LAUNCH

Starting a Counseling Ministry
in Your Church

1. STARTING RIGHT

Envisioning your ministry

BIBLICAL
COUNSELING CENTER.org

Starting Right

Think It Through

1. Starting Right – The first steps you should take (Envision)

Develop a biblical philosophy: Do you know where counseling training fits into your overall strategy of making disciples. In Acts 20, God's word reveals to us a pattern for healthy church leadership that is both public proclamation and private guidance. Paul compassionately shared with boldness the grace and truth of Christ to those who were hurting. Many churches who have great pulpit ministries falter when they lack the encouragement and support to follow through to obedience. Other churches have compromised the word in both public and private ways. There are four words that shape an effective counseling paradigm within your church.

Key Word # 1 - _____**Holistic Discipleship**_____: Fulfilling the whole Great Commission

Counseling is part of the great commission where people work out their salvation and grow in maturity through obedience and fellowship with God. Biblical Counseling tears down the wall between religious problems and everyday problems.

Key Word # 2 - _____**Protective Restoration**_____: Leaving the 99 for the One

Jesus's heart for the lost, lonely and hurting can be seen in the parable of the lost sheep. When someone in your church strays, who do you send after them? Training biblical counselors will have this heart and be equipped to compassionately engage the sheep who has strayed.

Key Word #3 - ____**Spiritual Leadership**____: Giving Personal and Effective Guidance

Counseling is part of the call to biblical shepherding in the church. Seeing a problem and addressing it for the good of your people. Counseling helps you lead your people well.

Key Word #4 - _____**Missional Compassion**_____**:** Creating Effective Outreach

Do the hurting in your church and community even think to turn to your church for help? In an post-christian nation, counseling the hurting can be a great bridge for the gospel into your community. When your church gains a reputation for quality and consistent care, your neighborhood notices. This atmosphere of love is what draws many to Christ. On the contrary, if your church can't answer the questions of the hurting, it confirms for many unbelievers that the church lacks any relevance to their lives.

Key Word #5 __Write in your Pick **(**_____**)**__: You Choose: Write in unique words fits your church vision and mission.

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Work It Through

Key Question for church leadership to decide:

Is your church leadership committed to discipling your people, no matter what struggle they may face in life?

As a Leadership group, think through the answers to the following discussion questions to assess your unity and readiness to move your church towards biblical counseling.

Question #1 – Where could biblical counseling complement our overall discipleship and outreach calling in our church and community?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Question # 2 - Form follows function: What contexts do desire to be able to provide care/ counseling at your church? Rank the contexts from greatest to least where you intend to provide care and counseling. Essentially, where do you intend to steer the counseling to find help and care? The larger your organization, the more complex this planning normally is.

_____Adult Education Classes
_____Youth ministry
_____Small Group Ministry
_____Formal Counseling Ministry
_____Recovery Ministry
_____Pastoral Staff Counseling
_____Elders/Deacons
_____Outreach ministries

Question # 3 - As a leadership team, decided how will you overcome these common objections to counseling becoming part of the vision of your church?

- Do we really have “serious counseling” kinds of problems here?
- Isn’t Counseling is something that should only be done by the professionals?
- Isn’t counseling what we hired our pastor to do?
- Is the bible really adequate to address serious issues?
- Won’t this create disunity when everybody knows each other’s problems?
- Is Biblical Counseling capable of dealing with mental illness?

Starting Right

Follow Through

Moving forward in a Biblical Counseling Ministry will require you to envision a ministry model that is consistent with your culture and mission. Too many churches underestimate the pushback they receive when transitioning medical or pastoral model of counseling to a shepherding model of counseling. If you don't have a well planned ministry model, your church will often lack confidence that this will be any more than a passing fad. In the next sections, we will flesh out more about how to have an effective plan.

Introducing Biblical Counseling to your church:

Casting vision to develop Biblical Counseling as necessary and achievable for your church

Write our your plan for the following questions:

When and how will you introduce a Biblical Counseling vision to key leaders?

When and how will you introduce this vision to your entire church?

How can you overcome common objections carefully?