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# **COUNSELING**



**C**ounselling is a way of helping someone (child) who has a problem/need. Children, like adults, do have problems. And this could be physical, spiritual, mental, emotional and social. These problems if they are not handled in time could result in other problems in a child such as unhappiness, depression, fear, oppression, feeling of rejection, feeling of unworthiness, distrust, bitterness etc. These are strong walls that could affect a child's relationship with God. Unless these walls are broken, there will be no proper spiritual development of the child. The child feels insecure, insignificant and unwanted even by God.

Sometimes the child may be ignorant of the root of his problems. He just knows for instance he is never appreciated or loved. Why this happens he does not know. In counseling, the root of the child's problem is identified and prayerfully addressed (Consider these scriptures - Prov.12:15; 15:22).

### IMPORTANCE OF COUNSELLING

- It focuses on the individual and specific needs of the child.
- It enables the teacher to work on highly personal problems of the child.

### GOAL OF COUNSELLING

In counselling what we do is to trust God to change the child's thinking and not his behaviour. Counselling helps to bring the child to think as God expects him to think. Your target basically as a counsellor is not to restore joy or happiness but to bring the child to a point where he sees Jesus as a solution to his problem.

### QUALITIES OF A CHILD COUNSELLOR

- Patience to listen: If people don't say their problems, you may not be in a good position to solve them.
- Biblical maturity: - i.e., his behaviour must be guided by divine (Biblical) principles.
- He must have a good understanding of how to handle children.
- He must be spiritually sensitive.
- He must be prayerful and well versed in the scriptures.

### TOOLS FOR COUNSELLING

- The Bible - John 5:39.
- Understanding of how the mind works.

### COUNSELLING THE UNSAVED CHILD FOR SALVATION

- Establish first that the basis of his coming out is salvation.
- Find out whether the child understood the gospel message.
- Be sure he understands the need for salvation.
- Teach the way of salvation.
- Challenge him to make a decision of acceptance.
- Lead him in the prayer of acceptance.
- Teach him assurance of salvation using appropriate/relevant scriptures e.g., - John 1:12; Rev. 3:20; Acts. 16:31.

### COUNSELLING THE CHILD WITH OTHER NEEDS

These other needs could be:-

**Spiritual:-** need of assurance of salvation.

\*inability to pray. \*inability to study the word of God. \*Overcoming sinful habits. \*demonic problems.

**Mental/Emotional:** \*desire for attention. \*lack of love. \*poor academic performance.

**Physical:** \*sickness.

**Family:** \*Broken home. \*financial. \* problem of one parenting. \* disagreement between parents.

**Social:** \* peer group pressure.

**A Class Discussion:** How will you help children with the above needs?

**In handling these problems.**

# COUNSELLING THE CHILD



- Determine whether the child is saved.
- Identify areas of need. You may ask thus: Why did you answer the invitation.
- Use relevant scriptures to address the child's problem.
- Pray with the child and minister to the child.

### COUNSELLING A LARGE GROUP

It is better to counsel one child at a time. However where counselling a group becomes inevitable, the following steps could be taken:-

- Identify their needs.
- Group the children.
- Assign counsellors to each group.
- Those that require special attention could be asked to come back at a more convenient/less busy time.

### POINTS TO NOTE WHEN COUNSELLING

- Pray and trust the Holy Spirit to guide and direct you.
- Establish a rapport with the child.
- Use your Bible.
- Ask questions that will require more than "Yes" or "No" response.
- Be patient. Avoid rushing a counselling session.
- Be friendly with the child.
- Don't counsel behind closed doors.
- Don't work on assumption. Treat every case as unique.