

THE CHURCH : THE COUNSELOR

ISA 9:6 For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called **Wonderful Counselor**, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

ISA 9:7 There will be no end to **the increase of {His} government** or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the \Lord\ of hosts will accomplish this.

The church has assumed a position of being the problem solver of those who attend. Some have even taken on a burden to counsel those outside the church. Some have hired professional counselors with earned degrees from recognized colleges to protect themselves from the new liability laws. Some are using counseling as a form of evangelism.

There are financial counselors and advisers. Others for marriages. Others for children with problems. Some provide job assistance help. Some churches now are providing health food and dieting counseling. Others are hiring exercise advisers and providing the equipment and space for complete programs for diet and exercise.

When we see the tremendous need that is in society for nearly every kind of help, it seems the church has a certain responsibility to reach out to these people. After all people with marriage problems will never be of much use in the church until they get things right. Those that cannot manage their finances will not be good tithing members. There is no end to the diversity of problems and the need for counselors. Only the very largest churches can afford to hire such a large staff to specialize in all this problem solving.

After many years of spending hours with various problems and not being successful in solving them, I have had to ask myself if I'm qualified to speak into these situations. What one pastor can become expert in so many different problem areas? If God expects us to be the source of the solution, He should have equipped us to do that ministry.

I have been searching the scriptures to see how the early church handled these problems. We see the problems that arose when they tried to distribute food to certain widows. We are instructed to give to the poor, destitute, the orphans and the widows. In fact we are exhorted give to all that ask. We have no example of counseling marriages or finances or raising children. There is no mention of dieting or health care. Some say that since these problems have always been a part of mankind, there had to be help. Because this most certainly goes with any society it just goes without saying that they had to handle all these problems. Even though the Bible is silent concerning these problems, since there were surely problems there had to be those who were assigned to these ministries.

The Bible clearly says that Jesus Christ is the Wonderful Counselor, the Eternal God, the Eternal Father and the Prince of Peace. If it were possible that Jesus Christ would really counsel and help His people and be a Father to them and establish Peace in households, He would certainly be the

expert in every field of problems.

The next verse tells us how this works. His counsel works within His government, which is His Kingdom. All the problems that exist outside His Kingdom are solved within His Kingdom. Not by counseling but by the subjective work of the Kingdom within the lives of those who are subject to the Kingdom.

The failure rate of counseling those who are outside the Kingdom and refuse His government is extremely high. In fact it is about hopeless. My success in counseling those who were in rebellion against the principles of the Kingdom of God is zero. This is why secular psychology and secular psychiatry have such a high suicide rate. They feel that they are failures and cannot help anyone.