

# The Ministry of Counseling

I. How can Jesus be seen as the model counselor?

A. Jesus was called the “Wonderful Counselor” (Is. 9:6).

1. He counseled Nicodemus (John 3:1-5).
2. He counseled the woman at the well (John 4:18).

**3. He counseled a man concerned about his inheritance (Luke 12:15).**

## B. Jesus had the heart to counsel.

1. Jesus had a heart of compassion (Mt. 9:36; 14:14; 20:34).
2. Jesus had the heart of a servant (John 13:3-5; Mark 10:43-45).
3. Jesus was willing to work with the unlovely and untouchable (Mt. 8:1-4; John 8:11).

4. Jesus did not have a condemning heart (John 8:11). Jesus was touched by the condition of mankind (Heb. 4:15).

## C. Jesus had the right attitude toward sinners.

1. Jesus was not intimidated by sinners (Mt. 9:10-13; Luke 15:2).
2. Jesus was not shocked by sinners (John 8:1-12).
3. Jesus was not afraid of the demon possessed (Mt. 17:14-18; Mark 5:1-8).

**4. Jesus was confident and secure in Himself and understood Who He was before the Father (John 13:3-4).**

**D. Jesus had the qualifications to counsel.**

**1. Jesus was separate from sinners (Heb. 7:26).**

**2. Jesus was able to relate to the human condition (John 2:24-25).**

**3. Jesus was patient with people (John 20:24-29).**

## **4. Jesus functioned in the gifts of the Spirit.**

**a. Word of Knowledge (John 4:18).**

**b. Word of Wisdom (Mt. 22-21-22)**

**c. Discerning of Spirits (Mt. 9:32-34)**

**d. Working of Miracles**

**e. Gifts of Healing**

5. Jesus had a good working knowledge  
of the Word of God.

**E. Jesus used the Word of God in counsel.**

- 1. Jesus quoted the Word of God regularly in dialogue (Mt. 13:13-15; Mark 7:6-7; Luke 4:18-19).**
- 2. Jesus directed people to the Word of God for self discovery (Mt. 9:13; 12:3-5).**

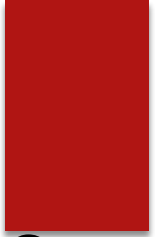
**II. Is there such a thing as a “ministry of counseling” from a biblical point of view?**

**The answer to this question is both yes and no.**

**A. The ministry of counseling is not one of the ministries listed in the New Testament.**

**B. The function of counseling is seen as an aspect of the work of pastoring.**

- 1. As such the ministry of counseling is an extension of Christ's ministry to the needy (Ps. 23).**
- 2. As such the ministry of counseling is an extension of the pastoral ministry in the local church.**



C. The nearest ministry to that of counseling that is referenced in the Bible is that of an exhorter (Rom. 12:8).

1. The word “exhortation” in the New Testament refers specifically to “an appeal, an entreaty, encouragement, consolation and comfort.”

**To exhort someone is “to admonish, or to urge someone to pursue some course of action. It literally means:**

- To appeal to, urge, encourage and exhort.**
- To implore, request, entreat.**
- To comfort and cheer up**
- To try to console or conciliate, and speak to someone in a friendly manner.**

2. In the New Testament an exhorter is one who is called to someone's aid.
3. An exhorter is someone who offers the same strength and comfort that the Father (Rom. 15:5; II Th. 2:16-17), the Son (I John 2:1; 14:6) and the Holy Spirit (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:7; Acts 9:31) provide.
4. Every believer is called to a ministry of exhortation (I Th. 5:11; Heb. 3:13; 10:24-25).

5. There will be those who seem to have a special grace in this area of function in the body (Rom. 12:8). Those who function in the ministry of exhortation operate in the following manner.

a. They come to the side of and encourage people in times of tribulation, affliction, sorrow and bereavement (Mt. 2:18, 5:4; I Th. 3:2-3).

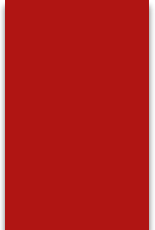
b. They intercede for those that are sick (Mt. 8:5).

c. They encourage and exhort people regarding their future in relation to God's purposes (I Th. 5:14-18; Luke 3:18).

d. They admonish people when they are not entering into the full privileges of their inheritance (Luke 15:28).

- e. They warn the careless and apathetic of impending danger and encourage watchfulness (Rom. 16:17-18).
- f. They exhort and encourage others to follow the ways of God (Acts 2:40; 11:23; Eph. 4:1; Jude 3).
- g. They warn others of dangers they sense in the course they have set for themselves (Acts 21:12; I Th. 5:14; II Th. 3:11-12).

**h. They come to the side of those who have fallen, but have demonstrated repentance (II Cor. 2:6-8).**



**D. The ministry of counseling can be summarized with a number of truly biblical words and concepts including,**

- Reproving**
- Encouraging**
- Instructing**
- Training**

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- **Admonishing**
  - **Edifying**
  - **Exhorting**
  - **Comforting**
  - **Warning**

### III. What are the different levels of counseling?

A. Level One: The Holy Spirit speaking directly to the heart of an individual.

One of the objectives of the Counselor is to get people to function at this level. The Holy Spirit is committed to speaking to from the inside out.

**B. Level Two: The pastoral leadership of the church ministering to members of the church.**

**Leaders of the church have been called by God to minister to the needs of the flock.**

**C. Level Three: Trained counselors ministering to those entrusted to them.**

**Trained counselors are really an extension of the pastoral ministry of the local church.**

**D. Level Four: Believers counseling other believers (Rom. 15:13-15, Amp.; Gal. 6:2; I Th. 5:14).**

***May the God of your hope so fill you  
with all joy and peace in believing  
[through the experience of your faith]  
that by the power of the Holy Spirit  
you may abound and be overflowing  
(bubbling over) with hope. Personally I  
am satisfied about you, my brethren,  
that you yourselves are rich in  
goodness, amply filled with all  
[spiritual] knowledge and competent  
to admonish and counsel and instruct  
one another also.***