

ACBC Theology Exam

Updated 10/14

1. Describe the inspiration, inerrancy, and authority of Scripture as well as the relationship of each one of these issues to one another.
2. Describe the sufficiency of Scripture. Relate the doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture to the practice of biblical counseling. Research and respond to the arguments of at least one integrationist or Christian Psychologist regarding the insufficiency of Scripture for counseling.
3. Describe your position on the nature of continuing revelation (i.e., prophecy, tongues, words of knowledge). In particular explain whether you believe prophecy is a present gift in today's church. Explain the relationship between your understanding of the gift of prophecy and the sufficiency of Scripture.
4. Define general revelation and special revelation and describe the nature of their authority as well as their relationship to one another.
5. Explain the doctrine of common grace relating the doctrine to the ability of secular psychologists to understand true information about the human condition.
6. Explain the doctrine of the noetic effects of sin relating the doctrine to the ability of secular psychologists to understand true information about the human condition.
7. Explain the doctrine of the Trinity, and provide its biblical basis.
8. Explain each of the following attributes of God describing the practical implications of each attribute for life and counseling: wrath, mercy, holiness, omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence.
9. Explain, using biblical categories, your understanding of the image of God in man.
10. Provide a biblical description of the dichotomist view of mankind. Explain the counseling implications of this doctrine with regard to the inner and outer man.
11. Describe the biblical understanding of manhood and womanhood from both an egalitarian and complementarian perspective. Explain which view you embrace and outline why you believe it to be the most biblical.

12. Describe the dual natures of Jesus Christ and explain why this reality is crucial for salvation.
13. Provide an explanation of and the biblical basis for the doctrine of substitutionary atonement, explaining the implications of this doctrine for human guilt over sin.
14. Explain what it means to trust in Jesus Christ alone for salvation.
15. Provide an explanation and biblical defense of justification.
16. Define faith in biblical terms explaining its relationship to justification and sanctification.
17. Describe the role of repentance in beginning and continuing in the Christian life.
Explain the importance of the doctrine of repentance for biblical counseling.
18. Describe the doctrine of Union with Christ explaining its biblical basis and implications for Christian living.
19. Explain the biblical categories of past, present, and future sanctification.
20. Explain the synergistic nature of sanctification being sure to describe the relationship between God's grace and moral effort in the Christian life.
21. Explain the role of the Holy Spirit in the Christian life describing the importance of this role in the counseling process.
22. Provide your understanding of how the Holy Spirit guides Christians today.
23. Provide a biblical description of the church.
24. What role should the church play in the counseling process?

ACBC Counseling Exam

Updated 10/14

1. What issues should be covered in an introductory session with a counselee regardless of the counseling issue? Explain the importance of each issue.
2. Describe at least six biblical strategies to develop a caring relationship with your counselees. Clearly identify each strategy and ground its use in specific passages of Scripture, explaining its practical utility in building a relationship.
3. Provide a biblical theology of emotions. What role should a counselor allow a counselee's emotions to play in counseling? How can one tell the difference between sinful emotions and righteous emotions? How would you use Scripture to help a counselee change improper emotions?
4. Provide a biblical definition of anger. Describe manifestations of anger in both the inner and outer man. Explain the biblical factors that drive anger. Detail several biblical strategies to respond to anger.
5. Provide a biblical definition of depression. Describe manifestations of depression in both the inner and outer man. Explain the biblical factors that drive depression. Detail several biblical strategies to respond to depression.
6. Provide a biblical definition of anxiety and fear. Describe manifestations of anxiety and worry in both the inner and outer man. Explain the biblical factors that drive anxiety and fear. Detail several biblical strategies to respond to anxiety and fear.
7. List several reasons for concluding a counseling case. For each, describe how you would go about ending the counseling.
8. Describe in biblical categories the operations of the devil. Is there a difference between Believers and unbelievers regarding the activity of the devil? What is a biblical methodology for responding to the demonic in the context of counseling?
9. Define, describe, and provide a biblical evaluation of each of the following: 12 step recovery programs, cognitive-behavioral therapy, the biogenic theory of mood disorders, and electroconvulsive therapy.
10. Describe the role you believe church discipline should play in biblical counseling.

11. Describe what you believe to be the role of confidentiality in biblical counseling. What kind of commitment to confidentiality should a biblical counselor make? What biblical and practical considerations limit confidentiality? What is the responsibility of a biblical counselor to report to civil authorities on matters of domestic violence, sexual abuse, and other illegal matters? How should biblical counselors cooperate with the authorities about these things?

