

# Christian Counseling

by Richard Siple

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*Richard Siple's sermon emphasizes the importance of Christian counseling rooted in biblical truth to address mental and emotional struggles.*

**Duration:** 52:26

**Scripture:** Psalm 1:1, Matthew 11:28-30, Romans 15:14, Colossians 2:1

**Topics:** "Counseling"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes that there are no unique problems and that people's sins are not that different from one another. He encourages the audience to understand that others have gone through similar struggles and that there are no new sins under the sun. The preacher also highlights the importance of preaching like counseling, getting off the pedestal and walking with the Lord. He emphasizes that individuals have free will and are responsible for their choices, and that God will hold them accountable for how they respond to influence. The sermon references Romans 14, which states that every person will give an account of themselves to God.

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## Transcript

I'd like to have us turn to the book of Matthew this morning, Matthew 11, and I think probably many of you can quote this passage, Matthew 11, 28 to 30. Now, I want this to be an informal session, so I'll probably get going. There's a lot more material I want to cover than I have time for, and I'll probably get rattling along at a great rate, but don't you mind interrupting me.

You just throw up your hand and interrupt me, and if it's a question I think we can answer at the moment, I will, and if I think I'm going to cover it later, I'll wait, or if I don't think I can take time for it, I'll tell you. And any question you ask me, I can answer, so you just don't have to worry about it. That's true, because I learn how to say I don't know.

So that really helps. It took me a while to learn that. That's one of the things we learn, you know, when God deals with the self-life, right? We learn how to say, I'm sorry, brother, I just don't know.

No, because we know so little, don't we? But thank God we have his Word, and he's able to teach us if we're teachable. And let's never get rigid where we're not teachable. When I was a young pastor, I used to think that probably by the time I'd been in the ministry two years, I would have the sum total of truth all fixed in my mind.

You know, it's obvious. I had the Bible, and I'd been to Bible college, and surely in that amount of time, I could have everything all figured out. But after 28 years, you know, it still isn't so, and may God help us to believe that and understand it.

And he's always teaching us, and we're always learning at his feet, and there's always a vast field of biblical knowledge that we don't yet know. And so let's always have our hearts open to God. Let's stop and just bow our hearts before the Lord.

Lord, we want to stop just this moment to pray again, so that I may say to you with all my heart that I know that I cannot teach, or I cannot impart your truth. And I pray that the Holy Spirit will do it, that he will meet our need in Jesus' name. Amen.

Someone read for us Matthew 11, 28 to 30. Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. One of the great disasters of our time is mental illness, so-called, and emotional problems of all kinds. Hospitals are packed with supposedly mentally ill people.

And I suppose that the statistics are probably right, that one out of every seven people sitting in this room will spend some time in a mental hospital. Now, that's awful to think of if you look at the number of people that are in this room, but that's the ordinary statistic. Now, I trust that among Christians it won't be that high, but the thing that's alarming is that even among Christians it's becoming very, very high indeed.

And there are many Christians spending time in psychiatric wards of hospitals and in mental institutions. Now, I'm not saying that in a critical sense. I'm just saying that it is a problem that is not peculiar to the world.

It's a problem that also has spread into the church and into the evangelical church where there are Bible-believing people. Again, I'm not saying that in a condemning way. I'm just saying it's true.

And so the problem is with us, and we have to begin to know how to deal with it. So to just get myself in all kinds of trouble this morning, well, I'm going to start off with a statement. And maybe it'll help to jog us into thinking and facing up to the issue.

As far as I'm concerned, mental illness, true mental illness, and I want to emphasize the word true. As far as I'm concerned, true mental illness is only one of three things. It is either a true physical defect, such as a brain or nerve damage or a chemical imbalance in the body or something of that type, a truly physical problem, or it is a demon problem caused by demon power, or it is a spiritual problem and is not truly a mental problem at all.

Now, I'm thoroughly convinced of that. I do a great deal of counseling, and I deal with people in all kinds of conditions. We do counseling in the mental hospital and also in psychiatric wards.

We're training laymen in our church to do counseling. We finished a 16-week training course this past year in which we trained four of our men and four of our women to do Christian counseling. And now there's such a demand for it, we're getting ready to run it through again after the first of the year.

And people are just pleading to take this kind of training so they can deal with problems. God's given us quite a ministry among Greek Orthodox people, and one of the women who has met the Lord and attends some of our home Bible studies is a psychiatric nurse in one of our big city hospitals in Akron. And so she went on duty one night, and as soon as she got on duty, because she is a Christian, people come to her even in that area with problems.

