got to be truthful and loving. Well, yes, but beneath and behind that, we're embracing this reality.

These are the very aspects of the character of God. The reason truth and love have such an impact on people is because it's God at work. Jesus said, I am the way, the truth, and the life.

The Lord is the truth. So when we're sharing His truth, we, as it were, are just passing along the very character of our God. And there, you know, people are having a measure of a confrontation with or an encounter with the Lord in that truth that we're sharing.

But also, 1 John 4, God is love. It's not just that we want to be loving, but we do want to be loving. It's that God is love, and those who know God, they love with the love of God.

And if they don't have that love, it brings into question their knowledge of the Lord, whether it ever happened or at least the depth of it, you know. Because we love Him because He first loved us. And when we can minister with the love and truth of God, really in our heart as part of our character, it's astounding.

The Lord can translate that to someone in even the first conversation we've ever had with them in our lives, you know. And if we are sharing with people and we don't sense a compassion and a concern and this motivating desire to help, it's kind of a reminder the Lord is saying, you know, I want your heart toward them to be like my heart toward them. And what do you do? You go back to the Lord, the source of love,

you know.

Lord, thank you for your great love for me, and I appreciate so much your sacrifice for me. And I see your love is beyond measure. And when I think on it, Lord, it does stir in my heart love for you.

And I just want to, Lord, I want to walk in that place. And the Holy Spirit is given to us to help us. The fruit of the Spirit is love, Galatians 5. And John 16, the Spirit of truth will guide us into all the truth.

So we're not left to ourselves, you know, to kind of make these realities appear. To be able to share personal testimony with people, you can see in the Scriptures that God has a commitment of His heart to honor personal testimony. You can write a lot of Scripture verses that are personal testimony verses.

A lot of the Psalms are personal testimony, especially from the life of David. Some of the Book of Acts is Paul's testimony and the testimony of the early church. Little verses and phrases in the pastoral epistles and other epistles from Paul's life are personal testimony.

So sharing the truth and love of God testimonially is absolutely biblically sound. Absolutely. Let me read this one.

By the power of the Holy Spirit that God has used me mightily in reaching the mentally ill people, disciplining them. That's a good ministry. A lot of people are in distress mentally, a company that is very often undisciplined life for many reasons.

Their life's out of control. I give glory to God upon hearing two days a week or a month after an encounter with them that they went home to be with the Lord. Because these opportunities the Lord has given me, recently I signed up as a volunteer counselor in a hospice care.

Just before going further, what a fertile soil really to minister the hope and help of the Lord. I mean a hospice. We're all going to die.

It's not a popular subject and we don't like to go there. But there's a point, a man wants to die, then the judgment, unless the Lord comes first, which certainly stirs the prayer. Come Lord Jesus, come quickly.

But folks faced with threatening circumstances, especially the ultimate one of a hospice, God bless you dear saint, whoever you are. What a tremendous place to minister. I desire to use the gifts God has given me.

To my dismay, I was told that I cannot use God's word in counseling the patients and the families unless they ask and that I would be trained in counseling. Should I back out or ask the Lord to have his will accomplished in the lives of these people? You know, the fact that you have a heart for folks in such a desperate circumstance, I would say consider prayerfully pressing on. It is sad that in some settings like that, and more and more this is the case, organizations, certainly in the world, but you know sometimes even in the church, if they have some government standards they think they're under, prohibiting the use of the word of God.

And I do believe for a Christian, that this is clearly a biblical exception to yielding to government authority. We are to render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's. We are to be good bond servants, good citizens.

Whenever anyone in authority, and this kind of goes to personal counseling in troubled marriages, where a pattern often is that the husband is demanding compromise on some level with the wife and trying to use his physical edge. Anyone in authority over a Christian does not have the right to demand of us to do something contrary to the revealed word of God. Remember when the disciples in Acts, they were out on the street preaching and they'd already been told, don't be doing that.

And in Acts chapter 5, they brought them in and reminded them and told them not to do that. We prohibit you preaching in the name of Jesus. Remember what they said? We must obey God and not man.

Now if the instruction of the authorities was not contradictory to the word of God, but it was just something they wouldn't have preferred or whatever, they still would have needed to comply as we are to. But when anyone in authority, whether it's a government, a boss, a pastor even, a husband, anyone in authority over us, and like this place, if they say you cannot use the word of God there, you have a couple of choices. Tell them you have a heart for these people in hospice, you would love to minister to them, but you cannot but speak the things of God.