Case Studies

Erik

Erik is a 20-year-old Believer who has been struggling with pornography for the last three years. Before that time he knew that pornography existed, but had never seen it because his parents carefully monitored all the technology in their home. Erik discovered porn on a trip out of town when some of his friends from High School showed it to him on their phones. Since then Erik has frequently looked at pornography. The problem became worse when he moved to college and had unfettered access to the Internet on his laptop computer. Several weeks ago, Erik became convinced that as a Christian he must begin to deal aggressively with this sin. He did the hardest thing he had ever done and told his dad about the problem. Erik's dad loves his son and wants to help him, but has no idea what to do about a problem like this. They came together to meet you for counsel.

12. Assume that the information you have here is a straightforward presentation of the facts and write down the homework assignments you want Erik to complete after this first meeting with you. After you list the homework explain the specific issues you will address with Erik in counseling sessions. Please include the categories of "put off" and "put on" in your answer.

Sarah

Sarah is a 34 year-old married mother of three who comes to you for help with depression. She says that she has been feeling “terribly sad” for the last six months, and has had a lot of trouble “keeping up with life.” She came to you seeking the opinion of a biblical counselor on what she should do. Sarah has several friends who received anti-depressants from their family doctor. The medicine seemed to help for a while, but they also experienced some unpleasant side-effects that she is concerned about. She asks you explicitly, “Do you think I should see my doctor about taking an anti-depressant?”

13. How would you respond to this question? Write out your answer exactly as you would provide it to Sarah.
14. What means would you use to find out more information about Sarah’s current problem? What information would you seek?
15. Carefully describe whether and how you would want to work with a physician to help Sarah through this ordeal? As part of your answer to this specific question describe, in general terms, how you believe biblical counselors should cooperate with medical professionals.

Tim and Emily

Tim and Emily come from a church across town, and have asked to meet you because of some help that you offered their friends several months ago. They are coming because of a persistent problem they have had in their marriage. They explain that in their six years of marriage Tim has always had a “short fuse.” He regularly “loses it” when he comes home from work which fills the evenings with tense communication. Their weeks are filled with arguments about everything from dinner being ready on time, to whether they should have kids. Tim thinks Emily is a good wife, admits the problems are his fault, but says he just doesn’t know how to “maintain control.” About a year ago Tim went berserk screaming at Emily, kicking the kitchen table and throwing plates on the floor in response to Emily’s complaint that he came home late without calling. Emily was always

uncomfortable with Tim's previous pattern of outbursts, but this was different. She was truly scared. Tim was too. In tears she told Tim that something had to change.

Tim talked to his pastor who told him that he needed to see a professional therapist. Tim followed the advice and made an appointment with the Christian counselor whom his pastor recommended. Tim met with the therapist for a few sessions, who ultimately recommended he see a psychiatrist for medical care. When Tim met with the psychiatrist he was told that he had bi-polar disorder and began to take the medications prescribed by the physician.

Tim was initially discouraged to learn that he had a disease that would likely last his entire life, but he was thankful to have a plan to deal with problem. Emily was also encouraged that there was now at least something they could do.

Their encouragement quickly gave way, however, when after several months on the medication Tim had still not really changed. While his temperament seemed milder in general the loss of control, and screaming were still present. It was at this point that Emily began to regret ever marrying Tim. All the arguments together with the couple's lack of children were taking their toll. She realized she was in a marriage that she did not want to be in, but didn't think she had any options.

Then last week Tim "went completely crazy." Emily suggested on a Saturday morning that Tim should cut the grass because he had not done it the week before. Tim did more than scream and throw things this time. As he yelled and became more "worked up" he threw the phone at Emily. He missed her, knocking a hole in the wall, but they both knew he had crossed a line.

Emily said she couldn't take it anymore and wanted out of the marriage. She told him that if something didn't change very quickly she was going to leave. That is when he reached out to his friend who recommended you.

Tim and Emily both profess faith in Christ, and relate their testimonies of conversion in their teen years. Both are also terribly discouraged. Tim doesn't know how to treat Emily better since he is "plagued" by this disease. Emily loves Tim and would like their marriage to work, but she is worn out with the lack of change. She feels badly about wanting to leave because she knows he has an illness, but she is increasingly convinced that God is telling her to divorce Tim.

16. How will you decide whether to pursue Tim and Emily as believers or unbelievers? What difference will their status as Christians make in your counseling?
17. Describe, as fully as you are able, your strategy to help Tim and Emily think biblically about his diagnosis and their use of bi-polar and illness language.
18. Emily is "Convinced that God is telling her to divorce Tim." Write out your word-for-word response to Emily on this matter. In your response, be sure to address the themes of biblical decision-making and permission for divorce and remarriage.
19. What strategy would you employ to see repentance, reconciliation, and restoration happen between Tim and Emily?
20. Describe a detailed plan of restoring marital communication that you would pursue with Tim and Emily.