

Biblical Soul Care: Caring & Counseling Together

At Shawnee Bible Church, we value biblical care and loving support outside of classrooms and our corporate gatherings. We believe that biblical counseling has a major role in the church because it organically grows out of biblical exposition and biblical theology. We practice historic biblical counseling which seeks to be exegetical in nature, that is, drawn out of Scripture not merely “in agreement” with it. We see opportunity to minister in the problems we face because Jesus warned, “*in the world* you will have tribulation [trials and sorrows] but take courage; *I* have overcome the world” (John 16:33, NASB, emphasis added). We believe the distressing problems of life ultimately find solution and balm in the One who has overcome the world.

Biblical “soul care” is a component of church care which seeks to apply the gospel to various trials, hardships, and sin issues in the lives of believers. It is a model of discipleship-oriented counseling that views Scripture as sufficient for addressing our non-organic problems of living because, in the true knowledge of God, he has given us “everything pertaining to life and godliness” (2 Peter 1:3, NASB).

We are committed to the position that Scripture provides the only authoritative guide for what we are to believe and how we are to live (2 Timothy 3:16–17). Biblical counseling training focuses on the competent and compassionate use of Scripture, theological truth, and the supportive life of the local church for helping the weak, admonishing the unruly, and encouraging the fainthearted (1 Thessalonians 5:14). Biblical counseling is not based on man’s wisdom, opinions, experience, or concepts of behavior (1 Corinthians 2:12–16). We do not agree with or practice psychotherapy. We see biblical soul care as a loving discipleship involvement in the lives of believers and an evangelistic effort in the lives of unbelievers.

We seek to cultivate both a formal and informal function for biblical soul care at Shawnee Bible Church. Formally, we have credentialed counselors who have completed rigorous training and earned certification with the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors (www.biblicalcounseling.com). Informally, we desire to foster a “culture” of soul care and change-oriented discipleship among our members as they build one another up in truth and love (Ephesians 4:11–16). We provide focused classroom instruction to develop these skills. Furthermore, we believe competent preaching of God’s Word provides a constant diet for equipping believers to encourage, admonish, and help one another “live godly in the present age” (Titus 2:12).