

## INTRODUCTION

Pastoral Counseling has often been neglected. History has shown that a pastor is often asked to give advice or counsel but often has not been trained. While being in a trusted position, pastors have given wrong advice simply out of ignorance of what the counselee has been experiencing. The Bible does not speak of pastoral counseling as we know it, but it does contain principles by which we can counsel people. Foundationally we must understand the human worth and dignity of the human race otherwise we have no reason to help another person.

The course begins with the fact that pastors have been counselors for their congregations for many years. For a long time, pastors have been the first line of defense for people with problems.

The course begins with the necessity of the conversion of the pastor/counselor. A pastor must have a relationship with Jesus before he can offer Biblical counsel to another person.

Lessons two and three describe the portrait of a counselor. Whether a pastor likes it or not he must be like God in his characteristics. He has a very high standard to follow. Next, the characteristics found in 1 Timothy 3 are studied one by one. It is impossible for any person to be able to live completely with all of these characteristics; however, our command is to be perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect. It should be our goal.

The second half of the course takes on 10 of some of the most common problems people have in their lives. This part of the study helps the student recognize the problems of his people when they are sharing with the pastor or counselor. Hopefully these sections will help the pastor keep his people on the right track by looking to Jesus for strength and wisdom. *A word of caution.* No student can think himself fully qualified as a counselor after taking this course. This is only an introduction to pastoral counseling, The path to becoming a clinical counselor is much longer and requires additional training.

What are the differences between a Pastoral and Clinical counselor? Dr. Stokes gives a good general description. "Clinical Counselors such as Clinical Psychologists, Psychiatrists, Social Workers, and Marriage and Family Therapists are licensed and regulated by various governmental

boards and professional associations. Pastoral Counselors such as Pastors, Ministerial Counselors, Chaplains and Church Counselors are credentialed and regulated by various ecclesiastical governing structures and may be influenced by professional associations.” There are many other differences that are worth reading about.

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“Prudent”

Respectable

Hospitable

Able to Teach

Not Addicted to Wine  
Not Pugnacious  
Gentle  
Uncontentious  
Free From the Love of Money  
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