

I. Should you be competent to counsel? Yes!

A. All Christians counsel.

1. Just as all parents teach their children - like it or not - so all Christians counsel – like it or not.
2. You can counsel (Rom. 15:14).

14 Now I myself am confident concerning you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.

Paul says you have the capacity because in Christ you have:

- (a) Goodness
- (b) All knowledge which gives hope

NOTICE: the context of the chapter is SCRIPTURE as the hope giver. Not the counselor's skills and ability.

3. You **must** counsel (Gal. 6:1-2).

Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. 2 Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

B. Some Christians are gifted to counsel.

1. It is the same root word as parakletos - Come along side, give aid (Rom. 12:8).

Therefore, it is fair to say "counseling" (i.e. Biblical) is a gift of the Holy Spirit.

2. Gifts are to be HONESTLY evaluated, not hidden or hyped up.
3. Gifts are to be used or exercised.

C. Some are commissioned to counsel as pastors.

1. Pastors are under-shepherds/kings of Christ and the Holy Spirit. Counsel is part of messianic kingship (Isa. 41:21-42:9, Acts 20:20, 31).
2. You are a model-teacher.
3. You are to deal with the flock as individuals (John 10:1-4).

Jesus the True Shepherd

10 “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. 2 But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

4. Col. 1:28 is uniquely the goal of the gospel ministry.

28 Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

D. Should we have specialists?

II. How can you be competent? (1 Tim. 4:16)

Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

Preliminary remarks:

- "Take heed" or keep your eye fixed on (ἐπέχω, epecho) yourself and your teaching.

Example: like a man taking a "bead" on or an aim at a target.

- "Persevere" or "stick to" or "keep on" taking this aim.

Example: like a wrestler in the "up" position. Stay on top of this goal.

A. Fix aim on YOURSELF: First you are a SHEEP before you are a shepherd.

1. Concentrate on your *faith and conscience* (1 Tim. 1:18-19).

Fight the Good Fight

18 This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, 19 having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck,

a. You must not be a hypocrite.

- 1) Practice what you preach, or
- 2) You'll negate every bit of counsel you give (Matt. 7:1-5, Jer. 17:10).

b. You must be nouthetically confronted. (Greek: νουθετέω, nouth-et-e-o, to admonish)

1) **God must confront you.** Your self-applied study of the Word is foundational.

2) **Other men must confront you and discipline you.** No one is above this.

This prevents a "drift" from Biblical ministry into fuzzy thinking or emotional counseling. Example: Jesus Christ

Is. 50:4-5

**4 "The Lord God has given Me
The tongue of the learned,
That I should know how to speak
A word in season to him who is weary.**

**He awakens Me morning by morning,
 He awakens My ear
 To hear as the learned.
 5 The Lord God has opened My ear;
 And I was not rebellious,
 Nor did I turn away.**

John 10

2. Concentrate on your *prayer* (1 Tim. 2:1, 8).

Pray for All Men

2 Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men,

- a. James 4:2-3: **You do not ask, or you ask amiss.**

First: God's glory

Second: The person's good

Last: Your faithfulness

Prayer is essential to avoid "prescription" or mechanical counseling.

3. Concentrate on your *qualifications* (1 Tim. 3:1-7).

Qualifications of Overseers

3 This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. 2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; 3 not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; 4 one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence 5 (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); 6

not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. 7 Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

a. You must examine yourself honestly.

Use 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and

Titus 1:6-8.

6 if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. 7 For a bishop[a] must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, 8 but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled,

b. You must work at these. You do not put a check on the list and move on

4. Concentrate on *discipline* (1 Tim. 4:7-8).

But reject profane and old wives' fables, and exercise yourself toward godliness. 8 For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.

a. You must be a spiritual athlete.

1) There must be effort or practice.

2) There must be disciplined patterning.

b. You must practice.

1) Your heart must have priorities.

2) Your life must follow them.

Example: YOU CAN'T HELP OTHERS GROW AND RESTRUCTURE THEIR LIVES IF YOU HAVE NO SELF DISCIPLINE. Use to schedule yourself.

5. Concentrate on *reading and teaching* (1 Tim. 4:13).

13 Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

- a. There must be systematic Bible study.
- b. There must be application. Example: Use of Scripture in Counseling.
- c. Your life must be an example (Phil. 2:1-11 and John 13:1-15).

Phil. 2:1-11 Unity Through Humility

2 Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, 2 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. 3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

The Humbled and Exalted Christ

5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. 9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on

earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

John 13:1-15 New King James Version (NKJV)

Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet

13 Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.

2 And supper being ended, [a] the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him, **3** Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, **4** rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. **5** After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. **6** Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, "Lord, are You washing my feet?"

7 Jesus answered and said to him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this."

8 Peter said to Him, "You shall never wash my feet!"

Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.”

9 Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!”

10 Jesus said to him, “He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you.” 11 For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, “You are not all clean.”

12 So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? 13 You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. 14 If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.

6. Concentrate on your attitude (1 Tim. 5:1-2).

Treatment of Church Members

5 Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a father, younger men as brothers, 2 older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, with all purity.

a. You must be a prophet.

- 1) God's word is your message.
- 2) Speak boldly without compromise.

b. You must be a Suffering Servant.

- 1) Isaiah is a Suffering Servant who is a type of Jesus Christ who dies for His people.
- 2) Jeremiah is the Weeping Suffering Servant who weeps over unrepentant Jerusalem.

3) Ezekiel is the Silent Suffering Servant who suffers in his calling but is not allowed to complain (Ezek. 24; 1 Pet. 2:20-25). Nouthetic counselors are looked at as butchers, Biblical hit men. There is a danger, but this attitude will prevent it. Follow Matt. 18:15-20 to the "T".

Questions, objections, etc.

(1) All Christians are not equal.

Answer: Yes, but all have answers in the Bible.

(2) Aren't there dangers of incompetency?

Answer: Yes, but life is full of dangers that we must face. We must choose those God requires us to face.