

## Urban Initiative Biblical Counseling



### January-March 2009

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### 2008 Ministry Summary

We thank the Lord for the opportunities to teach and learn in 2008. In addition to the privilege of counseling, we were invited to present seminars in two churches and we attended two counseling conferences. One of our favorite teaching/learning experiences is the counseling study group. Every other Friday, we discuss Biblical truth and ways to apply it for the glory of God, “as iron sharpens iron.”

### Karen Goes to Court

One unique ministry opportunity took place in the *court system*. Early in the year, a counselee requested permission to receive Biblical instead of secular psychological counseling. Praise God, by His Sovereign Grace that is exactly what took place. Counseling goals and progress reports were required as part of the counseling process. Later we learned those reports had been distributed to three social workers, four attorneys and the judge. In the fall, Karen went to the trial with the counselee, to encourage, support and pray, although the court had not requested her presence. On the first day, Biblical counseling was mentioned several times as social workers and attorneys quoted from the progress reports. At the end of the day, the defense attorney told Karen she was “invited” to take the stand the next day. In addition to specifics related to the case, she was asked questions, under oath, such as: “Where did you receive your education? What are your credentials, training, continuing education and experience? To whom are you accountable? What is Nouthetic Counseling? How is that different from psychology? How would you counsel a person with these diagnoses: depression, bipolar, anxiety, abuse?”

After the trial the defense attorney told us, “I was skeptical about biblical counseling before, but now I’m a believer (in biblical counseling).” The prosecuting attorney commented to my counselee, “If I ever needed counseling I would choose her.” She was very positive and encouraging as she spoke to me afterward and eagerly accepted our Urban Initiative Biblical Counseling Brochure.

We were thrilled to have this God-given opportunity to represent the sufficiency of the Scriptures, and to describe the support and accountability through the local church for the counselor and counselee. God searches and knows the human heart and His Word addresses the issues of life. We must be prepared to articulate Biblical answers to the world’s questions and challenges.

This experience also demonstrates the benefit of being associated with a larger organization like the National Association of Nouthetic Counselors. NANC and the local church provide accountability and authority.

### **2009 Ministry Goals**

- To be fully supported (due to the current economic crisis, our support level has decreased to 40%)
- To present our ministry to 4 churches or groups
- To encourage men and women to be trained to counsel/disciple Biblically in their own church
- To increase our knowledge of Scripture in order to be more effective counselors

### **Prayer Requests**

- Wisdom and strength for ministry
- For God to motivate mature believers, especially men, to learn to counsel/disciple others Biblically
- Opportunities to speak and teach

### **History of the Counseling Study Group**

In each of our previous newsletters we have mentioned the counseling study group and have extended an invitation to join us. Why should you consider becoming part of this group? What is our purpose and what do we do?

Initially, its purpose was to prepare individuals to complete the NANC certification exam and we called it the NANC study group. In the past two years the questions on theology and counseling have guided our discussions. However, not everyone in the group is working toward certification. We believe the topics discussed are beneficial for any Christian who desires to grow in his knowledge of God and in his ability to interpret life's situations Biblically.

Our primary goal is to learn to apply the truth of Scripture to our own life situations in order to become more like Christ. Next, we desire to more effectively minister the Word to hurting people. We are a diverse group representing seven different churches. We all look forward to fellowship around the Word of God and the lively discussions every other Friday. The next meeting is January 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Tari Zortman is the reason we started the study group. Two years ago Tari asked us to mentor her and two others through the NANC certification test. She had the desire to develop a ministry to teens and women at risk, and knew she needed to be trained and prepared to counsel them biblically. We began with these three women, and as others joined us the group grew, and we are having a blessed time. We asked Tari to share a bit of her testimony and the progress of her ministry dream, Shepherd House Ministries.

### **Counseling Study Group Testimony**



*“Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times which have not been done, saying, ‘My purpose will be established. And I will accomplish all My good pleasure.’”* Isaiah 46:10

Fifteen years ago I met Jerry Hime on the referral of a friend for counseling. I went to see Jerry for a few sessions, but when I was challenged to submit to the Lordship of Christ and do away with the sin in my life, I decided that this Biblical Counseling wasn't for me. I returned to my sinful lifestyle.

As you can imagine, things did not go so well for me, until I did as Jerry had been teaching me (to put off sin and put on righteousness). I decided it was time (as a professing believer) to start living for the King. PRAISE GOD!

