



**ASSOCIATION FOR BIBLICAL
COUNSELLING AND EDUCATION**

**BIBLE BASED
COUNSELLING**
Course 1
SEMESTER 1

WEEK 5

STUDY SCHEDULE FOR SEMESTER 1

The schedule provides guidelines for the maximum time to be spent on studying the material. Each student is unique, and this also applies to their circumstances. You may study in your own way and at your own pace. It is, however, in your own interest to study all the material and assignments thoroughly. The word, **Textbook** refers to Chapters 1 – 6 on this CD.

5	Chapter 2	2.4.2 2.5	God's provision Application Case study: Clyde	Textbook PB (Part Two) Textbook Bible
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Week 5

Unit (Chapter) 2

Sub--Unit 2.4.2 – 2.5

Learning Outcome:

This part of your study should enable you to identify the resources for change which God has given in the life of a person.

Assignment for self-study:

Consider a particular problem area in your life (e.g. aggression, unforgiving).
Make a list of the resources God has given you to enable you to change.

CHAPTER 2: DYNAMICS OF BIBLICAL CHANGE

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2.4.2 Biblical change: What brings this change about?

There are four ways in which God changes a person's life: His Word, other people, the Christian culture and creation.

2.4.2.1 The Word of God

2.4.2.1.1 Hebrews 4:12

How will the counselor ever understand the heart of another person? This passage shows how the Word of God functions so that the counselor and the counselee can get to know the heart.

The word '**judges**' means:

1. To give direction - it shows where the problem lies.
2. To analyze - it shows how the heart functions.

Scripture gives direction in counseling and indicates where the problem is and then analyzes it. Through his thinking man structures the world in which he thinks he can live. From these thoughts mans motives arise: that which drives him - the reasons why he does certain things.

Scripture analyzes these motives and opens them up to enable the person to recognize them. In this way an awareness grows in the heart. This is Gods agenda for change.

2.4.2.1.2 More words

The process of change from the thorn tree to the fruit tree is described by the word **conversion (Greek metanoia)**. This word describes what happens in the inner person: a change.

It implies turning away from the idols to the living God. John the Baptist preached that the people should repent and bear the fruit of conversion. Conversion happens in the inner man but shows fruit on the outside.

There is a God-centered dimension which is changed. This is to understand that a person is controlled by something besides God. God can set him free. He can change and trust in God. This is an inner change which bears fruit. Or a person is dominated by fear of others and bears fruit: aggression, tension, etc. But when he is controlled by his faith in God, he bears fruit like speaking the truth, courage.

Build this perception: the Biblical counselor works with basic Biblical categories. The counselor should have faith in these categories: they are Biblical.

2.4.2.1.3 The Word of God says who He is

Find specific passages in Scripture in which God reveals Himself and says who He is. God reveals Himself on every page of the Bible. Read chapter 4 to 7 of Jay E Adams' book 'A Theology of Christian Counseling'.

2.4.2.1.4 Who are the enemies of man?

Man's enemies are his old nature, the world and the devil.
Find passages in the Bible which reveal these enemies.

2.4.2.1.5 God's promises

God's promises are evident right through the Bible. Which promises can you recall?

2.4.2.1.6 God's commandments are summarized in the law but they are also revealed to his people in many ways through the rest of the Bible.

2.4.2.2 God uses other people in the process of change

God's people are the instruments He uses to effect life fulfillment in the life of others. God guides a person through others to look at himself realistically but also to experience salvation and deliverance. This course is aimed at equipping God's people to do this work. See in this regard the last subject for this semester: Counseling in everyday life.

2.4.2.3 The Christian culture

The Christian culture of singing, **testimonies and literature** is a source which God gives to the Biblical counselor to guide people towards living in the presence of God. Study in **theology** is indispensable for the Christian counselor (see the additional re source books in the introduction).

2.4.2.4 Creation

God uses his creation to reveal not only his care and provision but also his omnipotence to man (see Romans 1). A person cannot but walk right into God's creation every morning when he wakes up.

It is absolutely necessary to know God and to grow in knowledge if the Biblical counselor wants to guide people in the reality of their everyday life but also in the reality of God's redemptive power.

2.5 Case study: Clyde

Every speaker and book uses case studies to explain his theory. Such a story contains what a person does and how he feels, and its core illustrates the theory.

We do the same in Biblical counseling. The student is invited to decide if the story is plausible. Then study it and work with it.

If the following account of Clyde's life is really true, it will explain a lot about the other stories of people's lives that you are going to encounter.

CASE STUDY – CLYDE

Fruit:

Clyde is thirty five years old. He is married and has two sons aged 10 and 12. He is a medical doctor. He is intelligent and has had many forms of training. Physically he is short with thick lenses. He seems to be clumsy and awkward in his movements.

It is usually accepted in counseling that a person's personality is determined by his history, The Biblical counselor does not agree with this, but believes that Clyde's history will assist in understanding him.

History:

Clyde's parents moved to the city when he was in standard 5. It had been an adjustment. His dad was a successful salesman and was promoted to area manager. Clyde remembers how the children teased him as a clumsy boy and said that he was one of Snow White's dwarfs.

