GRACE THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

The knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness

BC7104 Counselling and Life Transitions

2027

When: Thursdays 9:30 – 11am. **Starts:** 4 March, 2027

Online Classroom: (You will receive a MS Teams invitation before the class begins. Students will need to login to their Teams account.)

Tutor: Peter D. Reynolds D.Min (Couns)

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1. BIBLICAL CASE

- Genesis 1:28-29, 31a: *God created Adam and Eve mature human beings and it was very good. Only as mature could they fulfil all that God intended for them.*
- Luke 2:52: *Jesus underwent human development to maturity going though transitions in different aspects of growing up. Without this growth to maturity, he could not have fulfilled God's purposes for him.*
- Ephesians 4:12-13: *Spiritual maturity remains the goal for our lives hence the provisions God has made for our growth to maturity.*
- Hebrews 5:14: *Here is a definition of spiritual maturity.*
- James 1:2-4: *Here is the way of spiritual maturity*
- Colossians 4:12: *The goal of any personal ministry toward others is their spiritual maturity.*

2. GRADUATE IDEALS.

At GTC we believe that the ideal graduate is someone who, because of Christlikeness and kingdom focus, by hard work, a commitment to a lifetime of learning, becomes mighty in the Scriptures, and commits themselves to serving the church and evangelising the world.

3. COURSE DESCRIPTION & PURPOSE

3.1. Description. There are no weekly classes for this course, instead it is designed as a self-study course to completed in one semester. You will meet for eight one hour tutorials with your tutor to assess your progress and answer any of your questions. This class will examine the major transitions and crises of the human life cycle. The course will cover infancy, childhood, adolescence, singleness, marriage, parenthood, mid-life, retirement, aging and death.

3.2. Purpose. To develop basic counselling skills to help others cope with the transitions of life, and the crises these transitions can sometimes bring. We will be able to learn how our speakers managed their most recent transition and how prepared they are for their next one. Throughout this course students will be encouraged to compare their own life experiences of these transitional phases of the life span.

'The study of theology is necessary and relevant because it helps us to be more deliberate and careful in our thought and speech about God. It helps us to be transformed by the renewing of our minds.'
(Keith Mathison, *TableTalk Magazine*, April 2018)

3.3. Technical Terms and Definitions (as understood in the context of this course)

Biblical Counselling/Pastoral Counselling/Christian Counselling/Therapy: *Person-to-person heart talk within the Body of Christ that is grace orientated, Gospel Focused, Christ centred; either formal or informal, planned or spontaneous. Can be practiced by any wise, reflective and sensitive Christian who has the goal of seeing others changing into the image of Christ.*

Pastoral/Christian/Biblical Counsellor/ Helper/Listener/Therapist: *One who is willing to grow and develop in her/his ability to assist others in the process of moving towards personal growth and change in the areas of behaviour, thoughts, and feelings. This process will be within a Biblical framework and in the context of the Body of Christ.*

Seeker/Speaker/Counsellee/Client: *One who desires personal growth and change and who actively pursues help and engagement towards this end.*

Secular Theories and Therapies: *Ways of understanding and helping people that do not have their presuppositions, methodology or outcomes determined by the Scriptures. In GTC's counselling programme we will teach you the secular theories and therapies, but we will not train you to use them. Rather, we will help and train you to develop a biblical modality and approach to help people grow and change (see the first definition at the top of the page)*

Psychology: *a branch of science that studies behaviour, thoughts and, feelings in an attempt to establish a theory of personality.*

Psychotherapy: *"any systematic methodology based on some theory of personality intended to achieve desirable changes in thinking, feeling and behaviour. More than 400 different systems of psychotherapy have been identified". (The dictionary of Psychology, Appendix E, by Ray Corsini, Brunner/Routledge Pub., 2002).* ***Psychotherapist:*** *one who seeks, through the art of healing conversations, to interact with the behaviour, thoughts, and feelings of another in order to achieve desirable change.*

