

## ETS CBS M.Div. Qualitative Survey

To assist in the assessment of the Capital Bible Seminary (CBS) M.Div. pastoral counseling curriculum, two dozen M.Div. students who took the two core pastoral counseling courses were randomly selected. Of those, eighteen (75%) responded.

Students were asked:

1. What impact, positive or negative, did Discipleship Counseling I and *Soul Physicians* have on your overall pastoral ministry, ministry philosophy, and vision of local church ministry?
2. What impact, positive or negative, did Discipleship Counseling I and *Soul Physicians* have on your philosophy of counseling and your practice, method, way of counseling in the local church?
3. What impact, positive or negative, did Discipleship Counseling II (Lab) and *Spiritual Friends* have on your overall pastoral ministry, ministry philosophy, and vision of local church ministry?
4. What impact, positive or negative, did Discipleship Counseling II (Lab) and *Spiritual Friends* have on your philosophy of counseling and your practice, method, way of counseling in the local church?
5. What impact, positive or negative, did these two courses and two books combine to equip you in the “4Cs”
  - a. *Content*: Biblical understanding of life, people, problems, and solutions—the Creation, Fall, Redemption, Consummation Grand Narrative?
  - b. *Competence*: Ability to speak the truth in love to help others to grow in Christ?
  - c. *Character*: Development of your own Christlikeness as you relate to God and others?
  - d. *Community*: Appreciation for and ability to connect with others in the Body of Christ in mutually encouraging ways?

The following pages provide all responses. The only changes are edits for spelling.

### M.Div. Pastoral Counseling Student Responses

- “The DC I class and book helped solidify the all-sufficiency of Scripture for all issues of the soul. Previously I had to work hard to develop a framework to deal with various problems that people have and DC I provided a guide for me to do just that.”
- “The DC I class and *Soul Physicians* completely reshaped and defined my entire ministry—they defined biblical relational ministry as nothing else had. It gave me a framework in which to live, work, and minister.”
- “The DC II lab and *Spiritual Friends* assisted in developing my use of God’s Word as the regular resource in ministering to the everyday ordinary, as well as extraordinary, issues I am confronted with in pastoral counseling.”
- “Through the impact of both classes and books, my relationship with Christ has become much more personal and not just cerebral. As a result, I am becoming more Christlike in my walk.”
- “Through DC I and DC II, I am far better equipped to hear, understand, discern, and speak to issues of depression, anger, anxiety, sexual addictions, marital discord, parent-child problems, etc. People in my ministry are amazed that a pastor is as well-equipped as I am to help them.”
- “As a youth pastor, DC I plays a critical role every day in how I minister and counsel my students. I face so many different circumstances and brokenness in ministry and the training and theology has grounded me biblically to help them.”
- “The biblical content in DC I and *Soul Physicians* truly gave me the big picture through which I now walk with every broken person to give them hope in the midst of their greatest sorrow and pain and struggle with sin.”
- “The sustaining, healing, reconciling, and guiding framework from DC II and *Spiritual Friends* is foundational to every counseling session I have.”
- “Through DC I and DC II, I am (at least I think I am) a better husband today because of these classes. I don’t talk as much and I listen more attentively. I am quicker to understand my wife. I know that I have been immensely impacted, by DC I/II. I wouldn’t be close to the same man I am today if I not for these classes.”
- “The DC I/*Soul Physicians* approach to ministry completely changed my approach to pastoral ministry and pastoral counseling. My involvement in the DC II lab had a foundational impact on my ministry and on my life.”
- “DC I gave words and structure to the heart of pastoring. Observing pastors who were removed from the people they were shepherding and who had fallen into a CEO model of ‘doing church’ had left my heart desiring more. DC I and *Soul Physicians* recaptured the personal ‘life on life’ role of a shepherd who administers God’s timeless truth to aching, soul-sick souls in an incarnational way. The classic M.Div. gives the pastor the tools necessary to study and accurately handle the Word of God. DC I adds the foundational, relational structure and philosophy to undergird the ministry of making disciples.”
- “The strength and attractiveness of DC I for me came from the wonderful balance of sound theology expressed from the perspective of a practiced pastor who understands the human soul in the context of a personal God and an incredible story.”
- “DC I/II thoroughly equipped me to view counseling first and foremost through a spiritual lens.”