Present: Why is he here?

His life is out of control - he is confused and feels depressed. His marriage is shattered. He wonders what life is all about. His agenda for counseling is for the counselor to solve his problem: take it away!

Clyde is an honest person and the facts stream from him. He talks about his escape mechanisms:

- * *He started drinking and it has increased recently he is worried about it.*
- * *He started buying pornography.*

Clyde had a wild time at high school and university up to his conversion. Then everything had changed and at the moment he sees the old things returning in his life - he has fallen back in the same things! This confuses him.

His emotions:

He is not only confused but feels guilty because his life has gone in the wrong direction. There are therefore very clear behaviour patterns and emotions in Clyde's life.

Summary of his situation:

- *Mockery of the children*
- *His parents were demanding - especially his dad. He had to have A's and go to the best school.*
- *He says that he would rather have studied English than medicine - but his dad said that he would not pay if Clyde did not study in a professional direction. Clyde shows signs of an accusation - his parents pressurized him into a choice.*

- *Choice of a wife: his parents were not satisfied with his other girl friends except for his wife. She was more aggressive and knew what she wanted in life.*

Thus there had been good choices in his life but the reasons for these could be questionable to the counselor.

This data is important for counseling not because it was the cause of Clyde's problem, but actually to help understand Clyde.

Present:

There are not only things from Clyde's past which can clarify matters - there are also present events which makes the picture clearer.

At present there is a lot of pressure on Clyde: *his drinking pattern, pornography, his feelings of guilt and pressure at work:*

- * *The demands of the medical profession - long intensive hours = physical demands.*
- * *The head of the hospital who appointed Clyde has a strong pro-abortion opinion. Immediately Clyde experienced conflict: which point of view should he take, how should he act, while maintaining a good relationship?*
- * *Clyde is demanding and negative at work with his subordinates. The chemists and sisters in hospital think it is no joke working under Clyde.*
- * *His wife: There is continual conflict. It has three aspects:*
 - *sometimes Clyde wants to do everything for her*
 - *at other times they fight*
 - *then again everything is ignored and he holds back.*

Which pressure is the biggest: job or marriage?

Pressure coming at him from the **future!**

Some of his biggest conflicts arise out of the future?

- * *His children are teenagers - he doesn't have much of a relationship with them (job pressure) - he feels he has lost them (he remembers how he felt about the fact that his own dad had lost him).*
- * *His parents are old - they are still demanding - it won't be easy for them to sell their house and move to a retirement home - he is afraid of this.*
- * *Clyde's own health: he is overweight, his heart has given warning signs - he is a doctor: Am / dying, will I have a heart attack?*

There is immense pressure on Clyde - he seems to be surrendering.

How can the Biblical counselor understand Clyde? How can this data be taken apart?

The counselor has **developed a feeling for his world:** his pressure, his past, present and future, his emotions, escape mechanisms, relationships, his job.

Can signs of **bitterness against God** be detected? How can this be understood? A Biblical counselor will not hinder the process by simplistic answers. The Biblical counselor is going to understand this data differently, that is Biblically (and not inclined towards moralism or pietism).

What is going on in his heart? What motivates him? What are his idols? The counselor has to dig deeper than behaviour and words. Why does he bear these thorns?

Before reading any further the student is advised to sort out the preceding data. Use the three trees (see 2.1.2).

Understanding Clyde (There are always one or all three of the following themes):

1. Clyde lives for **achievement in the eyes of other people** - this is the same as fear of the opinion of others: What do you as an important person think of me? This explains why he can push himself so much: because he wants to satisfy his boss for his opinion brings tension.

This also explains the times when he wants to please his wife.

Why does he capitulate before his parents in his career and marriage choices'? These are choices that could have been different.

The bitterness against God (he does not live up to Gods demands -that is why God punishes him). He is a depressed believer. He puts God in this role: How do I perform? Fear of God means to him: God is going for me!

2. My achievement in my own eyes.

The first fear is for people. This one is, however, his own standards as motivation for his driving himself. He wants to pursue the image he has of himself. Then it becomes complicated: his guilt about drinking and pornography is centered around: **it does not fit in with my image of myself**. He is an important member of the community and this image (drinking and pornography) does not fit. This is not guilt that he can confess before God - he judges himself and passes the verdict himself.

This also explains the times when he withdraws from his wife.

3. Your achievement in my eyes

He is demanding with others. He puts them into the position of the accused: people at work - his wife (explaining the aggressive phases).

4. False Saviours (gods)

To live in a world like the one described here is enormous. No person can really cope with such pressure. That is why Clyde deserves to escape from this pressure: pornography, drinking, etc. Doing this helps him to escape his problems for the moment and so new idols (false Saviours) are fabricated: drink, TV, pornography and fantasies. Something else, a false god is used to make me feel better (worthy, safe).

There are certainly other roots as well - but this provides the big picture!

The story of Clyde is a very complicated case. It does prove, however, that the Biblical model can lead a counselor to the real problems. The most important in Biblical counseling is that it does not only handle the symptom but identifies the real cause. Thus God's children can be guided to real restoration of their lives as well as living to the glory of God. This can be done by following the Biblical route (the three trees).