

## Understanding People - Introduction

### 1. Philosophy

- A. God is the creator. *I can only be fulfilled in life if I live according to His design for me. (Romans 11:36; Colossians 1:15-18; Ecclesiastes 12; Matthew 16:25)*
- B. The Bible is God's revelation of His design for man and it is sufficient *to give me every principle and precept I need to live according to God's design. (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:2-11).*
- C. My mind, heart and flesh are sinful *and seek to do their own thing. (Jeremiah 17:9; Proverbs 14:12; Matthew 7:13-14). I need help outside myself (Holy Spirit and other Christians) in order to live according to God's Design. (John 6:63; 1 Corinthians 2:10-13; Ephesians 4:11-16).*

### 2. Purposes - Galatians 6:1-4

- A. To train leaders *in the basics of how to help someone when problems arise. This is a combination of leadership development (2 Timothy 2:2 cf. 1 Timothy 1:18) and instruction on how to give to give Godly counsel (Proverbs 1:2-6).*
- B. To help each of us draw closer to God as we see our own sinfulness *(Psalm 51; James 4:8-10).*
- C. To promote the true Fellowship *of involvement in each others lives that provokes us toward Spiritual Growth demonstrated by greater dependence on God. (1 Thessalonians 5:14 - all the "one another" verses)*

### Questions from Preface and Introduction

- 1. Why has that become a difficult question to determine what constitutes Biblical Counseling? (7)  
*Primarily competing philosophies and pride coupled with either Biblical illiteracy which reduces the Scriptures to devotions for the emotions, or scholasticism that vacates application of Biblical principles to daily life on the altar of academia.*
- 2. What is the relationship between Biblical Study & "psychology." (8)  
*This has become confusing to many because they are seen as separate and competing realms. They are often competing, but they are not separate. Psychology not founded in and submissive to Biblical authority is only the musings of man seeking his own way.*
- 3. What about self-esteem? (8)  
*"Self lovers" = An emphasis on Self esteem from a perversion of Matthew 19:19. We are to think correctly, not "highly" of ourselves - Romans 12:3. It has been used to justify pride.*  
  
*"Stiff Exegetes" = Emphasis on "Technical Truth", not "Vital Truth." They fail in Scriptural Application. The need is for proper hermeneutics AND proper application. There is a lack in the application of the "one another" verses as if only the intellect matters.*

4. Are people really “mentally ill?”

*Only those that have an organic disfunction - i.e. a “medical” problem. These are treated by Psychiatrists (M.D.’s), not psychologists. In truth, mental health is a spiritual problem (i.e. alcoholism, dependencies, etc.).*

5. What is Crabb’s desire in writing the book (pages 11-15)?

*Drive us back to the text of Scripture to seek answers to urgent questions (pg 12)*

*Avoid the factions (see Guidelines on pg 14 -15)*

*\*Articulate our positions carefully and non-defensively*

*\*Maintain a willing openness to changing positions*

*\*Self-consciously labor to walk the tightrope of open conviction*

*Provide a framework for thinking about counseling and discipleship (pg 16)*

6. What is the major obstacle to marriage relationships? (page 18)

*Stubbornness, not limited understanding - i.e. sin blocking obedience to God’s commands*

7. How do Psychologists add to problems? (page 18)

*They redefine sin so people - often in order to excuse it*

*“They offer solutions to people’s problems that do not require the atoning work of Christ”*

8. How do Theologians add to problems? (page 19)

*They increase points of debate without giving Biblical principles to live by. “Biblically documented truth has somehow been short of its relevance. Passionless orthodoxy has spawned a generation of rigid Christian leaders who simply cannot relate to people.”*

*There is a wrong division between the academic and the practical (page 20)*

9. What is Crabb's foundation and what are his three assumptions? (Page 21)

*Foundation: Jesus Christ is the Way, Truth & Life without being shallow & that psychological disorder is really the product of the sinful pursuit of life apart from God.*