- “From DC I and *Soul Physicians*, I have grown tremendously in my ability to ask probing questions that get to the heart of the issue in others. I also have a greater level of courage, knowing that God wants to use me to be an instrument of change in another believer’s life.”
- “DC I and *Soul Physicians* have provided our caring ministry a firm biblical and theological foundation and guidelines to follow. As our ministry co-workers walk through God’s greatest story together, it transforms our lives together.”
- “DC I has given me a clear road map to apply the God’s changeless truth in pastoral counseling. God has given me opportunities to help many brothers and sisters who were in suffering to clearly see hope and life-changing experience in Christ.”
- “The methodology from DC II and *Spiritual Friends* have become the standard training resource for the disciple-making of our elders, deacons, small group leaders, and care givers. Time after time, people have shared with me how much they appreciate this balanced model.”
- “Through DC I and DC II, I am more capable now to decipher people’s problem and help them to engage in the process of soul searching with Scripture. As result, God has led me to see His transformation in people’s hearts.”
- “DC I provided the foundation for the vision of discipleship in my pastoral ministry at my church. Our need was to have a model for personal ministry that involved intimate ministry for collegial engagement of life, spiritual growth, and evangelism.”
- “DC I is the foundation of my pastoral counseling model. The DC II approach is my methodology for discerning, mitigating, and managing the maladies of the soul.”
- “The DC II lab gave me the practical experience of content and created the character to deal with the issues of pastoring the raw realities church and life.”
- “Through DC I and DC II, I’m now able to relate to people, help them, not with philosophy but with God’s Word of grace; empowering them to engage their spiritual, real-life issues.”
- “DC I and *Soul Physicians* helped me to think categorically about addressing the soul care and spiritual direction needs of members of our congregation.”
- “The DC I/*Soul Physicians* comprehensive approach has helped me to think in diagnostic terms about the issues people bring to me as a pastor.”
- “DC II has made me sensitive to the soul care and spiritual direction needs of my congregation. It significantly impacted our church’s vision statement: ‘healing and strengthening lives and families, one person at a time through faith in Jesus Christ.’”
- “The most significant impact of the DC II lab has been equipping me to avoid the ‘take two truths and call me in the morning’ approach. With suffering people who also struggle against besetting sins, we have to get into their casket with them, help them to hope again, in a Spirit-led fashion, at the appropriate time help them to address sinful patterns, then help them to apply biblical truth toward victory over their distorted perspectives.”
- “The two classes and two books helped me to understand the biblical lexicography of people, problems, and solutions as a foundation for my pastoral counseling.”
- “Because of DC I and DC II, I feel comfortable in counseling even though counseling is not my gift. The two courses and two books gave me a starting point to help me to understand how to relate the Bible to life and the importance of counseling in pastoral ministry.”
- “Perhaps the most import component from both courses and books was the way of thinking biblically about helping people move toward God. Having a framework to think through a

fallen world and learning how to join a suffering soul and lead them from the fall to redemption, the grave to resurrection, has been a key understanding.”