So one of the nurses came to her and said, Laura, in room number, I forget what the room, I'll say 24, we have a woman by the name of Mary who is catatonic. Now, if you don't know what catatonic means, it means to be in some way completely immobile. You can't move or you don't move.

And in this particular case, this woman simply was laying on the bed, stretched out straight and flat, stiff as a board, her eyes wide open, staring straight up at the ceiling. And it didn't matter what you did to her, she neither moved nor spoke. Now, it looks like a very bad condition.

And of course it is. So Laura went into this room. They told her because for some reason, and she is a brand new Christian.

She'd only been a Christian, I think, about six months. And so she went into the room and she picked up the board and read the doctor's report. The psychiatrist had been there and he had written on there, this woman is completely immobile and can neither move nor speak.

So she sat down by the bed. She reached over and took her hand and she said, Mary, I love you. And there's no response.

And she sat there for a little bit. And then she took out her New Testament. She started to read some scripture from one of the Psalms.

She read it for a little bit. Now, this isn't exactly medical treatment, you know. And then she bowed her head and prayed for Mary, you know, Mary still laying there staring straight at the ceiling.

And she sat there a little bit more praying quietly in her heart that God would lead her. And finally, she said, well, Mary, if you're not going to respond to me, I guess that I might as well leave. And she started getting up out of her chair.

And the woman said, ah, she's staring straight at the ceiling. Nothing else moves, you know, and not a twitch. And so Laura sat back down and she talked a little bit more.

And then she finally said, Mary, you know, you don't have to be this way. There is hope for you. God can completely change your life.

And in that second, the woman's head turned. She looked straight at her and she said, do you really think so? Isn't that something? And so then the woman completely relaxed and she got her testament out again. And she went through very carefully through the plan of salvation and presented to her how Jesus died for her sins.

And no matter how desperate her problems were, how shattered her life was or whatever the problem was, that Jesus could completely change her life. And Laura knew all about that because she had a husband who was getting ready to leave her. In fact, I counseled both of them and they're still together.

But he was getting ready to leave her and she'd been through some terrible situations and she had come to Christ and was trying to learn how to walk with the Lord. And so she shared with this woman what Christ could do in the human life. And this woman completely relaxed and turned over on her side and talked with her and began to share her troubles.

And when she finished and had prayer with her, then she went out of the room and went about her duties. And of course, she wrote on the report. And so she came back in two days later because she didn't work every day.

She worked on a kind of a swing shift. And when she came back in, why, one of the nurses come up to her and she said, you know what? Said, Mary is up and walking around and taking part in all the activities in the ward and she's going home this weekend. Now, that's just one example out of many.

Let me give you another quick example. We have quite a number of young people in our church who have been saved out of the drug culture and they've been all the way to the bottom of it with everything that could happen. And one of those young women, her and her husband were both in it right up to their neck and were ready for divorce and their whole life completely saturated with sin.

And when God saved them and put their home back together. But anyway, Cindy called me one morning and she said, Pastor, I wonder if you've got any time this afternoon to go to the hospital with me? And I said, yeah, I do. I have some time from two to three thirty.

She said, well, that'll be just fine. She said, we heard about a friend of ours who used to we used to swing it with him and sin, you know. And she said he's in the psychiatric ward at City Hospital.

And so I called him this morning and he's a Jewish young man, 26 years old, and he's married and has two children. His home is falling apart. His whole life is shattered.

And they have diagnosed him as being schizophrenic. And he's in the psychiatric ward. And she said this morning I presented the gospel to him over the phone and he prayed and asked Christ to come into his heart over the phone.

And I just wonder if you'll go with me this afternoon to talk to him. Now, I'm talking about a young man, 26 years old, diagnosed as a schizophrenic. So we went in that afternoon and she introduced me to him and we sat down and started to talk.

And so I was praying and really that God would lead me in it. And I asked him what he had done that morning. And he told me and I said, what has the psychiatrist been to see you? And he said, oh, yes.

And I said, what are you supposed to do? What's the treatment? And he said, well, tomorrow, this was on a Tuesday, he said tomorrow they're supposed to begin shock treatments. Well, I said, well, I said, tell me about your sins. And he looked kind of shocked, you know, and I said, come on, let's dump it.

And he said, all right, and the tears started running down his face and he dumped it. And here was a young man who was married and had two children and his wife was getting ready to leave him. He was carrying on two affairs at once.

He was a young businessman. He had a woman out of town and he would fly to this other city and carry on his affair with her. He had a woman in the city of Akron he was carrying on an affair with and trying to

live with his wife and two children, trying to run a business.

