

Collins, Gary

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

18. Keeping Perspective in Christian Counseling

The book's closing chapter argues that good Christian counseling keeps eternity in view. It opens with Martin Luther grieving his dying daughter Magdalene, yet holding onto hope. Gaines uses this to show how crises strip away the routine and force us to face what truly matters, and how counselors must be ready to help people at those moments.

Key takeaways

- Life's crises—birth, illness, accidents, death—jolt us into seeing what is ultimately important, and counselors meet people at exactly these points.
- Effective help requires a deep, biblically grounded worldview, not the thin 'Sunday school theology' many counselors fall back on.
- Christian counseling will always be diverse, shaped by our personalities, training, and each counselee's unique situation—but it needs a stable foundation.

- Right theology is not enough: like Jesus, counselors must combine truth with sensitivity, listening, and compassion rather than pushing an agenda.
- The counselor's calling is to be a knowledgeable follower of Christ, guided by the Holy Spirit, used as His instrument to change lives.

Passages worth keeping

"I am happy in spirit, but the flesh is sorrowful and will not be content, the parting grieves me beyond measure. I have sent a saint to heaven."

Luther models grief and hope held together—the chapter's picture of eternal perspective.

"The counselor gave the impression that he cared less about the counselee than about his agenda of pushing a correct biblical theology."

The warning against truth without compassion.

How it connects

The chapter ties counseling to living 'with the end and eternity in view'—Luther's hope at his daughter's deathbed and Paul's charge to Timothy both frame the counselor as God's prepared instrument.

Scripture referenced

- **2 Timothy 2:21-22** -- The believer as an instrument made useful to the Master—the counselor's calling and the book's closing challenge.