- “I grew tremendously both in knowledge and in character. The biblical principles taught in the two courses and two books gave me the content, and the interaction with others in the lab learning environment gave me the opportunity to love and learn. The course structure allowed me to hear the truth in love and afforded me the opportunity to practice speaking the truth in love.”
- “The importance of knowing God as a relational God cannot be emphasized enough. The concept of God’s great narrative and the relational nature of our Triune God is foundational to both courses. In DC I & II, we experienced God and the community that He desires for us.”
- “The books and classes have helped me understand people better as I seek to shepherd them. I always have in my mind that people are either dealing with suffering or sin or more than likely a combination of both. *This shapes how I preach and interact with my congregants.* I also use the CFR framework in much of my teaching and preaching.”
- “One of the best ways the *Soul Physicians* book has helped me is in teaching the four aspects of the gospel. I discuss justification, redemption, regeneration, and reconciliation often with people. These truths applied to the lives of Christians has provided incredible transformation.”
- “Through DC II lab and *Spiritual Friends*, I have learned to be more sensitive to others in their pain and struggle with temptation. The truth that shared sorrow is endurable sorrow has been very helpful for me as I shepherd our congregation. I also have gained a greater vision for one another ministry. That Christians have what it takes to encourage and confront one another because of their position in Christ (Romans 15:14).”
- “The courses and books really did build a foundation for all for C’s in my life and ministry. I am fully convinced of the necessity of community, the people of God, in helping people grow. The books have been resources that I continue to seek out in order to strengthen my content and competence. The classes and labs allowed for my own character to be conformed in a greater way to that of Jesus. I still believe that a counselor’s character is an overlooked, but essential component to effective, Christ-centered, biblical-counseling.”
- “In the classes and labs, my heart was deeply touched in dealing with my own sin and suffering. I was able to discuss my besetting sins with my spiritual friend and mentor. I was also able to share with the labs the pain of losing my dad. These were formational to my own walk with Christ.”
- “As far as community, based on the training from the classes and books, I have a conviction that a person cannot just go to a counselor and think that is enough for them. I believe that a person needs the Word of God, the Spirit of God, AND the people of God working together in their life so that lasting change can occur. The biblical evidence for this truth is overwhelming.”
- “The DC II Lab created in me the confidence to wade into the messy issues of personal suffering and premarital discussions and marital restoration issues.”
- “Through DC 1 and *Soul Physicians*, I have learned that it is not me who does the counseling, but the Spirit of God and that I am but a helper/partner who identifies with others because I have been and am being *comforted by the same Grace that they are being comforted by as I struggle to engage life as they do.*”

- “In particular, understanding RRVE (P) *has helped me to think in diagnostic terms*. What mindset has my church member embraced? How is he/she embracing or not embracing kingdom relationships. Or, how is he/she relating to self and others? *I now look for decision patterns and how a member is managing emotions. I.e. are decisions being made to apply biblical truths and is he/she aware of painful or other emotions and inviting Christ into their ‘emotional space.’*”
- “Most importantly, DC II and *Spiritual Friends* helped me understand *the importance of learning how to hear my spiritual friend's story*. DC II *has made me sensitive to the soul care and spiritual direction needs of my congregation*. Our church's vision statement reads *‘healing & strengthening lives and families, one person at a time through faith in Jesus Christ.’* Though our leaders are not formally trained, I informally coach them to Sustain, Heal, Reconcile, & Guide so they can be part of a person's healing and recovery from the storms & pains of life. Much of my preaching is also around counseling needs. Series such as Relationships 101, Friends, & Overcoming Emotions That Overwhelm have been some of our most well received teaching.”
- “Through the two courses and two books, I have been challenged to not merely give people solutions, but to walk with them in their pain. I also have learned how important it is to remember the original intention of creation and what effect the fall has on them. It allows me to love them in their sin and lead them in the hope of the gospel and the ability to give them hope in the redemption narrative.”
- “It was *very helpful to be in the lab with many different people of different age and background* and run through scenarios together. It was helpful to hear others take people through the steps. *It helped me to have confidence in the process. It was a powerful tool to flesh out the academic exercises through hands on sessions*. It helped me begin my journey as a spiritual counselor for the many broken people that I would encounter. Enough can't be said for the practical strength gained through the practical exercises.”
- “I think the content was the most powerful aspect of the classes in *that it truly gave me the big picture through which I would walk every broken person to give them hope in the midst of their greatest sorrow and pain*.”
- “My focus is no longer on ‘solutions’ as much as growth—growth in relationship with God, others, and self—as growth takes place, solutions become obvious.”
- “Counseling is not just for professionals—as lay people learn the art of relating they are able to serve as Spiritual Friends and come alongside others in ways that draw people to Christ and find solutions in Him—the focus of the Church leadership becomes one of equipping vs. doing.”
- “From the DC II lab I learned what it looks like to rely on the Holy Spirit in counseling and those opportunities have been the greatest asset to my practice of counseling—experiencing triologies in the labs and through *Spiritual Friends* is amazing.”
- “DC I crystallized the essence of all ministry as being in our relationships; it refocused me on the foundational theology of relating as God desires us to relate to one another.”
- “The courses and material clearly sets forth the scriptural call for *every believer* to see ourselves as expected to serve and equipped to serve those God brings before us in our day-to-day relationships.”
- “DC I focused me on my calling in ministry to be about equipping *every believer* to be more deliberate, more confident and more aware of our ability to meet the day-to-day needs of those around us with the power of God's Word in the power of the Holy Spirit.”

