



Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling: Changing Lives with God's Changeless Truth

James MacDonald (Editor) , Robert W. Kellemen , Stephen Viars

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Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling is a comprehensive guide that will equip God's people to use biblical truth to change lives. More than that, this book will increase people's confidence in the sufficiency and relevancy of God's Word to address real-life issues in a multitude of counseling situations. Readers of this book will:

Understand clearly why they should embrace biblical counseling

Be encouraged to trust God's Word to provide rich insight for living in the midst of even the most difficult challenges

Enjoy the relevant, pastoral, and theological teaching they have come to appreciate from such noted authors as James MacDonald, John Piper, Mark Dever, and Elyse Fitzpatrick

The 28 chapters blend theological wisdom and practical expertise. The first half of the book emphasizes a practical *theology* of biblical counseling; the second half highlights a practical *methodology* of biblical counseling.

Though accessible to all Christians, the book will especially appeal to pastors and church leaders, counseling practitioners, students, and educators.

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From Reader Review Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling: Changing Lives with God's Changeless Truth for online ebook

Aaron Ventura says

This is a series of short essays on biblical counseling. Piper's intro essay was the best. After that, the rest were only so-so. This is a recently published book (2013 I think) and is a good overview of the landscape of biblical counseling in North American evangelicalism right now.

Elizabeth says

Theology and counseling. What do these two words have in common? For one, many people tend to relegate both to professionals. Secondly, most people unknowingly engage in both, regardless of what type of formal training they have (or have not) received. Virtually everyone holds some sort of belief about God, and almost every person gives counsel at some point in his/her life.

Of theology, Josh Harris writes:

"Theology matters...it matters...because what we know about God shapes the way we think and live. What you believe about God's nature--what he is like, what he wants from you, and whether or not you will answer to him--affects every part of your life. Theology matters, because, if we get it wrong, then our life will be wrong...We're either building our lives on the reality of what God is truly like and what he's about, or we're basing our lives on our own imagination and misconceptions. We're all theologians. The question is whether what we know about God is true" (Josh Harris, *Dug Down Deep*, pgs. 10-11).

Yes! Theology matters. The study of this personal God and how He relates to His creatures makes a substantial impact on how one lives life. The authors of *Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling* understand and are committed to this truth. So much so, that Part I of this book begins with an introduction to the classic doctrines found in a systematic theology, laying a theological foundation for Christian living and preparing the reader for the practical implications found in Part II. The contributors to *Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling* do an excellent job demonstrating the relationship between theology and counseling. The theology is Biblical, readable, and relevant to daily life. Furthermore, the material serves to whet one's appetite for further study of God's Word and His work.

But what of counseling? Does counseling matter? In Part II, Mark Dever and Deepak Reju contend that "Counseling is a subset of discipleship and deals with the more problematic and difficult aspects of life to handle..." (pg. 251). If that is the case, counseling is part of what is commanded in Matthew 28 when Jesus instructs His followers to go and make disciples of all nations. You see, "counseling" is meant to encompass ministering the Word to one another and disciple-making, which makes a book like *Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling* important and helpful for all Christians.

Dever and Reju rightly recognize that:

"Every believer is expected to disciple someone and to be discipled, and is capable of doing so without any formal training. All they need is a willing spirit and a Bible. On the other hand, members may not know how to care for Christians who are struggling with more severe problems. Even if they are willing to help, they

may not know what to do, what to say, or where to go in the Bible for help. While everyone has the ability to disciple or be discipled, counseling might require more guidance from pastors and counselors" (pg.251).

Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling is available to offer further guidance. Bob Kellemen and Steve Viars write that the goal of Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling is to equip the reader to equip others "so that we bring Him glory through our individual and corporate growth in Christlikeness" (pg. 19). This book is an excellent means to that end.

*Many thanks to Harvest House Publishers for sending me a free copy of this book in exchange for my honest opinion!

Andres Vera says

This is another one of those books with "Christ-Centered" in the title where I wonder if it'll actually mean anything significant. It does, and it is a very encompassing theme of every chapter. The book itself has lots of great chapters, and some not so great. Each chapter is written by one or two individuals with particular expertise or experience on the topic. Although some chapters are not particularly strong, the ones that are excellent make this book a great read, although it was a little long.

Ben Robin says

This is a very helpful resource, which I expect to return to as a reference book throughout my ministry.

Connor Anderson says

An excellent overview of the major facets of Biblical Counseling. Well-rounded and thorough

Brent Meyers says

It was ok; there were some very good points and insights and some unbiblical points. The second half (practical) is much better than the first half (theological).

Ben Zornes says

This is a collection of essays on counseling, and as with any collection some selections are home runs, others are more akin to a batter standing in the box with glazed eyes watching three, dead-center fastballs zoom by. In other words, some are real strike-outs. At points it seemed as if, in some brainstorming meeting, the folks planning this book imagined what they'd be in hot water for if they left out a chapter on "xyz." It seems as if they then proceeded to make sure they didn't leave those chapters out, leaving some essays feeling "forced."

On the whole, however, there are good insights and encouragement as to how a church should think about its counseling work and ministry. As the title indicates, the editors and authors really did strive to make it a Christ-centered approach to counseling, and therefore returned again and again to the sufficiency of Scripture. I certainly have no complaints there. This isn't the best book on counseling, nor the worst. At points it is really good, and again, at others, not so good.

Michael Stilley says

Hit and miss. Some chapters were extremely helpful!

David Morton says

This book was much better than I initially expected, and absolutely changed my views on what, at its core, Biblical counseling is all about. The layout was in two parts, the first being a theological foundation for Biblical counseling as a whole, and the second being a practical outworking of this theology. This worked, and it worked well. Also, this is not a book from the three authors on the cover, but rather a book written by multiple authors, all converging on the topic with a striking level of unity. This should be the first book read by anyone considering becoming more adept at people-helping within their own church. Highly recommended.

Peggy Johnson says

Excellent read as one continues to grow in loving the church well.

Jacob Coldwell says

Great overview of what it looks like to practically follow Jesus.