And see if the Lord would grant favor right there on the front. Another thing you could do is just make a commitment in your heart to the Lord that you're going to look for every opportunity to share His word and you're just going to pray for favor. I mean, only two things are going to happen.

You're going to get favor or you're going to get fired. And you certainly can pray for favor. And we know from the word what happens when God gives favor.

I mean, Joseph went from a prisoner to almost running the prison. And he wasn't done there. That was just a little more preparation for being prime minister, you know.

When God gives favor, we've seen it a lot in prison ministry. My father founded Chaplain Ray International Prison Ministry. His name was Raymond Hoekstra, or I better say Hoekstra here with our Dutchman pastor.

Yeah, Glenn. They heard me, Glenn. I said, Hoekstra.

Chaplain Ray, they called my daddy. And he saw astounding favor in the prison system. He took my stepmom with him when he went to prisons.

And in those days, gals didn't go in. And my father would say, if my partner here can't go in, I can't go in. And every time he said that, they made an exception.

And things change when God grants favor. I would say your heart for those dying, give it time for the Lord to show favor, you know. And sometimes it happens, you're a reliable employee, and they just want you to do whatever you're doing that's given so much hope and help to these people, you know.

So even though by the letter, and we've seen going into prisons, we've been in a lot of situations where there have been prohibitions or even the door closed. And just through communication and prayer, the Lord just seemed to grant favor. Favor from God is gigantic.

I mean, it's just staggering what it can change. Here are a couple of questions. How dangerous is Joel Osteen's ministry and books? Also the others that have the same teachings.

I would say it's pretty dangerous. I don't know this man. I don't know his heart.

He does seem to be a nice guy. But it's not about being nice guys, you know. And God is merciful.

And I've only heard him teach a handful of times. Each time he did share some scripture, and I know this, God's looking at hearts, and if hearts are humble and hungry, and they hear the word and respond to the word, and not just some procedure by a popular religious leader, God is going to touch their hearts. But having said all that, I think it is a valid arena to be warned about, because he definitely is kind of a very contemporary, new form of the prosperity doctrine.

You know, the misguided belief that God wants every person healthy, wealthy, and circumstantially happy every day of their lives, which is not biblically sound. Jesus was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He was not Mr. Positivity.

He was reality. And part of the reality on this planet drives one to tears. Part of it leads to illness and sickness and ailments and all kinds of battles.

And some of those battles are thorns in the flesh that the Lord himself allows for higher purposes, leaving even the Apostle Paul, who probably had the gift of healing, certainly had seen people healed and even resurrected in his ministry. He knew of the healing grace of God. But when he asked to be relieved of that thorn in the flesh, which was sent by a messenger of Satan, you know, the Lord said, No, I'm going to teach you about sustaining grace and that my grace is sufficient for you.

So the prosperity doctrine is another one of those kind of self-focused messages. And I think Brother Osteen, I assume, I hope he knows the Lord. I would hope that he would in his time in the Word and maybe the Christians that have access to him that he might love and respect, might exhort him to a full gospel.

And by that I mean Colossians 1, where the Word is fully preached. And what's the full preaching of the Word? Christ in you, the hope of glory. Thank you.

Another question. Can you suggest a book to read for teenagers to guard their soul and their heart aside from the Bible? I think the more biblically saturated a book is, the more it's going to guard souls and hearts. And certainly the Bible is the best, though the Lord in His wisdom sometimes delivers the Word through other books.

I think of a book like, let's see, Ed Bulkley, Your God is Too Small, or How Big is Your God, I forget how it's put. A book like that is great. It kind of takes the circumstances of people's lives and holds it up against the majesty of God.

And sometimes teenagers can really benefit from that kind of teaching, because sometimes they don't catch the relevance of this glorious Bible message right down to the things that they think are important, or they get kind of fearful and hopeless. And a lot of young people really have bought into the lie that they're just here for personal enjoyment, as opposed to the knowledge and glory of the Lord. Ed Bulkley, B-U-L-K-L-E-Y, that's a good book I would recommend for that.

