

SOUL CARE | WEEK 1

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Everyone's a counselor

Whether you acknowledge it or not, you are a counselor. Every day, you are counseling yourself and, most likely, regularly counseling others. When your child is scared at night because of a thunderstorm, what you say to ease his fear is counseling. When your spouse comes home after a rough day, what you communicate in those moments is counseling. When you're lonely or stuck in sin, what you say to yourself in those hard times is counseling. The main question is not whether or not you want to be a counselor but whether or not the counsel you give yourself and others is biblical counsel. Is your counsel God's wisdom or man's wisdom?

As Christians, we believe that God has given us all the instruction we need in order to live a godly life on this earth (2 Peter 1:3-5). God has not left us to figure out what He commands of us, but rather, through His Spirit, working through the Scriptures, we can be equipped for every good work in which He has called us to walk (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Yet, when we speak to others and ourselves, is our speech and counsel dipped in Scripture or in something else?

Challenge | Evaluate your counsel

Over the next week, *keep a journal* of the prominent moments when you recognize you are counseling and giving instruction to yourself and others. What did you say to yourself when times are difficult? What was your go-to phrase for comfort? When someone asked you for advice on a certain situation, how did you respond? In addition, if you were asking someone for counsel on a particular issue, was his or her counsel rooted in Scripture? After you *reflect* on the words exchanged, do your best to think about whether the counsel you gave was rooted in man's wisdom (i.e., experience as authority, personal gain, etc.), or rooted in the word of God.

Read | James 3:13-18, Prov. 9:10, Jeremiah 9:23-24, Psalm 19:7-11,

In order to help you think through the signs of man's wisdom and God's wisdom, read the verses above and pray that the Holy Spirit helps you discern and approve what is excellent and so be blameless for the day of Christ (Phil. 1:10). If you're not sure if the counsel is biblical, feel free to connect with a member of the Soul Care team or a pastor to help you think through a specific issue.

Think | 1. What is the difference between wisdom that is from above and wisdom that is from below?

2. Who is the source of all true wisdom? How can we learn about what is wise and what is unwise?

Do | Try to share with a friend or your Small Group what you learned from this study.