

Equipping Counselors for Your Church

Appendix 2.1
Congregational SWORD Heart Exam

LEAD Biblical Counseling Ministry

L Life
E Encouragers
A And
D Disciplers

Changed People Changing Lives with Christ's Changeless Truth

"Speaking the truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15)

"Encourage one another daily" (Hebrews 3:13)

Congregational SWORD Heart Exam

S Strengths
W Weaknesses
O Opportunities
R Risks
D Diagnosis

"The word of God is living and active, sharper than any double-edged sword" (Hebrews 4:12)

Congregational SWORD Heart Exam

Our church is committed to being a *loving place to grow in grace*. One of the ways we seek to fulfill our commitment is by being a church *of* biblical counseling, not simply a church *with* biblical counseling. We want informal one-another ministry to saturate our entire congregation so that we all speak the truth in love to one another. We also are considering launching a formal biblical counseling ministry where specially gifted and trained persons are equipped to change lives with Christ's changeless truth.

In light of this vision, our congregation is taking a serious look at our capacity to provide quality, distinctively Christian care for our congregation and community. This congregational survey seeks to help us to assess our congregation's current informal one-another ministry (mutual encouragement, spiritual friendship) and our formal biblical counseling ministry (offered by pastors and members). This questionnaire also seeks to assess our potential for and commitment to growth in these ministry areas.

This *Congregational SWORD Heart Exam* takes, on average, one hour. It will be time well-spent both personally and congregationally. We ask that you prayerfully and thoughtfully complete this survey by _____ (one month from now), and return it to _____ either electronically at _____, or by snail mail at _____. Or, you can place your completed questionnaire in the collection box placed at the Welcome Center kiosk in the church foyer.

Our LEAD (Lay Encouragers And Disciplers) biblical counseling launch team, along with the church leadership, will thoroughly review all returned questionnaires—we will do the "D" of "Diagnosis" in the SWORD exam. Your input (about Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Risks) will make a significant difference in our ministry development.

Because ministry is relational, we prefer that you include your name below, rather than completing the survey anonymously. However, we will leave the final decision to you.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Present Strengths and Weaknesses

- Please respond to the following questions using a 1-to-10 rating. A “1” would indicate a very low level of effectiveness, or confidence, or desire in this area. A “10” would indicate a very high level of effectiveness, or confidence, or desire in this area. Please feel free to use any number from 1 to 10. Also, feel free to provide any comments you would like, or simply to provide the numerical rating.

___ 1. How well are we encouraging our congregation to care like Christ: to be spiritual friends, to practice informal one-another ministry?

___ 2. How well are we equipping our congregation for biblical counseling: to relate God’s Word to people’s lives, to change lives with Christ’s changeless truth, to speak the truth in love so people mature in Christ?

___ 3. How confident are you in your ability to offer informal spiritual friendship and to come alongside a friend who is suffering or struggling with a sin issue?

___ 4. How confident are you in your ability to provide formal biblical counseling to a person who is suffering or is struggling with a sin issue?

5. How would you assess our congregation’s current ability to provide biblical counseling for people in need of (please rate each area below using the 1-to-10 scale):

___ a. Individual biblical counseling

___ b. Pre-marital biblical counseling

___ c. Marital biblical counseling

___ d. Family/parental biblical counseling

___ e. Adolescent biblical counseling

- Please answer the following questions based upon the informal one-another ministry and the formal biblical counseling ministry provided both by our pastoral staff and by our equipped members.
1. What are some of the strengths of our current biblical counseling ministry?
 2. What are some of the weaknesses of our current biblical counseling ministry that you would like to see us address?
 3. What are specific ways that our church could improve the provision of informal one-another care?
 4. What are specific ways that our church could improve the provision of formal biblical counseling?
 5. What patterns or mindsets might be making it difficult for our church to become a place where we speak the truth in love to one another?
 6. When formal biblical counseling is needed, how long does it take to receive it? Have you or someone you know ever requested biblical counseling here but been unable to receive it?
 7. Do you believe that we have a sufficient number of trained biblical counselors (pastors and members) to meet the needs of our **congregation**? Why or why not? How many would be sufficient?
 8. Do you believe that we have a sufficient number of trained biblical counselors (pastors and members) to meet the needs of our **community**? Why or why not? How many would be sufficient?

