

Workshop Session 3

Integrating a Biblical Counselling Approach in the Local Church



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Four workshops

- 1. Foundation:** Identifying a biblical counselling approach
- 2. Structure:** Supporting pastoral care
- 3. Vision:** Casting and maintaining vision
- 4. Managing:** Misunderstandings, suspicions and barriers

Foundation: discussion

- What is your experience of vision setting in a church?
 - Have you done it well (or seen it done well)?
 - Have you done it badly (or seen it done badly)?
- What lessons have you learnt?

Vision Setting

Two 'visions'

- An overall vision – unchanging commitment to the glory of God
- A shorter term vision – regularly refreshed focus for a specific period of time

Vision and Culture

'Culture eats strategy for breakfast'

(Mark Fields, Ford Motor Executive)

Need 2 things:

1. Clear on vision
2. Convey it to change culture

1. A renewed emphasis on sanctification

- A forgotten element in church life
 - 'Discipleship' and 'activities' more prominent
 - Likeness to Christ eclipsed

Conformed to his image...

For those God foreknew he also
predestined to be **conformed to the
image of his Son**

Romans 8:29

Sanctification

Positional
sanctification

Progressive
sanctification

Positional Sanctification

*And by that will we **have been sanctified** through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*

Hebrews 10:10

Progressive Sanctification

*[we] **are being transformed** into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.*

2 Corinthians 3:18

Undivided hearts...

*I will give them **an undivided heart** and put a new spirit in them; I will remove from them their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh.*

Ezekiel 11:19

1. A renewed emphasis on sanctification

- Central to all church life... we are trying to become, individually and corporately, more like Jesus
- A vision to 'become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ' (Ephesians 4:13)

1. A renewed emphasis on sanctification

- *'Seeking to be a hospital for sinners, not a museum for saints'*

Sanctification: discussion

- What else could help renew an emphasis on spiritual growth and Christ-likeness?

2. An emphasis on relational strength

- The concept of 'one-anothering'

'One anothering'

- be devoted to one another
- honour one another
- love one another
- accept one another
- instruct one another
- greet one another
- agree with one another
- encourage one another
- speak to one another with psalms hymns and songs
- submit to one another
- bear with one another
- serve one another
- forgive one another
- teach one another
- admonish one another
- spur one another on
- offer hospitality to one another
- clothe yourselves with humility toward one another

2. An emphasis on relational strength

- The concept of 'one-anothering'
- A new willingness to pray for one another

3. Developing inter-personal skills

- Establish conversation as a ministry category

Hearing the Word

**Public:
Proclamation**

**Interpersonal:
Conversation**

**Private:
Devotion**

3. Developing inter-personal skills

- Conversation as a ministry category
- Training in interpersonal ministry
 - Real Change course
 - Seminar series on doing conversations well
 - Biblically based listening skills & talking skills

4. The strategic role of small groups

Influential in shaping church culture

Two contrasts

- Relationally rich group vs Bible study gp
- Social gp vs gp focussed on sanctification

Small groups: discussion

- Suppose your small group leaders were presented with a vision for their groups to be 'sanctification centres' – with their task as leaders to help the members of their group grow more like Jesus
- How might they respond?

A vision for sanctification

Expect push back

1. Isn't that God's job?
2. Already busy
3. Not trained or equipped
4. No one is expecting this

Implementing and sustaining change

- Envision leaders
- Encourage individual growth
- 'Mentor' groups
- Group vision setting
- Identifying gifts

Supporting this vision

- Preaching that aligns with this vision
- Sunday leading reinforces this vision
- Other church communication picks up on this language and vision

Undermining this vision

- When strugglers go unsupported
- When sincerity is lacking (*'let love be sincere'*, Rom 12:9)
- When emotion is stifled
- When leaders aren't vulnerable

A five-step plan

1. Cast a vision to elders / leadership team
2. Extend that vision to small gp leaders (and wait)
3. Broaden that vision to the whole church through preaching and perhaps a vision setting event
4. Support the vision by investing in training
5. Maintain the vision by revisiting it regularly

'Vision Leaks'

- Don't underestimate the importance of revisiting vision
- Regularly repeating, not constantly revising

Discussion

- How would you develop / improve this five-step plan to make it even more appropriate and effective for your own church?

A practical conclusion

A vision setting study for a small gp

Available in link on website / handout

