

# The Counselor: Character, Culture, and Competency

## Character

### 1. Who we are is more important than what we do.

...an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil. 1 Timothy 3:1-7.

<sup>33</sup> "Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad, for the tree is known by its fruit. <sup>34</sup> You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. <sup>35</sup> The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil. Matthew 12:33-35

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, <sup>4</sup> by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. <sup>5</sup> For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, <sup>6</sup> and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, <sup>7</sup> and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. <sup>8</sup> For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Peter 3:1-8

### 2. Some Key Character Qualities

#### A. Loving (Matt. 22:37-40, 1 Timothy 1:5)

There is a way to do ministry that is more about us than about others.

#### B. Holy (Luke 6:39-42, 1 Peter 1:13-16)

#### C. Humble (James 4:6, Phil. 2:3)

#### D. Teachable (2 Tim. 2:15, Prob. 2:1-5)

We must commit to being a life-long learner.

#### E. Hard-Working (Col. 3:23)

#### F. Dependent (John 15:4-5, 2 Cor. 3:5-6)

At the end of the day, we can change no one. We are utterly dependent on Christ, and prayer is a must.

## Culture

### A. Caring

*"People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."* Theodore Roosevelt

### B. Relatable (1 Cor. 10:13, Heb. 5:2-3)

Remove barriers of any kind of superiority.

Build Equity with the person.

### C. Slow to Speak (James 1:19)

One sure-fire way to lose the opportunity to counsel is when the person doesn't feel heard.

Check for understanding and clarification.

### D. Patient and Kind (1 Cor. 13:4)

People are not projects. They don't see what we see, they don't change as quickly as we would like. We also, don't see rightly and don't change as quickly as others would like!

### E. Full of Grace and Truth (John 1:17, Eph. 4:15)

Point people to the Gospel and the grace of God over and over.

Stand firm for truth, speaking it in love, because to not give truth is to not love well.

### F. Hopeful (Psalm 31:24, Matt. 7:24-27)

Always build hope in the heart of the counselee. Our hope is not like the world's; our hope is based on the firm foundation of the word of God.

### G. Ambassador (2 Cor. 5:14-21)

Our message is not our own. We are not the chef, we are the servers.

### Competency

I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to instruct one another. Romans 15:14.

#### 3 General Principles:

- A. God gives appropriate ministry through various stages of life.
- B. Avoid these two ditches:
  - a. "I think I know more than I do."
  - b. "I don't think I know enough."

"You know enough to act." Chapter 46 in "The Men We Need" by Brant Hanson.

- C. Help who you can. Escalate when you should.

#### Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think who we are is more important than what we do? Why do you think God finds that so important?
2. They say discipleship is more caught than taught. If counseling could be accurately defined as "intensive discipleship," then is that true in a counseling scenario? Why or why not?
3. Which of the two ditches mentioned in letter B of the Competency section would you say you are most likely to fall into? What is a helpful way for you to avoid that ditch?
4. Spend some time discussing some counseling opportunities you have in your life right now (using discretion), and round-table about some possible next steps.

