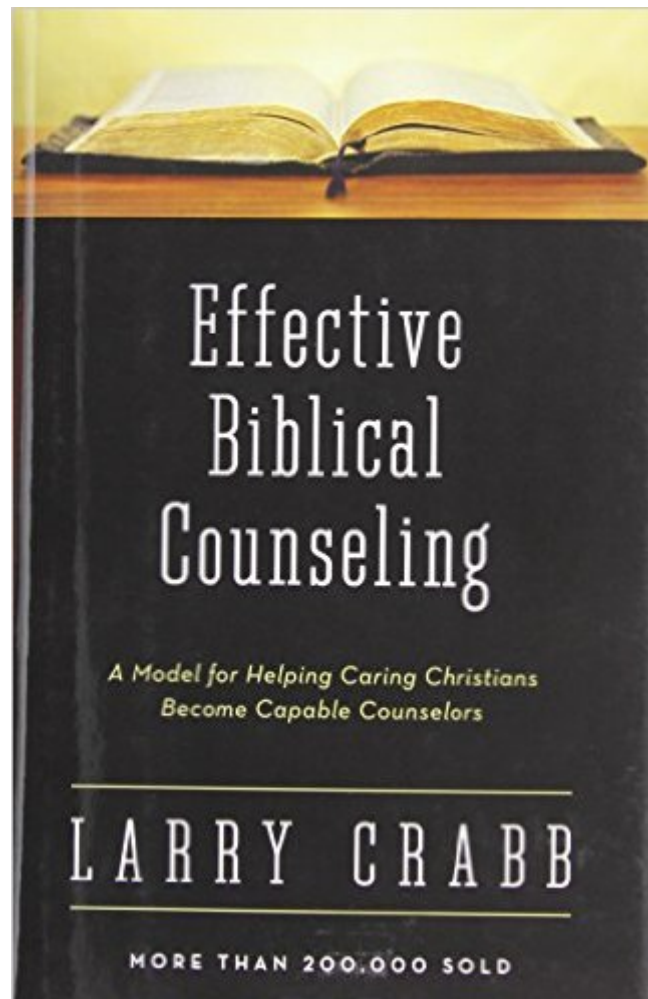


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Effective Biblical Counseling: A Model For Helping Caring Christians Become Capable Counselors



Synopsis

In *Effective Biblical Counseling*, Gold Medallion Award-winning author Dr. Larry Crabb presents a model of counseling that can be gracefully integrated into the functioning of the local church. He asserts that counseling is simply a relationship between people who care and that its goal is to free people to better worship and serve God. This book will show you how to help people achieve obedience and character growth in their lives, and establish a sense of personal worth and security along the way. Dr. Crabb says, "I believe that God has ordained the local church to be his primary instrument to tend to his people's aches and pains. In writing this book I have tried to be of practical help to Christians who want to be more effective in ministering to their suffering brothers and sisters."

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Crabb believes that the local church should assume the responsibility for restoring people who are in need of healing. For too long the church has abdicated this biblical role. He states that there are three levels of counseling. Level I is counseling by encouragement which every member of the church can do by helping hurting people focus on establishing biblical feelings. Level II is counseling by exhortation. This level of counseling requires a good biblical background, it can be done by elders, Sunday School teachers and pastors. Level III is counseling by enlightenment that tries to establish godly behavior through changed thinking. A picture is worth a thousand words. Larry Crabb's charts give clarity and meaning to his writing. While having a strong biblical basis, Crabb

does not ignore the contributions of secular systems of psychology, rather, he puts them through the sieve of biblical truth to find practical helpful advice. I appreciate his thoughtful critique of competing systems of psychology. He gives the reader a general introduction to the different schools of counseling, both secular and Christian. Rather than bashing the non-Christian viewpoints he notes their strengths and exposes their humanistic presuppositions. The discussion of Transactional Analysis on pg. 39 demonstrates a model of secular psychology adopted by the evangelical church. While Transactional Analysis can be a helpful tool for the pastor, Crabb looks at its humanistic presuppositions and warns of its misuse. He sees man's basic need as significance and security. People need to know that they have worth and that they are loved. Crabb has a gift to communicate in a clear way some rather technical stuff. Also worthy of note is Crabb's discussion how problems develop in chapters six and seven.

Dr. Crabb is very knowledgeable and his book contains great information that may help church counselors to improve on the way they approach counseling. However, on one hand, authentic heartfelt compassion is not something you can learn or be trained on; and on the other, there are certain circumstances where looking at the bigger picture may lead to better gains, granted God's compassion and forgiveness. For example, how many times church counselors or counselors advise beaten women to stay in their marriages, only to find out later that they ended up being the protagonists of a crime scene? They - the counselor - stuck to the letter of the law, but missed God's bigger picture. I prayed to God when I was in such a situation myself. I was in an abusive relationship. My son was 18 months. Our lives were at risk. My husband was also an alcoholic and not the best example for a kid. I was desperate. I cried out to the Lord. I heard deeply in my heart God's voice saying "take your child and run away. I will take care of you." I did it under very adverse circumstances. He has taken care of us and blessed us ever since. This happened 20 years ago. I went through counseling for a long time to do a "stuffed chimney clean up." I did have a lot of wrong thinking within me. I prayed for healing and worked hard session after session. Today, I dedicate my life to prison ministry, because I love God, I believe in Him, and I am deeply grateful. I want people to know that He loves them unconditionally and can do good for them too. I love my group there. I understand that those who make wrong decisions, mistreat people or commit crimes, lack love and Jesus most of all.

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