Psychiatrist: *"A physician who specializes in the diagnosis, treatment, prevention and study of mental and emotional disorders." (Corsini, 2002). Using a medical model, they rely mainly on the prescribing of psychiatric drugs in order to achieve desirable change.*

Redemptive-History: *the structure of biblical revelation as the unfolding over time of God's redemptive purposes for his people.*

Modality: *the approach we take to helping another.*

Presenting Problem: *the initial issue that brings a seeker to counselling.*

Two-Age Tension**:** the reality of living as Christians in a fallen world while simultaneously living in both the age to come and this present evil age.

The Victorious Christian Life: A life that only Jesus Christ has ever lived. He will share his victorious life with us on the day of his return.

Spiritual Maturity: With fear and trembling we face life in a fallen word with a growing commitment to faith, repentance, and trusting the Lord Jesus Christ and his gospel promises.

4. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

4.1. General Objectives. The goal is to see and expect maturity appropriate to each stage of the life span with on-going growth to spiritual maturity being the end goal of all aspects of our lives. Hence we will develop a robust understanding of what Christian maturity looks like.
Spiritual development as a Scriptural expectation is not included in the secular material. We will have to provide that aspect ourselves, noting where this failure by secular observers distorts their understanding of all the other aspects of the crisis and transitions of the human life span.

4.2. Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course you should be able to:

4.2.1. **Describe and explain** the different stages of the human life span and how these stages interact with biblical counselling.

4.2.2. **Explain** how you can with confidence to bring the Lord Jesus Christ in his suffering and glory to the struggling and hurting hearts and lives of others as they endure the transitions and crisis that are common to us all.

4.2.3. **Identify and define** how these truths become transformational for yourself and for those you minister to as we live together in the tension of the two ages.

4.2.4. **Explain and critique** how all that you are learning in this course can enable you to counsel effectively with both Christians and non-Christians.

My learning goal is:_____

4.3. Participation. Online students are required to have an active webcam on unless you have permission to turn it off.

5. ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

Credit students should read through this outline and ask any questions about things that you are unclear on. If any of the tasks are not suitable for your optimal learning, you are welcome to discuss an alternative that is acceptable to the tutor.

5.1. Classes: Attend and participate in the classes. We learn when we are present and engaged with the material. We learn better when we think through what is being presented and discuss it with others. Come to class with questions and ideas. Online students to arrange with the tutor the best way for them to participate in the class and get the most from their experience.

Activity	**% grade**
Class attendance	5%
Required Reading	30%
Assignment	45%
Examination	20%
Total	**100%**

5.2. Reading: Credit students are required to read **1000 pages** of text. In the end of semester exam, you will be asked an honesty question about the percentage of the readings you have completed

Credit students are required to read the following **two** textbooks:

1. *Caring for People from Birth to Death,* ed. James Hightower, Haworth Press 1999
   or *Crisis and Trauma Counselling* by Norman Wright, Bethany House Pub., 2011
2. *The Developing Person Through the Life Span* by Kathleen Berger, Worth Pub., 11Th ed., 2020.

or *Development Through the Life Span* by Laura Berk, Allyn & Bacon Pub., 7th ed., 2017

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5.3. Assignment:

Credit students are required to complete a 4 - 5000 word research paper. Choose a particular period of your life span that you have experienced and would like to explore in more detail**.** Describe the major changes, opportunities, and challenges of that period of life, relating it all to your own experience of that stage of your development. From the recommended reading, or the public library, or some other source, read a book that deals with that life span period, referencing it in your paper. Make use also of the class textbooks, class notes, handouts, and discussions.

This paper will remain confidential to your tutor. Please include a word count in your title page. *Guidelines for your written work can be found on page 13*

5.4. Examination (June 25)

There will be a two-hour exam requiring short written answers to questions on subjects covered in class. An examination is an opportunity for you to review everything that you have learned and attempt to recall it in your own words. If you are concerned about reading and writing in a limited time, or English is your second language, please talk to your tutor about how we can assist you.

