Theology Exam #24
Q: What role should the church play in the counseling process?
Memory Verse: Colossians 1:28

"He cannot have God for his father who does not have the church for his mother." Augustine

"Our weakness does not allow us to be dismissed from her school until we have been pupils all our lives…. God's fatherly favor and the especial witness of spiritual life are limited to his flock, so that it is always disastrous to leave the church." Calvin

"The church is the primary means through which God accomplishes His plan in this world. It is His ordained instrument for calling the lost to Himself and the context in which He sanctifies those who are born into His family. Therefore, God expects (and even demands) a commitment to the church from everyone who claims to know him."[1] Wayne Mack

1. **The church is the pillar and support of the TRUTH** (1 Tim. 3:15)

   "Our own relationship to God and His truth is in mortal danger if church does not occupy its intended place in our lives. So when we consider those who abandon the church as a means of spiritual growth, it is highly unlikely that they are truly holding to the truth or cultivating a meaningful relationship with God by themselves. In light of 1 Timothy 3:15, it is much more likely their faith has crumbled – because they have torn away the pillar that holds up the truth."[2]

2. **The church facilitates SANCTIFICATION through the proclamation of the word of God** (John 17:17; Heb. 4:12; Col. 3:16; Rom. 15:14; Jer. 23:29; Is. 55:10-11)

   "Attempting to grow in Christ outside of the church is like trying to learn to swim without ever getting into the pool!"[3]

3. **The church has been given gifted LEADERS to equip and shepherd its members unto MATURITY** (Eph. 4:11-16)

   "God has given the ordained teaching and ruling officers the task of changing people's lives through the authoritative ministry of the Word."[4] Jay Adams

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[1] David Watson, *I Believe in the Church* (Eerdmans, 1978), 21.
[2] Mack & Swavely, *Life in the Father's House* (P&R, 2006), 27.
[3] Mack & Swavely, *Life in the Father's House* (P&R, 2006), 29.
[4] Adams, Jay. *A Theology of Christian Counseling* (Zondervan Publishing, Grand Rapids: 1979), 278.

4. **The church has been given gifted MEMBERS to encourage, edify, and assist one another** (1 Cor. 12; Heb. 10:24-25; 1 Thes. 5:14; Eph. 4:29; Col. 1:28-29, 3:16)

5. **The church has been given the authority to hold its members ACCOUNTABLE**
   a. SIN should be confronted:[5]
      i. QUICKLY (Mt. 18:15, 5:23-24, 7:5)
      ii. PURPOSEFULLY (Mt. 18:15)
      iii. VERBALLY (Mt. 18:15)
      iv. PRIVATELY (Mt. 18:15; Pr. 25:9-10; Gal. 6:1-2)
      v. RELUCTANTLY (Pr. 17:19, 20:3; 2 Cor. 2:4)
      vi. COMPASSIONATELY (2 Cor. 2:1-8; Pr. 27:6)
      vii. GENTLY (Gal. 6:1; Pr. 15:1, 25:15)
      viii. HUMBLY (Gal. 6:1; Pr. 18:2; Luke 6:31)
      ix. CAREFULLY (Pr. 10:19, 11:9, 12:18, 13:14, 25:11)
      x. PRAYERFULLY (Lk. 22:31-34; Phil. 1:9-11)

Key Resources:

Jay Adams, *The Journal of Modern Ministry*, Spring 2007, pp. 59-70.

Jay Adams, *The Handbook of Church Discipline.*

Jay Adams, *A Theology of Christian Counseling* (Zondervan, 1979), 276-296.

Jerry Bridges, *True Community*.

Mark Dever, *What is a Healthy Church?*

Wayne Grudem, Systematic Theology (Zondervan, 1994), 853-949.

Mack and Swavely, Life in the Father's House, rev. ed (P&R, 2006).

James MacDonald, *Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling*, Chs. 15-16.

Paul Tautges, *Counsel One Another* (Day One, 2009), 153-171.

[5] Mack & Swavely, *Life in the Father's House* (P&R, 2006), 174-181.

John MacArthur and Wayne Mack, *Counseling: How to Counsel Biblically* (Thomas Nelson, 2005), 222-230.

Health Lambert, *A Theology of Biblical Counseling* (Zondervan, 2016), Ch. 11.