*Assumptions - pg 21 (Read from book as written - below is just a summary)*

*1) The Bible is sufficient*

*2) Relationship with Christ provides the resources*

*3) The community of God’s people is the context*

Understanding People. Chapters 1 & 2, pgs 25-45  
Epistemology & Biblical Authority

1. What is Truth?

*Webster: (1) "The state of being the case: FACT (2) The body of real things, events, and facts: ACTUALITY (3) a transcendent fundamental or spiritual reality.*

*Ultimately, truth is God and His Word (John 14:6; 17:17)*

2. Why is it important that we know the truth?

*To function apart from truth is to live based on a lie.  
This will ultimately lead to futility - See Ecclesiastes*

3. How do we know something is true?

*When something can be demonstrated to be "fact," . . . shown to be in accordance with reality. Man does not know absolute truth because man's abilities are subject to error (in assumption and in testing). Man can only know relative truth. Absolute truth must come from a source outside himself.*

4. What are the strengths and weaknesses of each of the following:

A. Intuition: (Page 30) This is based on undefined internal subjective certainty and not rational or external sources.

*Strength: the mind can work in amazing ways to process data and come to a conclusion - sometimes without going through "logical" steps.*

*Weakness: limited at best, for we can reason beyond it, and there is no basis for demonstrating it to be true.*

B. Reason: " (Pages 31-32) rationalism - a belief that unaided reason is capable of understanding all that is true.

*Strength: reason allows us to process material through what is thought to be true, so systems can be developed.*

*Weakness: 1. Our minds are of limited understanding (try to get a grip on "infinity"). 2. Logic is subject to breakdown because of errors in assumptions, processing information and drawing conclusions*

C. Experience: (Pages 32-33) Empiricism - hard data of observable and measurable experience provides the needed authority.

*Strength: research moves us toward pragmatic truth - i.e. what seems to work.*

*Weakness: Experience is founded on generalizations and often fails to take into account the exceptions, and it can be founded on incorrect data. Experience cannot speak to issues of morality.*

D. Revelation: God's special communication to man through His written word

*Strength: It is not limited by human weakness -*

*Weakness: humans do have to discern that its source is God and not Satan, and that they have understood the revelation accurately*

5. What is the value of General Revelation in counseling?

*This helps in the pragmatic application of truths. "Careful observers can also notice regularities in how things work and thereby 'discover' more effective remedies for human illness and better ways to build bridges" (Page 35).*

6. What is the value of Special Revelation in counseling?

*"In the Bible, God has spoken from His mind to our minds using language, a medium of communication that is rationally apprehensible." (Page 36)*

*It tells us how we are designed to function - and it claims to be sufficient to help us function according to the design*

7. What is the danger of the "two book" view of General & Special Revelation (pages 37-42)

*This is a primary view among "Biblical" counselors, however, because priority is not given to Biblical authority it eventually collapses back into rationalism and / or empiricism as the final arbitrators of truth usually under the guise of pragmatism (what works) instead of what is right before God.*

8. What are Crabb's four arguments for Biblical authority (Pages 42-44)

1) "God's **purpose** in revealing Himself in the Bible is different from revealing Himself in nature." *Nature is to make God known as someone with whom we must reckon. The Bible was given to be man's textbook on life.*

2) "The **plainness** of the Bible is reason to turn to its pages with confidence." *"The superior clarity of propositional revelation over any other form is argument for depending more on the Bible than on science in developing a counseling model."*

3) "The **purity** of the Bible as uncorrupted revelation contrasts with the defectiveness of a groaning and cursed nature."

4) "We have the explicit **promise** of the Holy Spirit's help when we come to the Bible in an attitude of teachable humility and personal honesty."

9. What does Psalm 1 tell us about counseling?

A. *Do not walk in the counsel of the ungodly - it leads to destruction.*

B. *Godly counsel come from God's Special revelation - it leads to blessing.*