

WHY EVERY CHURCH NEEDS A LAY COUNSELING TEAM



PART I

EPHESIANS CHAPTER 4:
EMBRACE, SPEAK, ENDURE, OVERCOME

How can churches prepare leaders to walk through the challenges of life?

- By Embracing the Ephesians 4 Pattern

I. BEFORE TIMES OF STRUGGLE, YOUR CHURCH NEEDS THE MATURE TO LEAD.

- "And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ..." (Eph. 4:11-13 ESV)

II. DURING TIMES OF STRUGGLE, YOUR CHURCH NEEDS TO SPEAK THE TRUTH IN LOVE.

- "Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ." (Eph. 4:15 ESV)

III. TO ENDURE TIMES OF STRUGGLE, YOUR CHURCH NEEDS EVERYONE TO DO THEIR PART.

- "...from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love." (Eph. 4:16 (ESV))

IV. TO OVERCOME TIMES OF STRUGGLE, YOUR CHURCH NEEDS TO REFOCUS ON GOD'S GREATER PURPOSE FOR OUR LIVES.

- "Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. But that is not the way you learned Christ!— assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness." (Eph. 4:17-23 ESV)

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PART II

IS LAY COUNSELING A GOOD IDEA?
WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS

Is it smart to allow lay people to counsel since their training is far less extensive than mental health professionals or even seminary-trained biblical counselors?

THE OBJECTIONS AND THE FEARS ABOUT LAY COUNSELING EXPLAINED

- Counseling is primarily medical
- Lay counselors are "volunteer surgeons"
- Lay counseling is not evidence-based

THE SURPRISING RESULTS OF LAY COUNSELING SUCCESS RATES

4 REASONS THE RESEARCH SAYS THAT LAY COUNSELING WORKS

- Lay Counselors are more available when needed.
- Lay Counselors specialize around their life story and passions.
- Lay Counselors develop deeper connections because of shared-life experiences.
- Lay Counselors reduce costs and increase counseling options to all in need.

IF YOUR CHURCH IS DISCUSSING THE VALUE IN TRAINING LAY COUNSELORS TO WALK WITH THE HURTING, CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:

- The very real and often unmet needs of your people.
- The value of Lay counseling is validated by both the relevant research literature and by the experience of many faithful laborers in the ministry.
- The quality of training and structured oversight are two key factors to developing a successful lay counseling ministry.