He was cheating the government on his income tax and they were catching up with him and investigating him and he knew they were going to get him. And he had two or three other crooked things going. And by the time he dumped all this filth and sin out and the tears were streaming down his face and he was sobbing and broken.

And I said, all right. And I read him some scripture, how the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. And he began to pour out his sin to God and he prayed and asked God to forgive him and to cleanse him.

And he got all through and his face was different. And, you know, I said, do you want those shock treatments? He said, I sure don't. I said, well, you don't have to have them.

After all, you're in charge. You don't have to have those shock treatments. I said, do you have the courage to tell the doctor you don't want them? He said, sure, I do.

I said, okay, then you make sure you get in touch with him today and you cancel those shock treatments. I said, what are you going to do about your wife? He said, I'm going to get right with her right now. And he went to the phone, called up his wife and he said, honey, I want you in here just as fast as you can get here.

I want to talk to you. His wife came in and he dumped his messed up life out to her and asked her forgiveness. And that young man went home that weekend.

Now, I know what I'm talking about. And I'm just saying to you that it's time for God's people to get back in the saddle where they belong. How many of you can quote the first Psalm? Anybody quote a part of it? Can you quote the first verse? You need to learn the whole Psalm, by the way.

And well, the first verse begins very interestingly. And I want you to quote it with me very slowly. Just we're not going to even get very far.

So just start quoting it with me very slowly. Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly. That's far enough.

Don't you think it's time that the child of God quit walking in the counsel of the ungodly and got back into the word of God for answers? If I need my automobile fixed, it doesn't matter too much to me whether the man is a Christian or non-Christian if he knows how to fix an automobile. I think a sinner may be a good mechanic. He may be a good mechanic and a bad man.

But listen, there has been a manual written on human behavior, right? Who wrote it? God, the Holy Spirit. Doesn't God know what's in man? Jesus said that Jesus committed himself to know man because he knew what was in man. Why? Because he made man.

You see, he knows. He knows what's in us. He made us.

He knows how we click, how we tick, how we run. And when it comes to human behavior, I think it's time for the Christian to stop walking in the counsel of men who are atheists and communists and anti-God and anti-everything we believe. We walk in their counsel and when we get in trouble and we have people who are in trouble emotionally and distraught, and we send them to ungodly men for answers.

And many times in our seminaries and our Bible colleges, we have been taught how to refer those that we don't know how to handle. It's a cop-out. It's a total cop-out.

Now, I think it's good for every minister of the gospel to have a good working relationship with a Christian internist, a Christian physician who is a good medical all-around family doctor, so that when you get people who have problems and you suspect that there may be a physical problem, you can refer them for at least an examination. See, I have at least two doctors. I can pick up my phone and I can call that doctor and I can say, I have a person sitting here in my office and they have this kind of a problem and I suspect that there may be a thyroid imbalance or there may be a brain or nerve problem or something and I'm going to send them to you for an examination and then he knows what to look for.

And so he puts them through an examination, tests their blood or gives them an EKG or whatever they need and he knows what to look for and then he calls me back and he says, the coast is clear, they're all yours. And he doesn't refer them to a psychiatrist if they have emotional problems. He sends them right back where they belong to the man of God who has the word of God, because he's a Christian and he knows that God has the answers for people's behavior.

Now, if they have a thyroid imbalance, then he gives them the medicine they need to get their thyroid straightened up. You see, I have a couple that were in recently and they were in awful shape. In fact, they were a Christian couple and when they came in, they were ready for divorce.

And yet every time they come in, they came in two times for counseling, we began the procedure and every time this woman would burst into tears and sit there and cry. And I kept watching her and I thought, this woman's got a thyroid problem. After a while, you get to recognize some of this.

So I said, when have you had a thorough physical? And she, well, I don't know, it's been a long time ago. And I said, all right, I want you to have a thorough physical. I want you to tell the doctor that you've been sent there by your minister and he's to look for a thyroid problem.

She went back. She had a thorough physical. Sure enough, she showed up with a thyroid problem.

He gave her the right medication. She straightened right up and she came back in my office without any tears. And we got down to business and began to go to work on the real problem, which was spiritual, of course.

And so God needs to speak to us in this day and get us back on course. Jesus said, come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and who's going to give them rest? I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.

That's what we need. You see, people need to dump their pride and their self and get meek and lowly in heart like Jesus. Get broken at the cross.

Boy, that'll heal a lot of emotions. They need to get right with one another. They need to get the bitterness out of their soul.

Most people that go to anybody, I don't care who they go to for counseling, have a problem either of bitterness or guilt. Those are the two great problems, bitterness and guilt. You say, well, there's a lot of anger.

