

Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling

Dr. John D. Street, Chairperson

The Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling (MABC) is a graduate program intended to equip men and women for practical excellence in biblical counseling. The content of the courses emphasizes the practical skills of counseling without neglecting the solid biblical foundation on which these skills are built. The classes, homework and reading assignments can be practically implemented in each student's life and ministry immediately. Each course the student takes will enhance his/her walk with God and ministry. The MABC degree is designed to help people to study, use and know Scripture more effectively in their own lives and in their counseling ministries with others. Our goal is to produce men and women who understand God's Word as it applies to the exercise of the spiritual gift of counseling under the oversight of a local church.

The MABC program is designed to equip teachers, pastors, missionaries, elders, deacons and the other Christian workers to counsel in ministry settings and is not structured to meet state requirements for licensing. It does meet requirements for certification with the National Association of Nouthetic Counselors (NANC). Vocational opportunities after graduation include ministry positions in local churches, chaplaincies, Christian colleges, Christian schools, crisis pregnancy centers, children's homes, rescue centers, and mission agencies. Even those whose primary responsibility is not counseling find that the MABC program provides invaluable training because it helps them understand themselves and others, and improves their overall effectiveness on the job, in personal relationships, and to their local church.

Philosophy of Counseling

The Holy Scripture, being God's law and testimony, is true and should therefore serve as the Christian's standard for all matters of faith and practice (Isaiah 8:19-20; 2 Peter 1:3). There is no authority that is higher than the one found in Scripture. Wherever and on whatever subject Scripture speaks, it must be regarded as both inerrant and authoritative.

There have always been people who have affirmed the inerrancy and authority of Scripture in matters of faith and practice, but who would not affirm

the sufficiency of Scripture for understanding and resolving the spiritual (non-physical) problems of man. These people acknowledge Scripture to be the Word of God and are therefore worthy of our respect, but when it comes to understanding and resolving many of the real issues of life, they think that Scripture has limited value. It is, therefore, crucial that we clearly articulate what Christian counseling truly is. There are four distinguishing features of truly Christian counseling as explained below.

Christ-Centered Counseling

Christian counseling is conscientiously and comprehensively Christ-centered. It focuses on who Christ is, what He has done for us in His life, death, resurrection and in sending the Holy Spirit. Christ-centered counseling also focuses on what He is doing for us right now in His intercession at the Father's right hand, and what He will yet do for us in the future. In Christian counseling, the Christ of the Bible is not an appendage or a "tack on" for living in the fast lane. Rather, He is at the center as well as the circumference, and everywhere in between, of counseling.

Christ-centered counseling involves understanding the nature and causes of our human difficulties. It involves understanding the ways we are unlike Christ in our values, aspirations, desires, thoughts, feelings, choices, attitudes, actions and responses. Resolving those sin-related difficulties includes being redeemed and justified through Christ, receiving God's forgiveness through Christ and acquiring from Christ the enabling power to replace unChristlike (sinful) patterns of life with Christlike, godly ones.

Salvation-Centered Counseling

A Christian counselor is also conscientiously and comprehensively Christian in his/her outlook on life. Truly Christian counseling is done by individuals who have experienced the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, and have come to Christ in repentance and faith, acknowledging Him as Lord and Savior of their lives. These are also people who want to live in obedience to Him; people whose main concern in life is to exalt Him and bring glory to His name. They are people who believe that, since God did not spare His own Son (from and on the cross) but delivered Him up (to the cross and death) for us (on our behalf and in our stead, as our substitute), He will freely

through Christ give us all that we need for effective and productive living (for transforming us into the very likeness of His Son in the totality of our being). Biblical, Christian counselors also acknowledge the role of the Holy Spirit in regenerating, saving, and sanctifying the believer. Truly Christian counseling is done by those whose theological convictions influence, permeate and control their personal lives and their counseling theory and practice.

Bible-Centered Counseling

Truly Christian counseling is conscientiously and comprehensively based on the Bible, deriving its understanding of who man is, the nature of his main problems, why he has these problems, and how to resolve these problems from Scripture. In other words, the counselor must be conscientiously and comprehensively committed to the sufficiency of Scripture for understanding and resolving all the nonphysical personal and interpersonal sin-related difficulties of man.

Church-Centered Counseling

Another distinguishing feature of truly Christian counseling is that it will be conscientiously and comprehensively church-centered. Scripture makes it clear that the local church is the primary means by which God accomplishes His work in the world. The local church is His ordained instrument for calling the lost to Himself and the context in which He sanctifies and changes His people into the very likeness of Christ. According to Scripture, the church is His household, the pillar and support of the truth and the instrument He uses in helping His people to put off the old manner of life and to put on the new self (cf. 1 Timothy 3:15; Ephesians 4:1-32). Credibility in counseling comes when it is done under the authority of the church and its properly appointed leadership, not from state licensure.

