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The Biblical Basis of Christian Counseling for People Helpers: Relating the Basic Teachings of
Scripture to People's Problems (Pilgrimage Growth Guide)

13. The Holy Spirit and Counseling

This chapter argues that the Holy Spirit is central to Christian life and counseling, not a fringe topic for charismatics. It establishes who the Spirit is (fully God and a Person), what He does in believers and unbelievers, and how that shapes the counselor's work. It closes by weighing the debate over miraculous 'signs and wonders' and applying it all practically.

Key takeaways

- The Holy Spirit is called the Paraclete — Comforter, Helper, Advocate, Counselor — and is the Person of the Trinity closest to us because He lives inside every believer.
- He is fully God (called God, does what only God does, has divine attributes) and a real Person (has mind, will, emotions; can be grieved, lied to, obeyed).
- With unbelievers He convicts of sin and draws them to faith; no one can persuade another to believe apart from His work.

- Five works in believers: He sanctifies (gradually makes us like Christ, producing the fruit of the Spirit), guides us into truth and Scripture, is God's present-day presence so no believer is ever alone, creates genuine community, and empowers with spiritual gifts for serving the church.
- Counseling isn't a listed gift, but 'encouraging' (Romans 12:8) overlaps with it; all believers are to help one another, some are specially gifted, and training still matters alongside the Spirit's work.
- On miracles/'signs and wonders,' sincere Christians disagree; avoid both a quick-fix miracle obsession and a cold rationalism that strips God of power. The supreme sign is a changed life.
- For the counselor: cooperate with the Spirit's sanctifying and guiding work, stay connected to the church, and rely on His empowerment rather than working alone.

Passages worth keeping

"The supreme sign and wonder, giving the fullest credibility to Christianity, will thus always be the changed life of the believer."

Packer's balancing point in the signs-and-wonders debate — transformed character over spectacle.

"The one who is in you [the Holy Spirit] is greater than the one who is in the world [Satan]."

1 John 4:4 — the chapter's closing assurance for the counselor facing difficulty.

How it connects

The chapter ties Ralph Hamburger's transformation from hatred to a life of service as a living picture of sanctification — the Spirit changing a person 'from the inside out.'

Scripture referenced

- **John 16:7-9** -- The Counselor comes; convicts the world of sin, righteousness, judgment.
- **Matthew 28:19** -- Spirit named with Father and Son — evidence of His deity.
- **Galatians 5:22-23** -- The fruit of the Spirit that sanctification produces.
- **1 Corinthians 12:4-11** -- Spiritual gifts given by the Spirit to build the church.
- **John 3:3-8** -- New birth is being 'born of the Spirit.'
- **1 John 4:4** -- The indwelling Spirit is greater than Satan — the closing assurance.