Yes, but most anger comes from bitterness. Some of it comes from guilt. Once in a while, it comes from fear.

The fear problem isn't too hard to solve. The bitterness and the guilt are something else. But God has the answer.

Does God have the answer to bitterness? Amen. How many heard Don Godfrey's testimony? God has the answer to bitterness. I don't care how bad it is.

God can dump it all out, clean it all out, and get it straightened up. Does God have the answer to guilt? Amen. Cleansing in the blood of Jesus, getting the life straightened up, restitution.

God has the answer to guilt. So you see, most of people, and a psychiatrist may help a man, if he's a really good, honest man, he may actually help the man find out why he feels guilty. And then what? Where do we go from here? So he knows why.

Then the only thing he can tell him is, well, you know, this is why you feel guilty, but it's not really your fault. It's your mother's fault or your grandfather's fault or the teacher's fault or somebody else's. And so what you need to do is blame it on the right person and quit worrying about it and don't feel guilty yourself anymore.

And the guy says, well, I guess I'm not so bad then. And he goes out and it doesn't do him an iota of good because he's still guilty. He's still just as guilty.

And I have counseled with people that have been in two and three different psychiatric wards and hospitals and have been to as many as three different psychiatrists. And it's like the poor woman with the issue of blood who had spent all, and they were nothing bettered but worse. And they came and they found out their problem was spiritual.

Spiritual. See, that's the behavior problem, spiritual. And God's word absolutely has the answer.

And we've been brainwashed. We've been brainwashed by the culture in which we live. We've been brainwashed by the ungodly.

And I'm sorry to say that even in our Christian seminaries and colleges, we've been brainwashed to think that we don't know how to handle that. So we send people to the world for the answer. And may God start to send them to Jesus Christ.

Pardon me? Okay, it's a really good question. I don't know if you heard it all. And if you'll hold it a minute, I'm going to deal with it.

Okay. But no, don't feel bad. It's a good question.

Very important. And so we're going to get to it. Very, very important issue.

Let's turn to 1 Corinthians 10, 13. Ought to memorize this first. First thing I want to say is there are no unique problems.

Absolutely none. About 15 years ago, I lost all my curiosity about sin. You know, it's almost humorous, but it's not.

It's really tragic. People come in my office all the time. They sit down.

They look at me with a white look on their face. And they say, now, Pastor, I know what I'm going to say is going to shock you. Oh, brother, I don't have any shocks left.

None whatsoever. So, you know, there are no unique problems. Somebody read us 1 Corinthians 10, 13.

Now, one of the problems with people is that they tend to think their problems are unique, that they are different, that they have problems that no one else has, and therefore, no one can help them. In fact, this is one of the greatest problems for teenagers. Teenagers have a terrible time with this.

And they haven't lived long enough to find out what other people are going through. And so they think that their problems are totally unique. Now, true, they are a unique person, but their problems aren't unique.

And of course, they need to see themselves as a unique person that God loves and has created for a design and a purpose in life. And they need to see themselves as a person of destiny, but not as a person with unique problems. And so we have to get people to understand that their problems are not unique, that they're the same old problems.

In fact, there's only a few problems, really. You know, and we want to be careful not to classify people, but really, people's problems just fall into almost just a pitifully few categories. Because there aren't that many sins you can commit.

You know, there's only 10 commandments. And most sins just fall into very few things. You know, you're either lying or you're stealing or you're hating, you know, or, you know, there's just not much that you can do.

Now, you can get all kinds of angles to it. And some people have invented some ingenious methods, you know, of carrying out their sins. But there aren't many sins that you can commit.

And people have been at it for many years, you know, so they've gone over the gamut. So what we have to get across to people is that there are no unique problems and their problem is not that different and that other people have gone through it. And now I want to say something that I think is very essential.

In revival or in preaching, I think we need to learn to preach like we counsel directly to people. Let's get off this high pedestal. We need to communicate with people in an auditorium when we're preaching, just like we communicate sitting here in this room, directly at them, directly back and forth between them and ourselves.

And when it comes to problems, we need to be willing to share with people exactly what we are. You see, I'm perfectly willing this morning for you to know anything about my life. Okay? There isn't anything about my life that I don't want my wife to know.

Makes for a good marriage. And we can discuss absolutely everything and we can pray over together. You know, it's a tremendous relief to get out on my knees at night with my wife and confess my sins to God in front of her so she can pray with me in sympathy and love and accept me.

That's a tremendous thing. If you're going to counsel with sinners, then you better admit that you're a sinner. Okay? You see, we've got to get down off this pedestal where we've been placed.