The exam is to be typed and submitted vis email to your tutor.

6. LEARNING RESOURCES (Recommended Reading)

Adams Jay	*Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage in the Bible*	Pres & Ref., 1980
Allender Dan	*The Wounded Heart-Hope for Adult Victims of Childhood Sexual Abuse*	NavPress, 1990
Allender Dan Longman Tremper	*Intimate Allies-Rediscovering God's Design for Marriage and Becoming Soul Mates for Life*	Tyndale House, 1995
Axline Virginia	*Play Therapy*	Ballantine, 1969/1981
Berk Laura E.	*Development Through the Life Span*	Pearson 6th ed 2013
Carder Dave	*Torn Asunder - Recovering from an Extramarital Affair*	Moody, 2008
Carter Betty and McGoldrick Monica eds. 2nd ed	*The Changing Family Life Cycle-A Framework for Family Therapy*	Allyn and Bacon, 1989 5th ed., Pearson 2015
Chester Tim	*Captured by a Better Vision-Living Porn Free*	IVP 2010
Cloitre Marylene, Cohen Lisa, Koenen Karestan	*Treating Survivors of Childhood Abuse-Psychotherapy for the Interrupted Life*	Guilford Press, 2006 2nd Ed., 2020
Courtois Christine	*Healing the Incest Wound-Adult Survivors in Therapy*	Norton, 1988 2nd ed., 2010
Crabb Larry	*Men and Women-Enjoying the Difference*	Zondervan, 1991
----------	*The Marriage Builder-A Blueprint for Couples and Counsellors*	Strand Pub., 1991

----------	*The Silence of Adam-Becoming Men of Courage in a World of Chaos*	Zondervan, 1995
Doherty William	*Take Back Your Marriage – Sticking Together in a World that Pulls Us Apart*	Guilford Press, 2001 2nd ed., 2013
Doriani Dan	*The Life of the God-Made Man-Becoming a Man After God's Heart*	Crossway, 2001
Eggerichs Emerson	*Love & Respect in the Family-The Respect Parents Desire, The Love Children Need*	Thomas Nelson, 2013
Fossum Merle A. and Mason Marilyn J.	*Facing Shame-Families in Recovery*	Norton and co., 1986 Revised Ed.,1989
Friedrich William	*Psychotherapy of Sexually Abused Children and Their Families*	Norton, 1990
Galinsky Ellen	*The Six Stages of Parenthood*	Addison-Wesley 1987,1990
Geldard Kathryn & Geldard David	*Counselling Children-A Practical Introduction 5th ed.*	Sage, 2018
Gibbs Jen	*She-a Journey of Faith, Hope &Love with Women of the Bible*	Tsunami Pub, 2016
Glaz Maxine & Moessner Jeanne eds	*Women in Travail and Transition*	Fortress Press, 1990
Gottman John M.	*The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work*	Harmony, 2015
----------	*The Relationship Cure-A 5 Step Guide to Strengthening Your Marriage, Family and Friendships*	Harmony, 2002
Groom Nancy	*Married Without Masks-A New Look at Submission and Authority*	Baker Books 1996
Harvey Dave	*When Sinners Say, "I Do"-Discovering the Power of the Gospel for Marriage*	Shepherd Press, 2007
Harvey Donald	*Surviving Betrayal-Counseling an Adulterous Marriage*	Baker Books, 1995
Hine Thomas	*The Rise and Fall of the American Teenager*	Bard/Avon Books, 1999 Harper Perennial, 2000
Holcomb Justin & Holcomb Lindsay	*Rid of my Disgrace-Hope and Healing for Victims of Sexual Assault*	Crossway, 2011
Huggins Kevin	*Parenting Adolescents*	NavPress, 1989
Hunt Susan	*Spiritual Mothering-The Titus 2 Model for Women Mentoring women*	Crossway, 2016