Fifteen years ago in the middle of my crisis, only the Lord was aware of the outcome. As I look back, things have begun to become clear and start to make sense. But never in my wildest dreams would I have imagined I would be participating in a counseling study group.

Now, after years of counseling, I have been part of the counseling training group for the past two years and I am preparing (Lord willing) to be certified as a Nouthetic Counselor. If that wasn't enough of a change for this once unredeemed young lady, the Lord in His providence has given me a heart and vision for the lost; for girls and women in crisis. After many years of prayer Shepherd House Ministries was born; a discipleship ministry to shepherd girls and women "From Crisis to Completeness in Christ" ([www.shmmm.com](http://www.shmmm.com)).

And as the Lord's providence would have it, Jerry is on our Board of Directors as the Vice-Chair, and Karen has offered to help with our Program Committee. Thank you to Jerry and Karen Hime for their commitment to our study group and thank you to the Lord for never giving up on us.

***“Almost every problem or failure in the Christian life is in some way rooted in the fact that we do not understand or we forget Who God is and who we are,” Sinclair Ferguson.***

### **NANC Conference Testimony**



Nancy Helm is a member of Family Baptist Church and our dear friend. She teaches a Sunday school class for women and serves as a deaconess. We praise God for her consistent walk with Christ, and the many ways she ministers to others in our local church. We asked her to reflect on her first experience at a NANC conference—we did *not* pay her to say nice things about us!

“In October I went to my first NANC Conference in St Louis, Missouri with Jerry and Karen (my gracious traveling companions and beloved friends). It was a wonderful and greatly blessed experience. We had dinner with Martha Peace and her husband Sanford our first evening there (a surprise birthday gift from the Himes). Martha is a well-known, trustworthy Christian author and nouthetic counselor. All of the workshops I attended were profitable, solid in biblical truth and great tools for effective counseling. After our return to Minneapolis, I was able to utilize what I had learned from one of her workshops in our women's Sunday school class. We are currently studying her book, *Attitudes of a Transformed Heart*.

It was a thrill to be able to hear Jay Adams and John MacArthur speak. All the guest speakers were wonderful. It was pure joy to meet other believers from all over the US who have a desire to counsel using God's Word to transform lives with grace, mercy and truth. It is my goal (with the help of the Lord and the Himes) to become NANC certified in the future and to counsel those in need of change in a God honoring and glorifying way. Praise God for His goodness!”

The Urban Initiative Biblical Counseling Ministry brochure was developed in September of 2007 and describes our counseling ministry. Since many of you have not seen it, we included the text of the brochure below.

## **Urban Initiative Biblical Counseling Ministry**

### **Our Goal**

It is our privilege as Christians to come alongside to help and encourage one another through the problems of life. We believe the Bible is sufficient and superior in providing hope and help. We are committed not only to help people overcome their current problems, but also to train them to live all their lives in a manner that leads to increasing maturity in the Lord (2 Peter 1:2-10).

We counsel individuals, families and couples with such issues as: abuse, anxiety, anger, bitterness, depression, conflict resolution, and interpersonal relationships. Our interpretation of life situations and relationships is shaped by the way we think. These interpretations also reflect what we worship, what or whom we serve—God or something else in creation.

### **What Kind of Counseling?**

This philosophy has been called “nouthetic” counseling. Genuine Biblical counseling uses the Bible to help people make sense out of life. For more information please visit the National Association of Nouthetic Counseling (NANC) website at [www.nanc.org](http://www.nanc.org).

### **The Counselee’s Commitment is to:**

- demonstrate a willingness to work at changing and growing in Christ, with the help of the Holy Spirit
- be faithful and prompt for appointments
- complete homework designed to address specific issues and promote growth in Christ
- make homework assignments the priority over other books or Bible studies during counseling

There is no charge for counseling, books or materials. The financial support of this ministry depends entirely on donations.

### **Response Form**

#### **Need**

I need Biblical Counseling and will call for an appointment

#### **Support**

Yes, I would like to support the Urban Initiative Biblical Counseling Ministry in the following manners:

Prayer Support: I will commit to pray regularly for the counseling ministry

Financial Support—A one time gift in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_

Financial Support—Monthly donation in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_

All donations are tax deductible. Donors who give by check will be sent a year-end tax statement. Please make checks payable to the Urban Initiative Biblical Counseling Ministry.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Please send responses to: Urban Initiative Biblical Counseling Ministry  
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