I don't know what you were taught when you went to school, but I was taught that I was supposed to be a cut above the ordinary man and that I was supposed to be holier than they and I was supposed to keep this image of the minister away up here on a pedestal. And if I didn't, they wouldn't follow me. Now, you have to give this image of the godly superior man so they'll follow you.

But all it does is create a distance and keep you from helping people. Because people react to you in that position one of two ways. They either point their finger at you silently and say, I don't believe you're as good as you act, or else they do believe you're as good as you act.

And they say, I could never be that good. And either way, you're sunk. Either way, you can't reach them.

You can't help them. People don't relate to us in our strength. They relate to us in our weakness.

Because they're weak. They're sinful. Let's face it.

And they relate to us on that level. And there are many times when I'm counseling with people that I have to say to them, you know, God had to deal with me in my life in a similar way. Maybe not exactly the same thing, but very similar.

And this is how God dealt with me. And this is the struggle I had. And this is how selfish and stubborn I was.

This is how God had to break me and bring me to repentance. We have to never forget sharing with a 20-year-old girl like that one time. She was having some problems.

And she looked at me so startled. And her eyes got big. And she said, why, pastor, you never sin, do you? I don't know.

I've really failed. She was flabbergasted. I remember doing a very bad thing to one of my church members one time.

He's a man that owns a business in the city. And he gives about \$30,000 a year to God. That's a considerable sum of money.

And he really loves the Lord. And he's one of these strong, strong men that just came out of nothing and built a business right out of the dirt. And he's very strong.

And so when he gets upset, it's good to have strong men in your church. They have more sense than you do a lot of times. Evangelicals need to stop being popes.

These pastors that think they know it all. Let's face it, that a lot of our men in our church are smarter than we are about many things. And some of them are even more godly.

Well, anyway, this guy, he'll tell you anything if he thinks it. So we had published the report of the nominating committee. And he thought it was supposed to be published two weeks before the meeting.

And, of course, it wasn't. The bylaws just said one Sunday before the meeting. But he'd gotten that in his mind some way.

And he came walking into my office. And I happened to be in the secretary's office, which didn't bother him. He came walking in.

And he told me off. You know, he just spews out what he thinks. And he told me how wrong it was.

And that it was up to me as pastor to see that that didn't happen. And he really laid it on the line. And I was real nice to him, you know, and explained to him that it was how it was in the bylaws, which didn't faze him at all.

Because it had been done since time began the other way. And so it didn't make any difference. And so then he stormed out of the office, you know.

And I was real proud of myself. I thought, man, you're really growing spiritually. You handled that beautifully.

You know, you didn't even get mad at him or anything. And the secretary said, you know, I said, how can you take that from him, you know? He said, oh, the Lord helps us. Man, what phonies we can be.

So then, but you know what I did? I found out that he had gone around and said it to quite a few of the other church members. He had been storming around, talking to some of his friends. And he got quite a few people all shook up, you know.

And so the next Sunday in the bulletin, I put a paragraph that said there's been some disturbance about the report of the nominating committee. But I thought it'd be of interest to you to know that the bylaws state so and so. And then we quoted the paragraph from the bylaws.

And I thought, you know, I just straighten out the record, you know. And so I nailed him publicly without saying a word. And then Monday morning, I was trying to pray.

And the Lord said, so you really fixed him, didn't you? I said, well, Lord, you know, after all, I had to straighten out the record. Lord said, yes. And he came and talked to you privately face to face.

And you weren't man enough to do the same. So you got him in the bulletin. OK.

All right. So this afternoon, we get in the car and away we go over to his house. Now, this is the part that really kills me.

I went to his house and he happened to be home. And I sat down with him, you know, and I said, I've come to ask your forgiveness. And he said, what? What for? He'd forgotten it already.

He's that kind of person. And I said, I just have to tell you what I did. And I said, you know, I didn't say anything to you when you're in the office.

But inside, I really was angry. And so I got even with you in the bulletin publicly. And God really convicted me this morning.

And I've come to ask your forgiveness. Now, this is the thing that really throws me. He looked at me and he said, oh, my pastor can't do anything wrong.

I said, what did you say? He said, oh, he said, whatever you did, it must have been right. He said, if you put that in the bulletin, it must have been perfectly all right. He said, whatever you did must have been all right.

He said, my pastor cannot sin. My pastor can do nothing wrong. So whatever you did must have been all right.

And I sat there, I've never done that before in a sense of my life. For a half hour, I tried to persuade the man that I had sinned. And, you know, I could not get him to accept that.

