

Everyone's a Counselor (Doyle and Moore) - week #2 handout

Chapter 2. "Biblical Counseling and a Theology of Scripture" (Heath Lambert)

In chapter 2, Heath Lambert mentions a counseling case with a young woman named Trenyan. She was described as "pretty, active, funny and artistic" but had become "withdrawn and distant". By chance encounter, one of her friends noticed "bloody lines" all over Trenyan's legs - tragically these were evidence of cutting that Trenyan "had experimented with when she was much younger"....

In the book, Lambert asks if the Bible has anything to say, or enough to say, to address problems like this. He then teaches about the Christian doctrine of Scripture. (Note, now play DVD part #2).

Four types of Scriptural sufficiency: (1) progressive, (2) completed, (3) formal and (4) material.

But what about Trenyan?? Heath Lambert intersperses his narrative about her, alongside his theological content. He wants us to gradually become aware of the severity of her problems. He tells us that Trenyan told him how she had started cutting her legs in order to deal with a "deep heartache in her life... Then she quit talking. It was my turn to speak", Lambert recalled.

"That moment when the counselor must respond to the pain that has been revealed by a broken person is one of the most sacred occasions in all of life. Another human being has just revealed something intimate, profound, and difficult about her life, and now she is waiting for a response. Those moments make me powerfully aware of my responsibility as a counselor to offer wisdom and care." p.37-38

After more explanations of the theology of Scripture, Lambert then introduces a section called "The Sufficiency of Scripture for Trenyan". He relates how this young woman was having trouble with her parents. They had been constantly arguing and fighting with each other - after the adultery of her mother had come to light. "Then Trenyan discovered a way to get a break. Whenever Trenyan saw blood, she had a physical reaction and would pass out." Pause for a moment here to think about this.

Lambert had dozens of conversations with Trenyan, ...in Psalm 55 Trenyan found hope. (Read the excerpt from Ps 55 - pg 61). Trenyan identified with David's overwhelming pain "my heart is in anguish within me" and "it is not an enemy who taunts me...it is you, my companion, my familiar friend...". For Trenyan, "it was comforting to know that her desire to escape from her pain was not freakish". (pg 62)

- (1.) David's example: "His pain is an occasion to pour his heart out to God."
- (2.) Trenyan's mistake: "Her pain was an occasion to retreat into her own heart and bring physical pain into her life".
- (3.) Trenyan's deliverance: "Through the immediacy and dynamism of prayer, it was possible to cast her burden on the Lord.)
- (4.) "The source of the changes in Trenyan is none other than God Himself." The sufficiency of Scripture is not proved from just 2 Tim 3:16, "because we have an entire Bible that God has given us to change our lives and demonstrate the sufficiency of Scripture for counseling".