Resident Program

Program Distinctives

The MABC-Resident is offered in two tracks. First, a 35 semester unit program with a thesis, designed to be completed in one to two years. Second, a 40 semester unit track with no thesis, designed to be completed in two to three years. They are available to residents of the greater Los Angeles area or others who are able to move the area. Courses are held at

night, Monday through Thursday, allowing students to continue to work in their present occupations and ministries while completing their degree program.

Program Length

While this program may be completed in one or two years, students may also extend the program length past the recommended two years. In order to complete the 36 semester hour track of the Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling, a 120-page thesis (also referred to as the Research Project) must be submitted and approved. The thesis may be completed after a student's coursework has been completed. If the student opts to take the non-thesis semester track, the length of the program may have to be extended (but not necessarily).

Full-Time Status for International Students

The full-time course load for a student in the MABC program is 8 units per semester.

MASTER OF ARTS IN BIBLICAL COUNSELING DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Required Courses:

BC500	Spiritual Formations.....	1
BC501	Introduction to Biblical Counseling	3
BC502	Essential Qualities of a Biblical Counselor..	2
BC503	Methods of Biblical Change.....	2
BC505	Graduate Research and Writing Seminar	1
BC511	Theological Basis of Counseling I.....	2
BC512	Theological Basis of Counseling II.....	2
BC521	Problems & Procedures I.....	3
BC531	Hermeneutics	3
BC542	Marriage & Family Counseling.....	3
BC556	NANC Membership Seminar.....	1
BC590	Counseling Practicum.....	2
BC591	Counseling Observation.....	2
BC592	Counseling Internship	4

Thesis Track:

BC600	Counseling Research Thesis/Project.....	3
<i>At least two of the following elective courses.....</i>		<i>3</i>

Non-Thesis Track:

BC598	Research Seminar Presentation	1
<i>At least three of the following elective courses.....</i>		<i>8</i>

Elective Courses:

BC506	Theoretical Constructs of Psychology (2)
BC516	Evangelism & Discipleship (2)
BC518	Counseling & the Book of Proverbs (2)
BC519	Counseling & the Book of Ecclesiastes(2)

- BC522 Problems & Procedures II (2)
- BC528 Cross-Cultural Counseling (2)
- BC538 Counseling & Child Development (2)
- BC548 Counseling & Youth (2)
- BC552 Marriage & Family Topics (2)
- BC557 Counseling & Medical Issues (2)
- BC558 Christian Life Issues I (3)
- BC559 Christian Life Issues II (3)
- BC581 Counseling Issues I (1)
- BC582 Counseling Issues II (1)
- BC583 Discipling Women (2)
- BC584 Problems Women Face Today (2)

Thesis Track:

Total units required for degree 35

Non-Thesis Track:

Total units required for degree 40

Remote Library Access

In order to facilitate research from off campus locations, the college library provides remote access to many of The Master’s College’s online databases. This access allows the student to search the available databases from any computer off campus that has an Internet connection. Currently The Master’s College has over 20 databases available with remote access. Students are welcome to contact the library directly if they need help with their research needs.

Summer Institute Program

Program Distinctives

The MABC-SIP, established in 1998, is a 36 (Thesis Track) or 40 (Non-Thesis Track) semester unit, non-conventional curriculum designed for individuals such as pastors, missionaries, teachers or school administrators who are actively involved in ministry. This modular based program enables students to earn a graduate degree in two to six summers depending on their own schedule and commitments. This allows each student to pursue in-depth training in biblical counseling while continuing in his or her current ministry or occupation.

Program Length

The SIP modular courses are offered for four weeks each summer. Up to four weeks of classes can be taken each summer allowing students to complete their classroom work in two summers. Each week consists of four - six units of classes. In addition to the modular courses, each student will be required to

take 9 (Thesis Track) or 13 (Non-Thesis Track) units of Independent Study coursework.

Each of our modular courses is divided into three parts: a one-week, in-session lecture in addition to extensive pre-session and post-session assignments.

Full / Part Time Student Status

Any student enrolled in 8units or more is considered to be “full-time” status for the Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling. A student must be enrolled in at least 4units of graduate level classes to achieve “part-time” status.

Independent Study

A total of 9 (Thesis Track) or 13 (Non-Thesis Track) independent study units need to be completed before the student is able to graduate from the program. These may be taken in between the first and second year or after the summer sessions have been completed. Students have four months from the time of enrollment in an independent study course to complete the course.

Course Registration

Registration forms for MABC-SIP will be available online in February to each student who has already been accepted into the MABC program. In addition to registering for specific courses, this form allows the student to make housing and meal plan reservations. Housing and meal plans are available for the student, his or her spouse, and children.

Advanced Standing

Any graduate from TMC’s undergraduate Biblical counseling major is eligible for a maximum of six (6) credits of advanced standing in the program. Also, any graduate from The Master’s Seminary who has completed multiple counseling courses as their electives are also eligible for “Advanced Standing”. Students awarded “Advanced Standing” will be waived credits towards their elective credits, up to a maximum of (6) credits. Advanced standing is not guaranteed, but will be decided on an individual basis at the discretion of the Graduate SIP Director and/or the Chairman of the Biblical Counseling Department.