Well, let's read a couple more verses before we close, shall we? Galatians 3.3, the first of the last two verses, Are you so foolish, having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh? This is another one of the reasons why the Lord has laid on my heart to be sure to include warnings in a Bible study on biblical counseling. It's a very foolish position to think that those who have begun in the Spirit, that would be born again Christians, born again by the Spirit of God, very foolish for them to think that they

now, now that they have begun in the Spirit, that now in their ongoing Christian life, that they could be perfected, that is, more fully developed to be increasingly like the perfect one, the Lord Jesus Christ, that we could be made perfect by the flesh. This is one of the huge differences between the counsel of the Lord and the counsel of man.

Whatever you might say, or avoid saying about the counsel of man, as compared and contrasted with the counsel of God, you'd have to say that the counsel of man is of the flesh. Counsel of man's counseling theories, the Sigmund Freud's and Alfred Adler's and Carl Jung especially, all these theoreticians whose theories are very popular and they get kind of modified and adjusted and mixed together through the decades, they didn't come out of a knowledge of God, out of a study of the Word. In fact, some of them, like Sigmund Freud and others, came from hearts that had actually purposely, with emphasis and passion, rejected the Lord.

So they were trying to develop a way of life, a philosophy of living, leaving God out. And I think, again, it's a great tragedy the way the church world has sort of embraced the theories of man sends leaders off to get degreed and studied in the theories of man, when the best you can say about them is the accuracy that they're not of the spirit, but they are of the flesh. They come from human speculation, imagination, perspectives that are dead in trespasses and sins, and some of them even really haters of God, in the sense that they were aggressively trying to develop a way to view life and develop life with God ruled out completely.

God help us to never be so foolish as to think that those who have begun in the spirit could now have their lives developed to maturity by fleshly resources, whether it be their own best efforts or the educated blind guesses of unredeemed humanity. I think it's good to remember that these geniuses, some of these men we've just mentioned in passing today, they were geniuses. Some of them are still alive.

Maybe Maslow is. They were geniuses. When it comes to human intellectual capacity, probably would dwarf every one of us here, but there's more to be said on this subject.

They were dead. They were blind. They had an agenda.

These are serious lacks, and to just take these systems of counsel and try to integrate them into the living, pure, holy, certain, sound, all-sufficient Word of God, well, the question here, are you so foolish? God have mercy. Help us not to be. One more verse, and we'll conclude with this.

Colossians 2.8 Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit. According to the tradition of man, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. What does it have to do with our studies? Well, we're looking at counseling God's way, which is the Word of God, the truth of God, the Spirit of God, anchored in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The only other options are some form of human philosophy. You know, when man starts to talk, not only about where we came from, origins, does he have his own wild speculations that are kind of exposed in Romans 1 as foolish and dangerous, and he has all of his evolutionary theories, but when the question comes, okay, we've settled how we got here, it just happened. And it just happened through a lot of happenings.

Now, we got that settled. Now, let's talk about how we're going to get where we want to go. And of course, it's not heaven, because God's ruled out.

It's the be-all-you-can-be philosophy. And human philosophy, that's what's in view in this verse. Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of man.

Boy, one of the newest, as far as historically viewed, but most entrenched traditions of humanity in our day is the widespread saluting and embracing of psychological theory, according to the tradition of man, according to the basic principles of the world. The basic principle of the world is, hey, you're good, and you've got it in you, and you can do it if you just get at it. That lie goes back to the Garden of Eden, where the enemy basically told Adam and Eve, you can be your own god.

You won't be needing any god. You'll be your own god. And beware lest anyone cheat you, it could be translated, take you captive by these humanistic means, and not according to Christ.

The desperate need in all of our lives is a life according to Christ. The desperate need in any field is a perspective that is according to Christ. The desperate need in the arena of counseling, whether it's informal one another counseling, or some place with someone in leadership or respect by appointment, it is that it be counsel according to Christ.

And that necessitates our message be the Word of God. Let's pray together, shall we? Lord, thank You for this time today. I thank You for these precious children of God.

I thank You for the great encouragement in my heart, Lord, as I behold their countenances, see their hunger for Your Word, their joy at the wonder and reality of the Lord Jesus Christ. Lord, thank You for being here with us. Thank You for Your Word.

We trust You by Your Spirit to bring much fruit in our lives from these seeds planted. And Lord, equip us more and more to be instruments of the irreplaceable, glorious counsel of the wonderful Counselor, the Lord Jesus Christ. We pray in His name, Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/aRcK9Zixmys.mp4>

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