----------	*By Design-God's Distinctive Calling for Women*	Crossway, 1998
----------	*Aging With Grace – Flourishing in an Anti-Aging Culture*	Crossway, 2021
Hurley James	*Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective*	Wipf & Stock, 2002
Jones Rebecca	*Does Christianity Squash Women? -A Christian Looks at Womanhood*	Broadman & Holman, 2005
Jones Stanton L. Butman Richard E.	*Modern Psychotherapies-A Comprehensive Christian Approach*	IVP Academic, 1991
Keller Timothy with Keller Kathy	*The Meaning of Marriage-Facing the Complexities of Marriage with the Wisdom of God*	Hodder & Stoughton, 2011
Kindlon Dan & Thompson Michael	*Raising Cain-Protecting the Emotional Life of Boys*	Ballantine Books, 2000
Kober Ted	*Confession and Forgiveness-Professing Faith as Ambassadors of Reconciliation*	Concordia, 2002
Köstenberger Andreas J.	*God, Marriage and Family-Rebuilding the Biblical Foundation*	Crossway, 2004
Kottman Terry	*Partners in Play-An Adlerian Approach to Play Therapy, 3rd ed.*	American Counseling Association, 2015
Langberg Diane	*Counseling Survivors of Sexual Abuse*	Xulon Press, 2003
----------	*On the Threshold of Hope-Opening the Door to Healing for Survivors of Sexual Abuse*	Tyndale House, 1999/2014
Levinson Daniel	*Seasons of a Man's Life*	Ballantine Books, 1986
----------	*Seasons of a Woman's Life*	Ballantine Books, 1997 Knopf, 1996
Lowe Julie	*Child Proof-Parenting by Faith Not Formula*	New Growth Press, 2018
Lush Jean	*Mothers & Sons-Raising Boys to be Men*	Fleming Revell Co. 2001 (Focus on the Family)
MacDonald Gordon	*The Effective Father*	Tyndale House, 1983
McGoldrick Monica	*You Can Go Home Again-Reconnecting With Your Family*	Norton, 1997
----------	*The Genogram Journey - Reconnecting With Your Family*	Norton, 2011

Miller John C. & Juliani Barbara Miller	*Come Back Barbara*	Zondervan, 1988
Meeker Meg	*Hero-Being the Strong Father Your Children Need*	Regnery Pub., 2017
Morley Patrick	*The Young Man in the Mirror*	Broadman and Holman, 2003 Zondervan, 2014
Napier Augustus Whitaker Carl	*The Family Crucible-The Intense Experience of Family Therapy*	Harper & Row, 2017
Osherson Samuel	*Finding our Fathers-How a Man's Life is Shaped by His Relationship With His Father*	Ballantine, 1987 McGraw Hill, 2001
Phillips Richard D, & Phillips Sharon	*Holding Hands Holding Hearts-Recovering a Biblical View of Christian Dating*	Pre & Ref., 2006
Pipher Mary	*Reviving Ophelia-Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls*	Riverhead, 2019
----------	*The Shelter of Each Other-Rebuilding Our Families*	Penguin, 2008
----------	*Another Country-Navigating the Emotional Terrain of our Elders*	Riverhead, 2000
----------	*Letters to a Young Therapist*	Basic Books, 2016
Napier Augustus & Whitaker Carl	*The Family Crucible*	Harper, 1988, 2002
Pittman Frank	*Turning Points-Treating Families in Transition and Crisis*	Norton, 1987
Richardson Ronald W.	*Couples in Conflict-A Family Systems Approach to Marriage Counselling*	Fortress Press, 2010
Schaumburg Harry W.	*False Intimacy-Understanding the Struggle of Sexual Addiction*	NavPress, 1997
Schmutzer Andrew J. editor	*The Long Journey Home-Understanding and Ministering to the Sexually Abused*	WIPF & Stock Pub., 2011
Sheehy Gail	*Passages-Predictable Crises of Adult Life*	Ballantine Books, 2006
Slattery Juli	*No More Headaches – Enjoying Sex and Intimacy in Marriage*	Tyndale House Pub., 2009
----------	*Finding the Hero in Your Husband-Embracing Your Power in Marriage*	Health Communications, 2021
Smith Winston	*Marriage Matters*	New Growth Press, 2010

