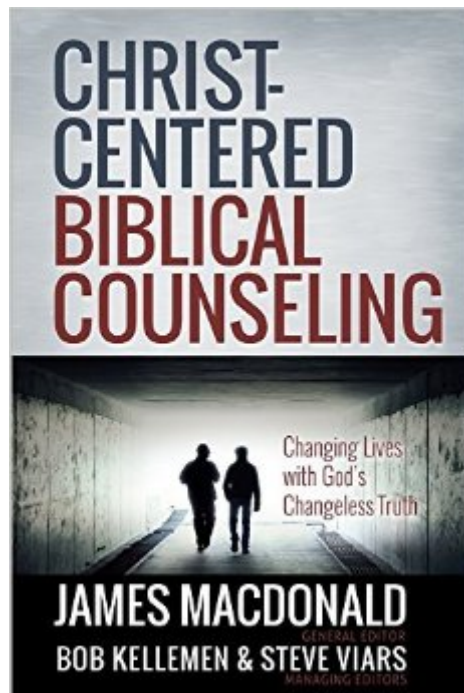


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# Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling: Changing Lives With God's Changeless Truth



## Synopsis

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.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 480 pages

Publisher: Harvest House Publishers (March 1, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0736951458

ISBN-13: 978-0736951456

Product Dimensions: 6.2 x 1.3 x 9.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.5 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars See all reviews (29 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #102,119 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #153 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Ministry & Evangelism > Counseling & Recovery #21510 in Books > Religion & Spirituality

## Customer Reviews

This book is a necessity for every Christian, Pastors especially but not exclusively. We all need to study counseling. I knew from the introduction that this was going to be an excellent book. John Piper's beginning chapter "The Glory of God: The goal of Biblical Counseling" was pure gold. Dr. Piper defines Christ centered counseling for us and sets a high standard that the rest of this 480 page book maintains. "Biblical counseling is the God-centered, Bible-saturated, emotionally-in-touch use of language to help people become God-besotted, Christ-exalting, joyfully self-forgetting lovers of people." Pure Gold. Listen to a sampling from the rest of this volume: "Our role as biblical

counselors is to remind broken people of the Gospel script. We're soldiers in a battle standing back to back as spiritual friends speaking God's truth in Love. We provide grace narratives with discernment, using the weapon of truth to take down enemy lies and take captive enemy plans." "It doesn't matter if we have helped people feel better emotionally or improved some aspect of their situation if they are no closer to Christ when the process is concluded." (What our counselees need) is to be formed into the image of Jesus. He needs to learn to abide in Christ so that the life of the Savior flows through and empowers everything he thinks, says, and does. He needs all kinds of things, but fundamentally, he needs to learn what it means to walk in a life giving relationship with Jesus." "Dependence must be on the Divine relationship, not on any human one. As a counselor, you must demonstrate this explicitly by your dependence upon the LORD.

As Powlison explains in the Foreword, Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling is "like an architect's 1:12 scale model." It communicates the concept of a structure, but is not overly detailed. Powlison says to think of the book as "a scale model of biblical counseling, delineating key theological underpinnings and sketching key methodological implications." (7) In the Introduction, Bob Kellemen and Steve Viars echo this mission and at their motivation is to "promote authentic spiritual growth among God's people in ways that are grace-based and gospel-centered, relationally and theologically robust, grounded in the local church, and relevant to everyday life and ministry." (11-12) The first two parts (grace-based/gospel centered, relationally and theologically robust) are the focus of the first part of the book: A Practical Theology of Biblical Counseling. In the second part, A Practical Methodology of Biblical Counseling, the focus shifts to it's grounding in the local church and its everyday relevance. This gives balance to the overall work and for many readers will help to rehabilitate the perceived focus of biblical counselors (we'll get to that in a minute). In part 1, readers are taken on a journey through the major contours of a systematic theology.

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.

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