You know what happened to that man? You know, all this time he wouldn't accept it. And he acted like, you know, it didn't bother him. And that man left the church, went to another Christian Missionary Alliance church in the city, helped them build a new church.

And then after he had time for God to deal with him, he wrote a letter asking my forgiveness and came back to the church. And now he's in the church. But you see where the problem was.

The problem was in this false thing, this false situation, where you can't get close to people and help them. So God is saying there are no unique problems. There are no difference.

We're all sinners. We're all on the same level. And God help us, if we're going to try to help people, to get on the same level and be exactly what we are and be honest and open and transparent and get down where they are with their problems and then help them and understand that their problems have a solution.

Let me ask you something. Is Christ adequate for every problem? You see, immediately your mind says yes. But what does your heart say? And what does your life say? And when you deal with other people, what does your mouth say? That Christ is adequate for all their problems? Is he adequate for every need? We sing about it all the time, loudly in our hymn books.

But do we really believe it? And do we really practice it when we deal with our people? Or do we get scared and run away and let someone else deal with them? Or do we accept the challenge and open the Word of God and try to help them with their problems? Turn with me to Colossians chapter 2. I know that you're familiar with the passage. It's become one of my favorite passages in the Bible. Colossians chapter 2. I'm going to begin reading with verse 1. Find it in the New Testament on page 282.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, 1st and 2nd Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians. There you are, Colossians chapter 2. For I would that ye knew. You know what we do in our church? We publish in the bulletin.

We have Bibles in the pews and we publish in the bulletin the page of the Scripture, the page number, so that the new Christians can find it without being embarrassed. Amen? Okay. For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh, that their hearts might be comforted being knit together in love.

My, how people need comfort, don't they? Being knit together in love unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God and of the Father and of Christ. Now, watch verse 3. In whom are hid some of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Huh? Oh, how we mistranslate that one.

How many? In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. That's comprehensive, isn't it? And this I say, lest any man beguile you with enticing words. Oh my, their words can sound enticing.

All the new books out, you know. Transactional analysis. I'm okay, you're okay.

You know, that's what the young man said when he came to Christ, you know. The young rich man, he came running to Christ and he said, I'm okay, you're okay. And the Lord said, no, I'm okay, but you're not okay.

The good master, what good thing must I do to inherit eternal life? And Jesus said, why did you call me good? There is none good, but what? But one, and that is God. So you're not good. I'm good, but you're not good.

I'm okay, but you're not okay. You need help. You need God.

And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words. For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. Verse six says, ye have therefore received Christ Jesus, the Lord, so walk ye in the philosophies of the world.

As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus, the Lord, so walk ye in him, rooted and built up in him. And established in the latest philosophy, the latest psychology. No, established in the faith as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

Beware, watch out, lest any man spoil you through philosophy and empty deceit after the tradition of men, after the rudiments or the basics of the world and not after Christ. Watch it, pastor. Oh my, all the philosophies of the world.

No, no, not after the philosophies and traditions of men, but after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. You believe that? Do you, do you evangelicals believe that? You Christians, you born again people, do you believe it? Then what's the next verse? Read that, just that to the first comma, verse 10.

Ah, in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily and ye are complete in him. You don't need to go outside of Christ to have your needs met. Isn't that wonderful? That makes life simple.

That narrows it right down. Christ has the answer. He's the one and so we can turn to him and know that we can have our needs met.

Now, I want to take it just a step farther. If Christ is adequate to meet every need, I want to say one more thing. Then Christians are adequate to minister Christ.

You believe that? I don't know whether you believe that or not. But you see, that's where we get frightened. That's where we're not sure.

But if Christ is adequate, who can minister Christ but the Christian? He's the only one that can minister Christ. And if Christ is adequate, then Christians are adequate to meet every need. I want to give you two scriptures quickly.

Turn to Romans 15, Romans 15 and verse 14. Now, I want to read this verse to you because when I read it to you, I want to say it right out of my heart to you as if I were saying it instead of Paul. All right.

Paul was writing it to the church at Rome. But I want to pick it right out of the scriptures and give it back to you from my heart because I believe this with all my heart. And I say this to the people in my church where I pastor and I believe it with all my heart.

And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren. That ye are also full of goodness. Let me ask you something.

Jesus said, there is none good, but one, that is God. Then how can you be full of goodness? Yeah, Christ dwells in you to be full of God, right? That you may know all the fullness of God. Sure.

If you're filled with God, you're full of goodness. That's it. And I'm persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness.

Filled with all knowledge. Do you have the Bible? Is it complete? Do we need more scripture? Do we need a new book written to the Bible? It's all there. Full revelation, right? It's complete.

