

ASSIGNMENT 1.5

Use the Biblical method to counsel GINA.

**Apply the four circles described in the study material.
Use the principles and methods discussed in the study material.**

Length: 6 pages

Learning Outcome:

Doing this assignment will enable you to evaluate how you apply the counselling method with a particular person.

Read through the Case Study “Gina, a real challenge” as often as you feel necessary to familiarise yourself with her completely.

Keep in mind that you are called by God not to judge her, but by loving her to guide her towards a change of heart and life.

“GINA, A REAL CHALLENGE”

Gina is the mother of a student involved in the college ministry that I was working with in El Paso. As I became involved in her daughter’s life, she and her family befriended me and we became quite good friends. At the same time, I was counselling a single parent who was also a friend of Gina’s. Gina and her husband knew of this counselling relationship and would ask me questions about their own marriage. Thus began our counselling relationship.

The counselling began in a group setting with three other couples that were experiencing some struggles in their first years of marriage. This seemed to be the best way to begin because the couples felt comfortable with one another and because of the lack of time in my schedule.

We met 6 times this way. Each week the couples were assigned work to do in a marriage manual. And each week we would use that material as a springboard for our discussions. Although each person attending gained valuable insight, it was clear that Gina and her husband, Brad, needed more.

Brad was the strong, silent type, while most of Gina's actions were dictated by her emotions. He was a real loner and she a social butterfly. I began to work with Gina and Brad alone.

Gina had pursued Brad, controlling the family scene, and was the spiritual leader. They had married while Brad was still in college and Gina worked to put him through college. Gina had rocky relationships with her family. Her father died while she was young and she and her mother did not get along. There is a possibility that she married to get away from painful relationships at home. She was finally free from the manipulative control of her mother.

Brad needed to see the importance of being the spiritual leader in his home. I helped him with practical ideas about family devotions and decision making. I placed useful materials in his hands which he studied gladly. He was a young Christian but he began to take initiative as a spiritual leader. However, the children received his new-found enthusiasm for spiritual things and the actions that followed with scepticism. Gina also demonstrated an unhealthy dose of cynicism towards him.

I encouraged Gina to be patient with her husband as he was growing and developing his spiritual legs. I was pleading for her support in this growth process, but she could not resist being Brad's critic.

Gina was studying at a local university. Her goal was to become a social worker and subjects like sociology and psychology formed part of her curriculum. She started to feel "free and independent" and did not want to be trapped anymore by household chores and a passive husband. I wanted to share her enthusiasm but on the other hand cautioned her to consider her whole situation. I proposed that she stopped her studies till the kids finished school. And I warned her that she was learning these things in an anti-biblical context and that she needed always to compare what she was receiving at school with Scripture.

Gina did drop out for one semester, but she enrolled again the next semester. She had minimal knowledge of the Bible, so she tended to compare her husband with the models offered in class instead of the models offered in the Word. Consequently, she became more and more dissatisfied with her relationship with Brad.

In our counselling sessions Gina seemed unable to see herself as a sinner in need of God's grace. She would feign assent for a bit but would lock horns whenever I attempted to apply the need for forgiveness in her relationship with Brad. Gina's view of God's grace really cheapened grace. She kept demanding that her husband be what she wanted him to be, while demanding that she be free to be the

liberated woman. I began to feel that she was manipulating our sessions for her own ends. In the midst of a particularly stressful session I challenged Gina with this and she got very angry, almost leaving the room.

I started identifying ways in Gina's relationship with Brad where she had manipulated him to say and do what she wanted. This permeated their marriage from day one. She feigned receptivity, but I later found out that she was angry. I challenged her anger. She knew that I was right but could not believe that I had the gall to say those things to her. I demonstrated how she did the same thing with me. Although Gina acknowledged that I was right, she was still mad at me for exposing her sin.

PLEASE FOLLOW THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS FOR THIS ASSIGNMENT:

1. While reading the case study "Gina – A real challenge", consider the Biblical distinction between roots and fruit.
2. Go through each of the four circles with Gina, namely, Building a relationship, Understanding, Confronting/Encouraging and Activation phase.

2.1 Welcoming and the building of a Godly helping relationship

What are the critical issues in building a trust relationship with her?

What issues may present a problem in building a relationship with her?

What could you use as possible common ground or entry gate to build a relationship with her?

2.2 Understanding phase and the collection of data that moves into the direction of the heart.

Situation: What are Gina's present and previous living circumstances?

Structure: Roots. What is critical and important elements of Gina's thinking?
How does she think about God, herself, her family, life?
What are her desires, objectives, etc?

Strategy: Fruit and thorns
How does Gina behave? How does she react to her situation?
What are her strategic patterns?

Heart/treasure: Roots.
What are her deepest motives, aims, values, desires, treasures, drives?

2.3 Confronting phase and speaking the truth in love – setting God's agenda.

By now you have a fair idea of Gina's life, her history, present situation and her thorns and roots. As her counsellor you will need to guide and accompany her on the road to the Cross, where repentance and change of the heart can take place.

Consider for a moment that this will be a very difficult phase for her. Legalism, moralism and pietism won't help her. A suggested list of "do's and don'ts" won't achieve lasting change. Remember that you can lead a horse to the water, but you cannot make him drink.

How will you make her “hungry” enough to willingly go to the Cross, where she can become free through genuine repentance?

In your counselling sessions and ongoing relationship building, some key aspects might have become clear to you. Genuine change occurs within a heart that desires it more than anything else.

What would you look for in Gina that might give you the “green light” for this crucial confrontational stage where her specific roots will change resulting in specific new behaviour?

2.4 Activation phase

Complete the following table to show what thorns and roots have to change:

Thorns and Roots in Gina’s life that need to change

	What should she “put off”?	What commands and promises should she “put on”?	Bible verses you can use
TREASURE			
STRUCTURE			
STRATEGY			
SITUATION			

3. Prioritize

From the above list of Thorns and Roots (first column) what do you consider to be the most important that needs attention first?