



Countryside Bible Church

Discipleship Counseling Notes – Level 1, Class 2 Theological Foundations of Biblical Counseling

INTRODUCTION:

THE THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION OF BIBLICAL COUNSELING

A. The Foundational Presupposition

1. Stated – The inspired and inerrant Word of God is the only authoritative source by which we can know absolute truth. It is totally sufficient to address any issue of which it speaks and for which it claims to be sufficient. (2 Peter 1:2-3)
2. Confirmed – 2 Timothy 3:16-17

B. The Process of Developing Our Theology

1. Level One - We must begin by identifying the canonical Scriptures through the fields of higher criticism and textual criticism.
2. Level Two - We then seek to understand the canonical Scripture through the grammatical-historical method of exegesis.
3. Level Three - From the exegesis of a canonical text we engage in the discipline of biblical theology by formulating propositional doctrinal statements.

4. Level Four - The propositions of biblical theology are correlated topically to produce a systematic theology.
5. Level Five - Building upon a thorough systematic theology we may arrive at practical theological conclusions about life.
6. Biblical Counseling falls within the discipline of practical theology.

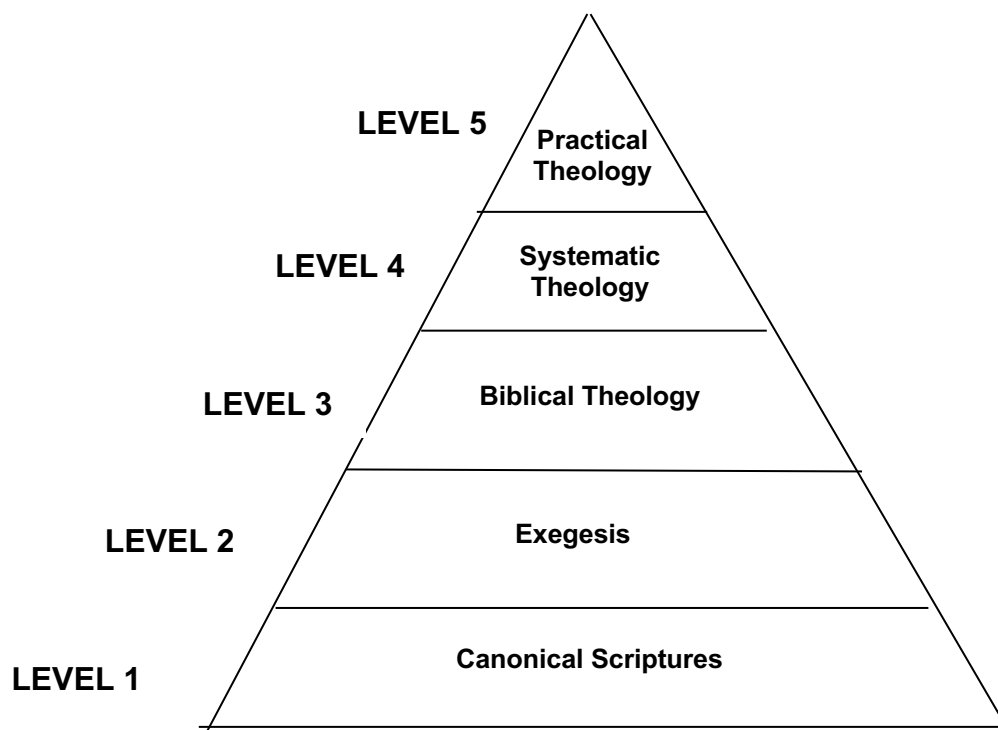


Fig. 1. The Theological Pyramid.

7. Implications from “The Theological Pyramid” – Fig. 1
 - a) Level 5 without levels 1-4 is not *biblical* counseling.
 - 1) Biblical counseling is not just a generic system with Scripture sprinkled over it.
 - 2) Too many people without theological training are telling the church how to change and grow. The problem is in the formation of their models.

- You can't even be completely confident of the results of the natural mind studying natural man - reason based on observation.
 - Jeremiah 17:9 indicates that the fall of man had "noetic" effects (i.e., effects upon the heart/mind)
- 3) For counseling to be considered *biblical*, Scripture must have an active, functional control on any methods of change and growth we use.
- b) Levels 1-4 without level 5 is incomplete and ineffective.
- 1) Theology was never given in a vacuum.
 - 2) Our job is not to simply dispense the Word; but to minister the Word.
 - 3) We have been in a battle for the Bible for many years. First, it was a battle with liberals of the issue of inspiration. Then, it was a battle over the issue of inerrancy. Today, the battle is with those who say the Bible is not sufficient. *See II Peter 1:3-4; II Timothy 3:15-17; Psalm 19 and 119.*
- c) Examples of the Significance of Systematic Theology as a Foundation for Biblical Counseling
- 1) THEOLOGY - the doctrine of God
 - God is Triune. We can study the Godhead ("Trinity") from two perspectives:
 - The Ontological Trinity and the Economical Trinity.
 - Within the Godhead, there is order and authority.
 - He is the Creator. Counseling must therefore be theocentric, not anthropocentric. In other words, counseling must be God-centered.
 - 2) EPISTEMOLOGY - the doctrine of knowledge
 - God defines reality because He created it.
 - Only God knows everything. This means only God sees the whole picture!

- If you, or a counselee, want truth, you must see things as God sees them and define them as He does.

