

- 6) Help people to define exactly what they must do to correct the problem, and to agree to change their behaviour with the help of God's Holy Spirit.

I see!
I need to ask my wife to forgive me, and I must forgive her, and love her like God says.

That is exactly right!
I will keep meeting with you until God solves the problem completely.



- 7) Counsel only people who want to change. If people do not want to change their behaviour, or if they simply want to talk with you without changing, then stop meeting with them. Do not waste time with people who only want attention. Some people enjoy being a victim. Others think only about themselves. Jesus said, "Do not throw your pearls to pigs" (Matt. 7:6).

2. Plan with co-workers activities to do during the week.

Prepare mature believers to be spiritual counsellors, with the seven guidelines above. Visit those who need counselling.

3. Prepare with co-workers the upcoming worship time when you will:

- **Tell** how Nathan counselled David, 2 Samuel chapters 11–12.
- **Explain** the biblical basis for some of the counselling guidelines above.
- **Praise** God for, or give reports of recent victories gained through spiritual counselling.
- Let the **children** present the drama, poem and questions that they have prepared.
- **Memorize** together 1 Corinthians 14:3.
- To introduce the **Lord's Supper** briefly explain the warning found in 1 Corinthians 11:28-32.
- **Form groups** of two or three to pray, plan and give and receive spiritual counselling.

Spiritual Counseling for Personal and Family Problems Help People with Problems, Like Nathan Did.

Choose activities that fit current needs and local customs.

Prayer. "Dear God, help me to speak the truth in love." (Eph. 4:15)

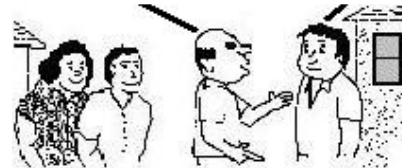
1. Prepare yourself to give spiritual counsel following the following seven guidelines,

To tell the painful truth to someone who needs correction is the most loving thing you can do for them. Find how Nathan helped restore David to fellowship with God (2 Samuel chapters 11–12).

- 1) If a problem is private, deal with it privately; otherwise deal with it in a small group, so that others can exhort and pray for God's help.

A man asks:
I have a bad habit.
Can you help me get rid of it?

A shepherd replies:
Jesus will help you. Come into my house. We will talk alone.



If the problem is an offence against another believer, then find in Matthew 18:15-16 what the offended person should do.

- 2) Counsel those of the opposite sex only where others are watching you. Never meet with them alone or behind closed doors. We are to avoid even the appearance of evil (1 Thess. 5:22).

I feel so discouraged!
Please help me.



Come to the garden where my wife is.



- 3) Talk about problems only with those who are directly concerned, with the person, their family or believers who are being hurt by the problem. Esther did not accuse Haman of his evil plot until she could do it in front of him and the king whom he had deceived (Esther, chapters 5-7).

My husband and I argue too much. He is so stubborn!



Then tomorrow we should talk about this together with him.



- 4) Listen as people explain a problem. Ask questions until you can discern the underlying root cause. Find in James 1:5 what we should do when we need to understand a problem better.

The problem is that my husband here does not help me care for the children.

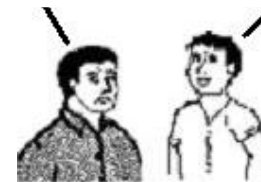


Yes I do!
The problem is that you scold them too much! You do not let them play like normal children.



Keep **others'** secrets. Never repeat to other people what you have heard in private. Find in Proverbs 11:13 what God thinks of gossip.

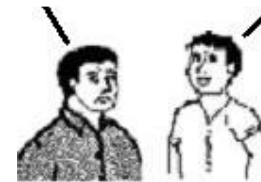
What did my cousin tell you when you counselled him?



We must not repeat what people tell us in confidence.

- 5) Apply God's Word to the *root* of a problem. Try not to deal only with the complaints that you hear at first; those are usually only symptoms of the real problem. Correct bad thinking with God's Word. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom" Colossians 3:16. Find in 1 Timothy 4:1 whose lies faithless men embrace.

I cannot stop my bad habit. It is too strong.



Satan told you that lie!

You have let him weaken your faith in Jesus' power. You are an adult and can determine how to behave.

- If one does not yet believe, then help him to repent and seek God's forgiveness in Christ.
- If one believes but feels unworthy, then study Ephesians chapter 1 together to show him who he is in God's sight, and what he has got forever in Jesus. Help him to thank God for it.
- If one feels insecure and fears that God does not love him, then study Romans chapter 8 together.
- If one feels that God is distant or that Jesus is angry with him, then show him in Colossians chapters 1, 2 and 3, how Jesus has brought to him the power and invisible things of God.