

#632 Methodologies of Counseling  
Western Reformed Seminary  
Tito de S. Lyro, M.Div.  
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## COURSE INFORMATION

### Course Objective

This course is designed to enable you to critique secular counseling theories and compare them to biblical counseling. You will also master the counseling methodology known as the 8 I's with the goal of applying it in your own counseling practice.

### Course Outcome

By successfully completing this course, you will be able to do the following:

1. Explain the difference between secular counseling and biblical counseling.
2. Identify the most popular secular theories of counseling.
3. Understand a practical framework for evaluating and executing the counseling process biblically.
4. Apply the 8 I's method of counseling in your own practice.

### Attendance

Since class discussion is an important part of this course, attendance is very important. School policy allows one unexcused absence; additional absences or tardiness will lower the final grade.

### Communication

All communication regarding this course outside of class days will be conducted via e-mail. You will submit all your assignments via e-mail attachment as Microsoft Word documents. Please use [president@wrs.edu](mailto:president@wrs.edu) to communicate with me and submit your assignments.

### Required Textbooks

- John MacArthur, ed., *Counseling: How to Counsel Biblically*
- Paul David Tripp, *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands*
- Jay Adams, *The Christian Counselor's Manual*

### Reading Response

You will submit two reading responses on the dates listed below. This assignment is designed to assist you to interact with the reading in a godly way. You should answer the following two questions in a 2-3 page (not counting the title page), double-spaced document.

1. Evaluate the resource(s) and interact with the text(s) (3/4 - 1 page response)

Determine what you consider to be the *three* most significant statements or contributions of the book to the ministry of biblical counseling. Each response should have all of the following elements:

- the principle stated succinctly,

- the page reference, cited parenthetically, wherein that principle can be found in the textbook,
  - the biblical text which that principle draws upon,
  - and 4) a specific use for counseling ministry or personal sanctification.
2. How will you respond biblically to a challenge presented to your life by the reading assignment? (1-2 page response).

This portion of the reading response focuses on the relationship between the reading and your life and calls you to specifically respond in repentance (a turning from who you are presently to greater likeness to Jesus in love for God and love for others). You are not required to give extensive details about your life, but it should include clear and specific attention to each of the points required below. This portion of the reading assignment is as significant as your discussion of key principles in the Reading Discussion, therefore, give it appropriate time and effort.

Your response should correspond to the following outline:

- the specific point in the textbook that prompted the element of conviction (this conviction may be a personal area of growth or a challenge to greater excellence in the field of counseling), with the page number where the point was made,
- why that point brought conviction,
- how the Scripture addresses the matter of conviction – concerning what needs to be put off in behavior and wrong worship (provide specific references),
- how transfer of worship is taking place for you – concerning the renewing of your mind by reestablishing who/what is your treasure and redeemer and why, and
- how you plan to practice right worship in *one* specific action of loving God and loving others (e.g., in approaching the Lord, a certain relationship, daily task, conflict situation, service project). Consider especially how you might encourage someone by sharing how you grew in response to this reading assignment.

### Methodology Papers

To best synthesize the instruction learned in this course on the Methods of Biblical Change, three methodology papers are assigned.

Methodology Paper #1: *Homework on Homework Paper*. As background for this assignment, review Appendices 4 and 5 in *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands* by Paul David Tripp (“Doctrines That Drive Homework” and “Homework and Four Phases of Counseling,” pp. 318-354) and Jay Adams’s *The Christian Counselor’s Manual*, Chapters 27- 29 (pp. 294-343). After you have reviewed the aforementioned resources write a 4-5-page double-spaced response paper using the following outline:

- What are the doctrines that drive homework? (Give Scriptural references and footnote as appropriate from Adams and Tripp)
- What are the benefits of homework for the counselor?
- What are the benefits of homework for the counselee?

- An example of a well-designed, thoroughly biblical homework assignment that *applies the doctrines that drive homework, and ties in as many of the noted benefits of homework to both counselor and counselee.*

Methodology Paper #2: *Biblical Hope Paper*. This paper will require you to research what hope is biblically, particularly answering the following questions:

- How can one have hope?
- How can one lose hope?
- How can hope be regained?

You should contrast the Christian hope with worldly hope, demonstrating a thorough understanding of the difference between the two. Please use the “Erik(a)-case study” to illustrate throughout the paper. This paper must be very succinctly written – limited to a 4-5-page double-spaced paper – in order to demonstrate that you have a good understanding of the Christian hope. The final page of the paper should be a one-page homework assignment leading the counselee to regain hope and implementing what was learned through the Homework on Homework assignment. (Include a brief introduction and instructions explaining how the counselee should use the assigned homework. See *A Christian Growth and Discipleship Manual: A Homework Manual for Biblical Living*, Volume 3, pages 35-71 for examples of how this assignment *could* be formatted. Take care to design the homework to effectively guide the counselee in the putting on of biblical hope throughout a week’s time). This research paper will require 4-8 resources (or 1-2 per page). You can use books assigned in the course but should also look to outside resources as well.

Methodology Paper #3: Method of Counseling Summary. This assignment is a 4-5-page double-spaced paper that is meant to be a useful summary of the 8 I’s. This summary should be designed as a tool for you to use in the future as you prepare your agenda for a counseling session and as you evaluate your counseling sessions. It does not need to be in essay form. It may be bulleted, in chart style, or any other form that is most useful to you. However, it must be a thorough, accurate and useful summary of the method. The summary must include:

- A clear definition of each major point of the eight I’s,
- Scriptural basis for each major point, and
- Some practical examples in a counseling situation.

You may want to also include other things that have stood out from the lectures or the books. *Do not merely transfer all the information from the syllabus to this summary, but reword and select scriptures that will help you remember concepts, and give practical examples that are memorable to you.*

### Writing Format

All written assignments must follow *The SBL Handbook of Style*. You will find formatting samples and other invaluable resources on formatting at <https://wrs.edu/student-center/student-handbook-and-resources>.

### Final Exam

The final exam will require you to memorize the instruction from the course, particularly the identification of the 8 I's methodology and its application for counseling. The essay portion of the exam will have you read a case study and then answer each question that follows based on that one case. The essays will test not only that you know the principles of the 8I's, but that you know how to practically implement them in a counseling setting.

### **Class Schedule**

January 23 – Class starts

January 30 – Read the article “The Therapeutic Gospel” by David Powlison prior to coming to class

February 20 – NO CLASS (Presidents’ Day) – reading report # 1 (*Counseling: How to Counsel Biblically*) by midnight local time. Please submit it via e-mail attachment as a Microsoft Word document

March 20 – NO CLASS (Instructor out of town) – Reading Report # 2 (*Instruments in the Redeemer’s Hands*) and Methodology Paper # 1 due by midnight local time. Please submit both assignments via e-mail attachment as Microsoft Word documents.

March 27 – NO CLASS (Spring break)

April 17 – Methodology Paper # 2 due by midnight local time. Please submit the assignment via e-mail attachment as a Microsoft Word document.

May 1 – Methodology Paper # 3 due by midnight local time. Please submit the assignment via e-mail attachment as a Microsoft Word document.

May 8 – Final exam taken during class period

### **Grading**

- Reading and reading responses – 30%
- Attendance and participation – 15%
- Methodology papers – 30%
- Final – 25%