Future Opportunities and Risks

- Please respond to the following questions using a 1-to-10 rating. A “1” would indicate a very low level of effectiveness, or confidence, or desire in this area. A “10” would indicate a very high level of effectiveness, or confidence, or desire in this area. Please feel free to use any number from 1 to 10. Also, feel free to provide any comments you would like, or simply to provide the numerical rating.

___ 1. What impact might more intentional, formal, structured equipping in biblical counseling have on our ministry to people in our **congregation**?

___ 2. What impact might more intentional, formal, structured equipping in biblical counseling have on our ministry to people in our **community**?

___ 3. What level of interest and commitment would you have in being further equipped as a spiritual friend who could help others in an informal, friend-to-friend manner when they are suffering or struggling with a sin issue?

___ 4. What level of interest and commitment would you have in being equipped as a biblical counselor who could help others in a more formal way by relating God’s truth to their lives when they are suffering or struggling with a sin issue?

- Please answer the following questions based upon the informal one-another ministry and the formal biblical counseling ministry provided both by our pastoral staff and by our equipped members.

1. What obstacles might stand in the way of healthy informal one-another ministry in our church? Where do we need to change or grow if we are to move forward as a church where every member speaks the truth in love?

2. In the past, how has our church responded to change and to the launch of new ministries? How might similar responses hinder or help a renewed focus on equipping in formal biblical counseling?

3. If we launched a formal biblical counseling training ministry, who and what might stand in the way? What apple carts might we upset? What objections might people raise? How could we respond?

4. Read Ephesians 3:20 and dream as if we could not fail. What do you think God will do with our biblical counseling ministry in the future? In one year? Five? Ten? Twenty?

5. What areas of counseling are you aware of that are the greatest need for people in our **congregation**? Of the list below, rank the top ten needs, with 1 being the greatest need.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Addiction: Drugs/Alcohol | <input type="checkbox"/> Grief |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Addiction/Pornography/Sexual | <input type="checkbox"/> Guilt |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anger | <input type="checkbox"/> Habitual Sin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anxiety/Fear/Phobia/Worry | <input type="checkbox"/> Infertility |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blended Family/Step-Parenting | <input type="checkbox"/> Infidelity/Affair |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Christ-Esteem/Identity in Christ | <input type="checkbox"/> Loneliness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Christian Growth | <input type="checkbox"/> Marital |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cutting | <input type="checkbox"/> Parenting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Death and Dying | <input type="checkbox"/> Peer Pressure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Depression | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Abuse |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Divorce/Remarriage | <input type="checkbox"/> Post-Abortion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Doubt | <input type="checkbox"/> Prayer Life/Spiritual Disciplines |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eating Disorders | <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-marital |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Educational | <input type="checkbox"/> Purposelessness/Failure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional Abuse | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Harm/Suicidal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional Control/Maturity | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Abuse |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Forgiveness | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Identity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial | <input type="checkbox"/> Vocational |

Other: _____

Other: _____

Other: _____

6. Where we to provide biblical counseling by trained members of our congregation, for any/all of the above, would you utilize that counseling? Please explain your answer.

7. How could we turn our community upside down for Christ through biblical counseling?

8. What are the five greatest concerns of the residents of our community? Five greatest struggles? How could we address these issues biblically?
9. How responsive do you think our community would be if we offered them biblical counseling?
10. What areas of counseling are you aware of that are the greatest need for people in our **community**? Of the list below, rank the top ten needs, with 1 being the greatest need.

- | | |
|---|--|
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Forgiveness | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Identity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial | <input type="checkbox"/> Vocational |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | |

11. What else would you like to share with us or ask us?

Thank you so much for giving of your valuable time to this valuable project.

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