- “DC I confronts the caregiver with the scriptural facts that at the heart of every issue we face in this world is a spiritual matter.”
- “In *Soul Physicians* and DC I, I learned that *there is nothing that we will confront and struggle with in this life that Scripture does not and God cannot address.*”
- “DC I provides the Scriptural and spiritual foundations for sound counseling of the whole person.”
- “Where DC I equips us with God’s Word for one-anothering, DC II focused me on not being content to simply provide the theology of one another ministry, but of ensuring we are actively, purposefully seeking to equip others to put into practice what they learn.”
- “DC II and *Spiritual Friends* provided practical life application skills for me to help others view our world with spiritual eyes in their day-to-day walk; *they equipped me to equip others* in seeing everyday relationships as an opportunity to sustain one another in our daily trials, to seek to bring healing in hurts, to learn how to hold *one another accountable in our walk with God, and how to build one another up in Christ.*”
- “While it seems axiomatic, the strength and power of the Creation, Fall, Redemption narrative that underlies these courses have permitted me to powerfully, simply and directly place life into a perspective and provide a backdrop against which to minister to others in their struggles. The narrative is an unshakable foundation that provides safety and security against so many uncertainties in people’s lives; it does it in a way that is both profound and yet simple. Understanding the theology of relationship has better equipped me to help others see the power they have in Christ in their relationships and the calling for ministry in those relationships.”
- “Learning to see with spiritual eyes and seeing life’s relationships through the lens of scripture has empowered me and provided me with a greater confidence in my ability to be used by God; actively looking for opportunities for God to work through me in any circumstance.”
- “DC I and DC II caused me to examine my relationships in light of my calling in Christ and to see all the missed opportunities for one another ministry that had been passing me by on a daily basis; not the “big ministry” moments we tend to focus on, but the everyday side-by-side yoke-sharing ministry opportunities we are constantly coming across and passing by.”
- “DC I clearly developed our call to community in Christ and DC II actively engaged us in development of community. *I truly appreciated the unity in diversity I was able to experience in DC II and the opportunity to experience first-hand God’s working through our common calling in Christ regardless of differences in our backgrounds.*”
- “*The Discipleship Counseling approach to ministry completely changed my approach to counseling.* Rather than viewing myself as a counselor or professional, I fully embraced the concept that I was a spiritual friend. Relying on what God was teaching me and working in me, and trusting His Spirit to join in the spiritual dialogue and direct our interactions, I had a freedom to engage others with compassion and freedom.”
- “I experienced life changing healing and understanding through my interactions in my pastoral counseling training. We lived what we were learning and I was personally sustained in ministry during a very difficult and trying time. I know that what I learned was effective equipping because I grew and continue to grow.”
- “Through DC I & II we were given an opportunity to experience God and God in community in and through others. Once you taste the truth of God and experience the love of God through one of His children, you begin to believe and value the fact that we may indeed

impart spiritual gifts to one another by which we are mutually encouraged and comforted. I truly appreciate the ability to connect with others in the body of Christ and believe that by learning to do so we are able to encourage others to connect in a real intimate way with Christ. This is at the heart of Jesus' desire for us – That we may be one in Him and perfected in unity and know the love of God and show the world that same love of God (John 17:18-23)."

- "Another area of DC I and *Soul Physicians* that helped me and my ministry is the topic of "Love and True." *Love and True helps me balance my minister, not just my ministry but also my personal life.*"
- "DC I and *Soul Physicians* help me the most to understand the original design of mankind (Creation). When I counsel, I look at his or her mindset, choices, feelings, and how he or she relates that will tell me how far the client is from God's original design, so that will lead me to a biblical diagnosis."