Strickland Darby	*Is it Abuse? -A Biblical Guide to Identifying Domestic Abuse and Helping Victims*	Pres & Ref., 2020
Tripp Paul	*Lost in the Middle-Midlife and the Grace of God*	`Shepherd Press, 2004
----------	*What Did You Expect-Redeeming the Realities of Marriage*	Crossway, 2010
----------	*Age of Opportunity-A Biblical Guide to Parenting Teens*	Pres & Ref, 2022
Tripp Ted	*Shepherding a Child's Heart*	Shepherd's Press 2001
Verrier Nancy Newton	*The Primal Wound- Understanding the Adopted Child*	Gateway Press, 1993, 2009 Kindle ed., 2023
Wachtel Ellen F. & Wachtel Paul L.	*Family Dynamics in Individual Psychotherapy*	Guildford, 1991
----------	*The Heart of Couple Therapy – Knowing What to Do and How to Do It.*	Guildford, 2019
Wallerstein Judith Lewis Julia Blakeslee Sandra	*The Unexpected Legacy of Divorce*	Hyperion, 2000
Wangerin Walter	*As For Me & My House-Crafting Your Marriage to Last*	Thomas Nelson, 2001
White Michael & Morgan Alice	*Narrative Therapy with Children and Their Families*	Dulwich Centre, 2006
White Jerry &Mary	*The Christian in Mid-Life*	NavPress, 1980
Worthington Everett L.	*Marriage Counselling-A Christian Approach to Counseling Couples*	IVP Academic, 1993
Wright Norman H.	*Crisis and Trauma Counseling - A Practical Guide for Ministers, Counselors and Lay Counselors*	Regal, 2003 Bethany, 2011
Yarhouse Mark A. Butman Richard E. McRay Barrett W.	*Modern Psychopathologies-A Comprehensive Christian Approach*	IVP Academic, 2005
Yarhouse Mark A. Sells James N.	*Family Therapies – A Comprehensive Christian Approach*	IVP Academic, 2008
various	*Responding to Violence – A collection of papers relating to child sexual abuse and violence in intimate relationships*	The Dulwich Centre Pub. 2003

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7. RESEARCH RESOURCES

7.1. GTC library 75 Rogers Road, Manurewa. If you are a student, then you automatically receive library membership and can borrow books from our library for 1-month. Priority is given to credit students. You are welcome to come and use the library at any time between 9am and 4:00pm, Monday to Friday.

We are able to post out books to students if students are willing to pay.

7.2. Christ College Library: Our friends at Christ College are happy to allow GTC students to be members of their library. While you cannot access their books without a trip to Sydney, for AU$55 per year, you can purchase access to their online database of journals and e-books. This is highly recommended for any credit student. Their librarians have also curated a large list of free online research resources.

To join the Christ College electronic library, email: library@christcollege.edu.au

7.3. Purchasing books. Books purchasing in NZ is often expensive and books can take a long time to arrive. Try your local bookstore, Christian bookstore, or online. We also recommend:

Reformers Bookshop (reformers.com.au) in Australia offers students a discount on books. Please use the (2026) discount code: **BCD26N**

Grace Books (gracebooks.co.nz) are a NZ Christian bookshop which carries a good stock of books.

7.4. Logos Software Library. Logos Bible Software is more than simply a Bible search tool. It is also an electronic library where you can purchase many of the books that you need. Once you purchase books you own them, even if you choose to use the free software version. GTC recommends that you subscribe to a library package (annual or monthly) in order to gain access to reference resources. It is worth noting Logos also has a student discount scheme and GTC is registered with them.

1CONTACT INFORMATION

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