



CORE VALUES

Our Core Values for Christian Counseling will help you understand the heart of our mission, as it pertains to our theology and practice. The first grouping of values layout for you our understanding of theological doctrine. The second set of values present our view of Christian counseling.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

The following is a brief summary of the doctrinal core beliefs of Growing in Grace Resources. It is not an exhaustive statement, but a framework to give you a point of reference regarding our beliefs about God and those who live in His world:

ABOUT THE BIBLE: We believe in the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Bible; that it has God for reveals the principles by which God will judge us; and therefore, is the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct and beliefs should be judged.

ABOUT GOD: We believe that the One and only true God is triune; that He exists as three persons – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; that all three are eternally equal in nature, attributes, and perfection and as such are equally worthy of our worship, love, and obedience.

ABOUT MAN: We believe that man was created in the image of God, but because of his fall into sin, this image is marred, his nature depraved, and he is separated from God and thus, can be said to be spiritually dead.

ABOUT JESUS CHRIST:

- His Birth:** We believe that Jesus was conceived of the Holy Spirit by the Virgin Mary and that He received a human body and a sinless human nature.
- His Life:** We believe that Jesus Christ experienced all the normal temptations of human existence, yet was without sin. We believe that He showed Himself to be the Messiah of Israel and the divine Son of God by His teachings and His miracles.
- His Death:** We believe that when Jesus Christ died on the cross, He provided the substitutionary, vicarious atonement for man's sin.
- His Resurrection:** We believe that after being dead for three days, Jesus Christ arose physically and bodily from the grave.
- His Return:** We believe the visible and personal return of Jesus Christ.

ABOUT SALVATION: We believe that salvation is by grace, plus nothing and minus nothing. The conditions to salvation are repentance and faith, which are granted by God as a part of his divine kindness to those whom He chooses.

ABOUT THE LOCAL CHURCH: We believe that the local church is God's primary instrument for His work today; that every believer should be an active member in a local assembly, supporting its worship, ministry, fellowship, discipleship, and evangelism by his/her time, talents, and offerings. The ordinances of the local church are baptism and the Lord's Supper, and belong exclusively to the local church.

ABOUT THE ETERNAL STATE: We believe in the everlasting conscious blessedness of the saved and the everlasting conscious punishment of the lost.

CHRISTIAN COUNSELING: A Christian counseling ministry is unique in mending relational and/or situational difficulties in which people are exposed. The unique components of a Christian counseling ministry are set apart from an exclusively secular model in the following ways:

1. We recognize the essential workings of the mercies of God in the life of the believer. The most important of these workings is salvation through Jesus Christ-what fellowship has light with darkness? (2 Cor. 6:14)
2. We believe these mercies are the promise Jesus makes to send the Comforter, Who ministers to us as well as teaches us in our sanctification. (See John 16:7-13)
3. We strive to help the believer to think and live a lifestyle that is acceptable to God. We do this by helping him/her recognize a proper view of God and how that view should manifest itself as we grow in knowledge, confess, repent, seek forgiveness, and put on Christ. A proper view of God will, among other things, facilitate His desire for us to be conformed to the image of Christ. Other approaches thrive to show their counselees a void of sin while exalting self.
4. We believe lives can be transformed by the renewing of the mind. (See Romans 12:1, 2)
5. We believe that God uses Christian counseling to help prove what the will of God is.
6. All of the models and tools utilized in Christian counseling stand in stark contrast to the philosophy and tradition of secular counseling which is ultimately based on the following specific principles:
 - Man is his own god; therefore, man is the source of his own answers.
 - At best, God can only be defined as a "higher power"
 - There are no absolutes
 - Guilt is not real, merely a feeling, which has been projected by the out-of-date mores of the church
 - The self-actualized, self-gratifying person is the desired result of counseling

There are other views, but our answer to the secular view on these points are the following:

-Man is a sinner in need of a Savior and, as such, is powerless to initiate or implement a complete, life-changing direction on his own. (Romans 3:10-12,23; 5:5-8; Eph. 2:8-10)

-There is a God-this God is revealed in the Bible, Who, in His manifestations as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, can create complete, life changing direction in a person's life. (Genesis 1:1, 26-27, 2:7; 2 Cor. 5:17; 1 Tim. 1:12-17)

-God, in His grace and mercy, has established certain absolutes, which guide us in our walk in this life. (Exodus 20:2; John 3:16, 14:6; 1 John 1:7-10; Gal. 6:7)

-Guilt is a real entity, experienced when we sin against God and/or our fellow man. It can only be eliminated by humble confession, repentance, and by seeking restoration of fellowship with God and/or our fellowman. (Romans 2:14, 15; 2 Cor. 7:8-10; James 4:10; 1 John 1:9)

-The desired result of Christian counseling is to see the individual live a life conformed to the image of Christ. (Romans 12:1, 2; Col. 1:28; Eph. 4:22-24; 2 Cor. 3:18)

David G. Banner & Peter C. Hill, Ed.; Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology and Counseling. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), pp 792-794