RTS Marriage Counseling Class

Summer 2022

Reading:

* *Christian Marital Counseling; Eight Approaches to Helping Couples*; edited by Everett L. Worthington, 1996
* *The 7 principles for making marriage work*, John M. Gottman, 1999/2015
* *The Relationship Alphabet,* Zack Brittle, 2015
* The PCA doctrine on divorce

Papers:

1. My experiences with marriage, my core beliefs about marriage, and what I believe my orientation or approach to marriage counseling is or would be.
2. Response to the marital case presented: assessment, assignments, educational piece, and encouragement focus.
3. Final paper on one of 3 topics (or one you lobby for):
   1. What I would say to young adults about the dating and selection process based on what I believe about marriage and God’s design.
   2. What I would say to elders about divorce and how to navigate members’ questions about grounds for divorce, intervention in and by the church, and what to do when someone disagrees with them.
   3. What I’d provide a class of would-be marriage mentors? What tools, what content, what training exercises, what model and focus I’d encourage them to have.

Course outline and class structure:

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| Date | Content | Structure (tentative): 4 days, 8:30am to 4pm |
| June 13 | Intro. Core theology related to relationships and marriage. Core counseling principles applied to marriage counseling. Case presentations. Personal assessment. Q&A | Intro and opening materials (2 hours). Case presentation and break (30). Counseling principles (90). Lunch (45). Group (30). Myths, rabbit holes, errors in marriages and in helping couples (1 hour). Break (15). Wrap up, Q&A (1). |
| June 14 | Counseling model. Emphasis on assessment and trust building. Different marriage categories or “diagnoses.” “What to do if…” Q&A. “Successful couples do \_\_\_\_, and unsuccessful couples do \_\_\_\_.” Exercises for couples. | Model described and discussed (2). Case application and break (30). Diagnoses and treatments (90) lunch (45). Group (30). “Broken vows,” and other threats to marriage. (2 hours with 15 min break). Q&A (15) |
| June 15 | Counseling model: exploring and experimenting. Conflict work and theory. Q&A. Exercises for couples. | Model described and discussed (2). Case application and break (30). Conflict videos and models (90). Lunch (45). Group and practice techniques (1). Educating couples (2 hr with 10 min break). |
| June 16 | Counseling model: encourage and inspire. Difficult couples. Separation and divorce. Repentance and reconciliation. When to refer. | Model described and discussed (2). Case application and break (30). Difficult situations and couples; “what to do if,” (90). Lunch (45). Group (30). Ways to repair and offer reconciliation (90). Wrap up and Q&A (1). |