You can't add a word to it. Then you have it. There it is.

You're full, filled with all knowledge and able also to admonish one another. Now, this word admonish is a Greek word in the New Testament that covers a lot of ground. Admonish is not an adequate English translation.

And in the way we use English words today, the word counsel would be much better. Able also to counsel one another because the word admonish, as it is in the Greek, encompasses rebuke and correction and instruction. All three of those thoughts are in the word.

A new thesis is the word in the Greek, and it covers the whole idea of reproving and correcting and instructing. And so God says that I am convinced that you're full of goodness, that you're full of knowledge and that you're able to counsel one another. Christians are able to counsel one another.

Turn with me to Galatians chapter six. Galatians six. Someone read Galatians chapter six and verses one and two.

Okay, who is it that are to restore those who have been overtaken? Those who are what? What does it mean to be spiritual? Can you be spiritual if you're not born again? Then who are the only people who have a right to restore people who are fallen and are in trouble? You're afraid to say it. Come on, let's say it. Christians are the only ones.

Christians are the only ones who are adequate to counsel people who are in trouble. Now, that's a strong statement, but that's the truth. There are no others who are adequate because there are no others who are spiritual.

And there are no others who know God. There are no others who know Christ. There are no others who have the word of God and who have the answers.

But the Christian. And the Christian is the only one who has a right to counsel people who are in trouble. Because he's the only one who is spiritual.

Now, let me give you a rundown real quick, because I think sometimes we think that these people have more than they have. And please understand me, there are many people in this field today who are

beginning to see this. And there are many people in the field of psychiatry and psychology today who are starting to use Bible principles in their counseling, even people that aren't Christians.

And thank God, as far as they use Bible principles, they get some results. That's very interesting. In fact, there's a man who is the head of the American Psychiatric Association who uses Bible principles entirely in his counseling and has completely rejected Freudianism and Rogerian counseling and the whole business and Skinner and all of it and has written against it.

And he uses biblical principles. So he's not a Christian. It's very interesting.

And he gets some fabulous results. He's getting people out of psychiatric wards who have sat there in catatonic states for years and all kinds of horrible conditions. And so that's very interesting.

But really, the only people who are capable of helping are Christians. And let me just give you an idea of how this kind of thing works. For instance, the entire Freudian-based teaching, which is a philosophy that saturated all our educational institutions, it saturated all of our communications media, it saturated the writing fields, the television, the theater, everything, until Freudian psychology has become almost a fact of life in people's minds.

And this whole way of looking at human behavior teaches something the Bible is totally against. It teaches personal irresponsibility. It teaches that you are not responsible for your problems, basically.

Now, thank God, in some areas, like I said, there are some very sincere and honest men who are not Christians who are beginning to see the falsehood in that. And they're beginning to change. And they're beginning to write against it and teach against it and practice against it.

But for many years, this has been the thought. And only in small areas is this changing. But they teach irresponsibility.

And the Bible teaches exactly the opposite. Do you know that that philosophy isn't new in the world? Do you know that it began in the Garden of Eden? The blaming game, passing the buck. You remember, God said to Adam, what hast thou done? And Adam said, it wasn't my fault.

Yeah, you know, he did a real neat turnabout. And he said, it was the woman that you gave me. Of course, people have been doing that ever since.

And when somebody tells you that it's not your fault, that it's your father's fault or your grandfather's fault or the teacher's fault or somebody else's fault, I want you to understand one thing. That if that approach to human behavior is true, then God cannot judge the world. Now, let's have some logic and some common sense about it.

God's Word teaches that the soul that sinneth, it shall die. God's Word teaches that the father shall not be punished for the sins of the son, neither shall the son be punished for the sins of the father. But every man shall bear his own iniquity.

God's Word teaches that. You believe that? God has given us a free will and people influence our lives, but only influence them. That's as far as they can go.

And we have a free will and the whole issue is how we respond to that influence. Let me give you a very simple example. Have you ever seen a home in which there were four or five children in exactly the same

home, born of the same father and mother, and they turned out totally different? Now, that blows that whole theory, right? I mean, just as simply as that, it blows it and throws it right down the drain.

Because you can have a father and mother who are Christians and who bring up their children exactly the same with family devotions and church and Sunday school and the same teaching and the same discipline and the same love and the same principles right down the line. And you'll have, say, out of five children, you'll have three of them that are wonderful Christians and two of them go in the ministry and one of them's not saved. And then the fifth one's a drunkard.

I mean, really, have you ever seen that? It's right there in front of our eyes on every side. And yet we allow people to tell us these ridiculous lies that we don't even need to go to the Bible to refute that are so obvious. They're like the nose on our face.

