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Strategic Pastoral Counseling

3. Preface to the Second Edition

The author looks back on the eleven years since the first edition and explains why this revision exists. His original argument — that pastors should keep counseling brief and focused rather than long-term — was once resisted but has now largely been accepted. He lists what changed in this edition and who it is written for.

Key takeaways

- When the book first appeared, pastors insisted their problems demanded long-term counseling; a decade later, short-term pastoral counseling is widely accepted as the better fit for a pastor's mix of duties.
- The revision draws on feedback from pastors who used the model for a decade, plus Nigerian, Philippine, and Korean cross-cultural editions and seminary classroom use.
- New material: a broader opening chapter on Christian soul care and spiritual direction, a fuller case for brief counseling, more on homework and spiritual focus, ethics, and updated readings.

- Primary audience is pastors who counsel alongside other duties, plus seminarians and church-based lay counselors; a secondary audience is pastoral counselors in hospitals, community centers, or private practice.