



Urban Initiative Biblical Counseling Newsletter

January-March 2008

Why a newsletter?

In order to keep you updated about our ministry and share the blessings we plan to do a newsletter each quarter. We also want to provide you with information you may find helpful in your personal walk with Christ and in your interaction with others. When circumstances and relationships in life are challenging, we may need a fellow believer to walk alongside us and to help us. It is our desire to encourage you personally and to suggest resources that will assist you as counsel and disciple others.

Ministry Update

Counseling

Between us, we have been counseling 60-70 hours a week. We are thankful for the beautiful offices provided by our church, Family Baptist. Currently, we are seeing individuals from about 20 churches. We team-counsel couples, Jerry counsels individual men and Karen meets with women.

We counsel individuals who present a wide range of problems. People's "stories" vary, but there are themes reoccurring such as: abuse, suffering, anger, anxiety, bitterness, depression, interpersonal relationships, divorce, separation, conflict, and communication.

Speaking Engagement

"Conflict Resolution through Biblical Counseling" was the topic of a 2-day seminar we presented at Sunrise Bible Church in September. Dr. George Cable enthusiastically supports genuine Biblical counseling and the material presented was well received by the individuals who attended. We love doing this and welcome more opportunities. Perhaps your local church would like to host such a seminar.

Counseling Brochure completed

"We need to develop a counseling brochure," we have often said. The catalyst that made it happen was the September conference at Sunrise Bible Church. Dr. Cable informed us he needed "a picture and bio for the newspapers in the area." That was shock enough to get the adrenalin moving, "for the newspapers??!!" We moved into action, with a lot of help. Our professional photographer daughter-in-law, Sherry, completed our portrait, making us look better than we do. We began writing the text, and our son Chris did the layout on his computer. The rough draft was done and re-done. Then, thanks to the suggestions and editing help of Susan Mowen, Gloria Ormiston, and Dorothy Woods the brochure was ready. Even the final step was arranged by our sovereign God. A friend of the counseling ministry, Kim Abrahamson, arranged to have it printed at her workplace free! The whole process was done in 14 days. Praise God!

NANC Study Group

Every other Friday, up to 16 people from area churches have been meeting for an interactive study group, using the theological and counseling questions for NANC (National Association of Nouthetic Counselors) certification. We are able to provide counseling observation opportunities for those who are working on their certification.

Although not all those who attend plan to become certified, the study and discussion have been helpful, since every one of us can grow in our ability to apply the truth of God's Word. In the circumstances we face, we need to be able to speak biblically to the struggles of others. We welcome anyone who wishes to join us!

Support

The financial support of this ministry continues to depend entirely on donations. We are thankful for the contributions of one local church and of friends of the counseling ministry, in addition to our own church. There is no charge for counseling, books or materials. In this way, counseling is available to anyone for any length of time, whether they are able to contribute to the ministry or not. However, contributions are always welcomed and appreciated.

Karen's Hospital Job Ends

Since December, 2006, as a result of changes in the Fibromyalgia program at Abbott Northwestern Hospital, my work hours steadily decreased through 2007. We thought each month would be the last. But, God was gracious to extend my job until December 13, when my Occupational Therapy career ended with a layoff. It has been a mixed blessing, since juggling two careers during the 19 years we have been counseling has made life very busy. Ultimately, I am very thankful, since few people have been blessed with two careers they have enjoyed so much. But we were definitely ready to enjoy just one!

The farewell celebration was a precious time of visiting with my former co-workers. What a blessing also, to visit with four of the five women who had been my managers during my 27 years at ANW. Each of these women has been supportive and encouraging through the personal and corporate ups and downs of those years.

The Benefit of Urban Initiative Counseling Ministry to your local church

Resource

We frequently receive calls from pastors asking us to counsel someone from their church, or to suggest resources to assist them in their ministry to others. We are altogether amazed, humbled and honored by this privilege. It always energizes us to help provide ways to help struggling people change, grow, and be encouraged in their walk with Christ. We are thrilled to be available as a resource to pastors, deacons, church members, or fellow counselors who are working with individuals from their church. As individuals grow in Christ and learn to handle their problems biblically, they become more valuable and productive members of their local churches.

Testimony of Lee Ormiston, pastor of Family Baptist Church:

“As a pastor of a local church, having ready access to biblical counselors who are committed to disciple hurting individuals has been a great asset. Not only has it been a great blessing to the individuals who are impacted by the biblical counseling, but it has been a tremendous help relieving some of the pastoral counseling load.”

Testimony of Family Baptist Church member:



Anne Kittleson: “I have read the Bible through more than 20 times and have been under solid Bible teaching and preaching as a Christian for almost 58 years. Still, the exposition and application of Scripture in the counseling study group have prepared me to understand the truth deeper and more clearly. I am able to be a greater encouragement to others because I learned how to understand people better. Though the Lord has long been precious and near to me, I believe I know my Savior better through the enlightenment of the Word in different aspects. When difficult situations arise, I find that I am able to be more intentional in the way I think and respond because of the biblical counseling training.”

Reading Suggestions

Instruments in the Redeemer’s Hands: People in Need of Change Helping People in Need of Change, by Paul David Tripp, P&R Publishing. We are all counselors as we interact with family, friends, co-workers, and neighbors. We give and receive advice, as we help one another interpret events and circumstances. This book helps us to interpret life biblically, and then gives us tools to minister effectively to others. Study guide written by Tom Zustiak available at tzustiak@copper.net .

Thankfulness Even When It Hurts, by Susan Lutz, P&R Publishing. God calls us to be thankful in all circumstances, but how do we do that? This 22-page booklet points the reader to the theology of trials and suffering in a refreshing and helpful way. Study guide written by Karen Hime available from Urban Initiative.

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