They're right there in front of us. That it isn't true. What is true is that we have influence on our children.

We have influence on the people around us. Our educational institutions have influence. Society has influence.

The culture has influence. But we have a free will and we can respond to it. And God holds every individual person responsible for how they respond to the influence and for the choices they make.

And God will call us to account before the judgment throne to answer. You believe that? Isn't that what the book teaches? Romans 14. So then every one of us shall give what? A count of himself to God.

Every one of us. You see? And when Adam said, it wasn't me. It was her.

Did God let him off? Did God say, oh, yeah, you're right. You're right. You're right.

And then he turned to Eve and Eve said, it wasn't me. It was the serpent. And so God said, oh, yeah, well, neither of you are to blame.

I'll deal with the serpent. Oh, no. God judged all three of them.

Because they were all responsible, you see? So that whole philosophy is completely false. Let me read. I have to throw a little humor in here.

Let me read you something. This is I like this poem. It's not scripture, but it's close to it.

No, not really. Please don't. No, it isn't really.

I'm just kidding. Let me read it to you. I went to my psychiatrist to be psychoanalyzed to find out why I killed a cat and blacked my husband's eyes.

He laid me on a downy couch to see what he could find. And here is what he dredged up from my poor subconscious mind. When I was one, my mommy hid my dolly in a trunk.

And so it follows naturally that I am always drunk. When I was two, I saw my father kiss a maid one day. And that is why I suffer now from kleptomania.

At three, I had a feeling of resentment for my brothers. And so it follows naturally I poison all my lovers. But now I'm happy, for I've learned the lesson this has taught, that everything I do that's wrong is someone

else's fault.

That's the philosophy of the world. That's an escape from reality. That's paranoia.

That's escaping from the facts of life, trying to justify our sinful position. And people need to be brought face to face with their sin and their problems, their hate, their bitterness, their resentment, their immorality, their dishonesty, and may deface their sin and confess it to God and repent and be washed in the blood and make restitution and get their life straight. Amen? Absolutely.

I was in, let's see, what crusade was it? Boy, I've been in so many now I forget. I was at a crusade somewhere in Canada, I think it was. And I went to the prayer room.

And there was a man came to the prayer room. And he was on his knees. And somebody said, come and help us with this man.

He can't seem to get anywhere. And he was kneeling there. And he was praying.

And his fists were clenched. And he was sobbing. And he was working so hard at it.

And I knelt down there. And he said, I just can't get through. I just can't get right with God.

And the poor man was in an awful state. He was just about in total mental confusion, ready to go to an institution, and even suffering for months and months. And there he was in this awful agony.

And I said, now, just stop. Just stop. Now, let's relax.

Now, I want to ask you one question. What would you say is the main problem in your life? And he thought for a minute. And he said, it's some bitterness that I've had in my life for six years.

Just like that. You know, somebody says, you must counsel with people for at least 10 weeks before you find a real problem. Oh, brother, talk about counsel without knowledge.

You know, most people will tell you their problem in the first 15 minutes. And I said this in Regina in the stupid newspaper, said that I said I could solve somebody's problem in one second after I talked to him. Boy, they really know how to misquote you.

But most people that come with a problem, if you go right directly at it, they know their problem. And I said, tell me about it. And he told me how about six years before he had got involved in a situation where he had done something wrong and he wouldn't straighten it out.

And he got bitter and he'd had this bitterness ever since. And it was wrecking his marriage and his home and his whole life. And I said, OK, I want to ask you one other question.

Are you ready to go back and confess it and make it right? He said, do I have to do that? And I said, certainly. And he thought for a few minutes and he said, all right, I'll do it. And so he prayed and he confessed it to God and he asked God's forgiveness and God cleansed him and straightened him right up.

He came down to the seminar and took the training at Stowe and he's going on with God. I tell you, you know, we make it so complicated and it's not that complicated. It doesn't take a degree in psychology to help people.

It takes a little knowledge of the word of God, right? And walking with the Lord, we need to get back into our Bibles and study our Bibles. When am I supposed to quit? Tell me. It's 1022.

OK, I'm sure it is. Didn't I answer your question? His question was, what about when a person's life, when they have this guilt from their parents and so forth? All right. In the process, what I'm saying is they have reacted to their parents in a certain way.

But now what we have to do is take them back to the scriptures and show them where their real guilt is, where they have really sinned. And I have found out that once we get people back to their real sin, they usually this false guilt clears right up, really. And they don't really have much problem with it.

But generally, they have some other sin around that needs to be swept out of the closet. That's the usual case.

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