3) ANTHROPOLOGY - the doctrine of man

- God's creation.
 - This means man is not just an animal.
 - This means man is not a victim.
 - This means man is not a god.
- Man is not autonomous.
- Directed by the heart, this is where change is necessary.

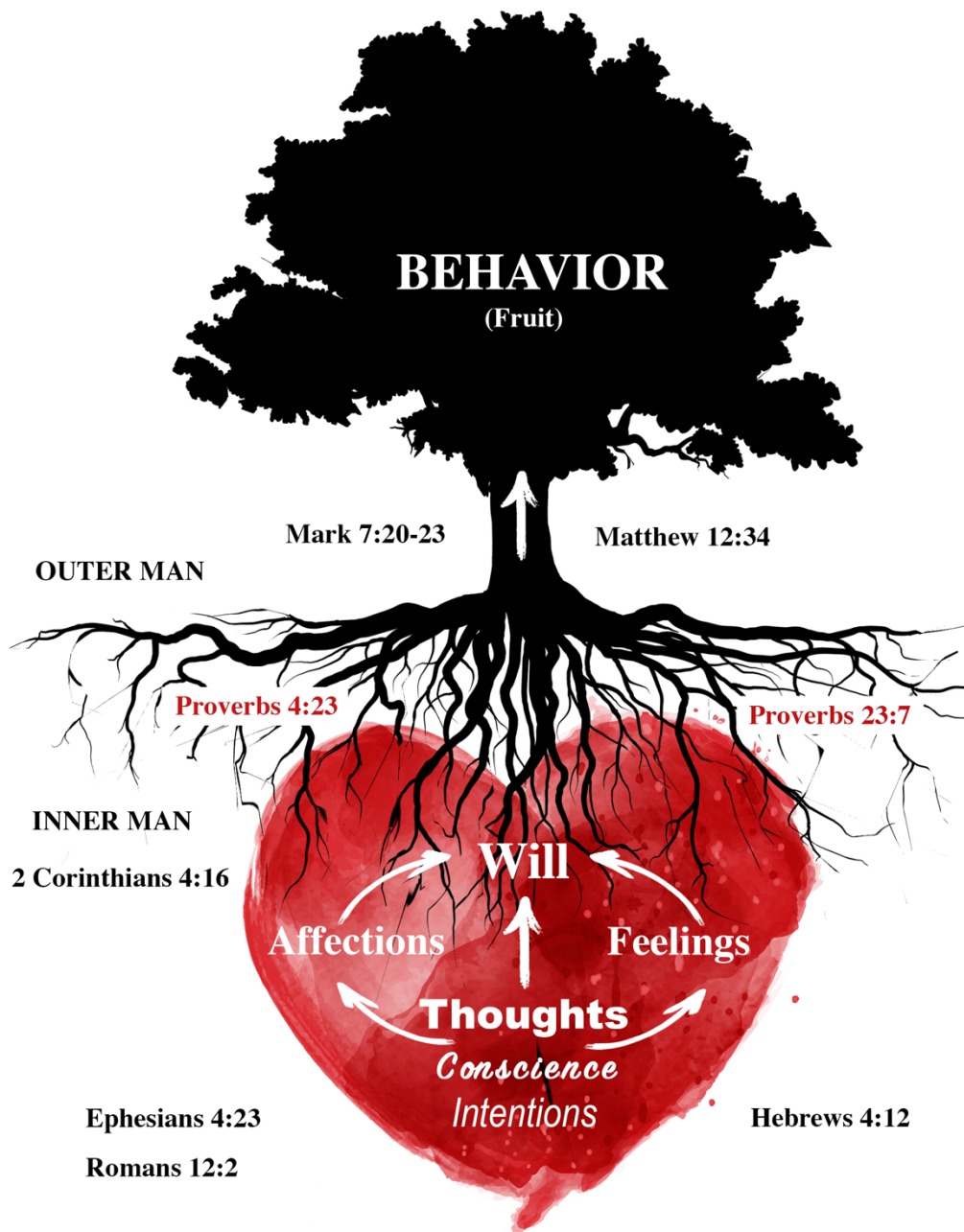


Fig. 2 The Source of Behavior

4) HARMARTIOLOGY - the doctrine of sin

- Sin has a hereditary aspect.
- Sin has a habitual aspect.
- Sin has a personal aspect.

5) SOTERIOLOGY - the doctrine of salvation

- Man's greatest need is salvation.
- Salvation restores man's broken relationship with God and is a prerequisite for God-honoring growth (progressing in sanctification).

6) CHRISTOLOGY - the doctrine of Christ.

- Christ is the Second Adam - the God-Man. He is our model.
- Christ was our substitute.
- Christ is our ascended Lord. Nothing is needed apart from His work - there is no problem He can't solve. Nothing is hopeless!

7) PNEUMATOLOGY - the doctrine of the Holy Spirit

- He is a Person.
- The Holy Spirit is necessary for the counselor to do his job.
 - See Isaiah 11:1-2
 - The Holy Spirit is what we need to be qualified.

8) ECCLESIOLOGY - the doctrine of the church

- The Church is the Body of Christ; Jesus is the Head.
- The Body of Christ is the place of worship and sanctification.
- The Church has limited God-given authority.

9) ESCHATOLOGY - the doctrine of end times.

- Christ rules, He has all authority (Hebrews 1:2-3).
- Never a situation He can't change if He wills.
- The Second Coming gives hope for the future.