Course Offerings in MABC

The Summer Institute Program course numbers are the same as the resident program course numbers with an "s" added (e.g. BC501s).

BC500 Spiritual Formations (1)

The lab requires one hour weekly of small-group discussion led by a faculty member. Structure is deliberately limited to allow for interaction concerning issues arising in daily life, classes and ministries. Relationships, motivations and strategies are examined for the purpose of encouraging transparency and a lifestyle incorporating counseling, encouragement and edification.

BC501 Introduction to Biblical Counseling (3)

This course offers a general introduction to basic concepts and distinctive features of biblical counseling. Students will discuss what biblical counseling is and what it involves, the role of the counselor in biblical counseling, the different kinds of counseling that are needed, the place of counseling in the ministry of the church and how biblical counseling theory and practice relate to and differ from some of the more common secular models and theories. Part of the course will involve a personal improvement project in which the student will evaluate his/her own counseling qualifications, design a plan for improving some area of his/her life, put that plan into action and then evaluate his/her progress as the course draws to a close.

BC502 Essential Qualities of a Biblical Counselor (2)

This course will help the student to understand the Christ-like character and functional qualities of the discipler/counselor. The course will also provide the environment for self-examination for present and future growth, both in his/her personal walk with Jesus Christ and as a skilled biblical counselor.

BC503 Methods of Biblical Change (2)

This course provides an overview of the counseling process presenting a comprehensive methodological model for promoting biblical change in people. The goal of this course is to encourage biblical thinking and procedures in the process of helping people.

BC505 Graduate Research and Writing Seminar (1)

This Seminar introduces graduate students to the fundamental principles and techniques of research and writing. Students acquire proficiency at locating pertinent reputable resources, developing appropriate conclusions, and composing their results in fully documented written papers, specifically applying the instruction to the student's first graduate research paper. Students are expected to take Graduate Research and Writing Seminar (BC505) prior to or concurrently with their first graduate course.

BC506 Theoretical Constructs of Psychology (2)

This course is designed to critically analyze secular and evangelical integrationist theories of psychotherapy. It will probe the anthropological presuppositions of treatment theory and seek to bring a thoroughly biblical critique to their foundational assumptions as well as methodology. Issues like theories of the subconscious, psychoanalytic approaches to personality, establishing norms, psychological testing, making the distinction between the normal and abnormal, major and mood disorders, schizophrenia and multiple personality disorders are among the psychological constructs and their popular theoreticians that will be explored.

BC511, 512 Theological Basis of Counseling I, II (2, 2)

This course offers a consideration of the theological realities that form the basis of a proper approach to counseling. Special emphasis is given to the nature of God and of man (fallen and unfallen), a biblical definition of the image of God, the nature of sin, the realities of regeneration and progressive sanctification, the concept of "the flesh" (old man/new man), an understanding of the heart/mind as used in Scripture and the place of the local church in the ministry of counseling. Please note: BC512 for SIP students is broken into two classes of 1 unit each, BC512s and BC513s.

BC516 Evangelism & Discipleship (2)

This course presents a biblical approach to evangelism in the local church setting. Various methods of personal evangelism and strengths and weaknesses of these approaches are evaluated. In discipleship, the practical aspects of assisting a believer's growth in the Lord and development of leaders within the local church will be discussed.

BC518 Counseling & the Book of Proverbs (2)

This course is an expositional study of the book of Proverbs with its special relevance to counseling

BC519 Counseling & the Book of Ecclesiastes (2)

This course is designed to help the counselor to work with individuals who are struggling with a materialistic cosmology.

BC521, 522 Problems & Procedures I, II (3, 2)

This course is designed to apply the biblical principles taught in the Introduction to Biblical Counseling (BC501) and the Methods of Biblical Change (BC503) courses to a range of specific counseling problems. Topics discussed include anger, fear, depression, homosexuality, anxiety, eating disorders, incest, child abuse, counseling youth, counseling divorcees and crisis counseling. During the second semester of this course, each student will research and present to the class a detailed biblical counseling

outline for a teacher-approved counseling issue.

BC528 Cross-Cultural Counseling (2)

This course is an exploratory study of biblical counseling in diverse cultural settings with a particular emphasis on equipping the Christian who seeks to counsel people of a culture different from his/her own.

BC531 Hermeneutics (3)

This course is an introduction to the science and art of interpretation, with special attention to the application of Scripture to counseling. Various interpretive approaches on key scriptural passages will be examined, especially as they relate to the biblical counselor and his task.

BC538 Counseling & Child Development (2)

Analysis of the physiological, cognitive, spiritual and personality development from birth through childhood. There will also be a discussion of parenting issues and a critique of the self-esteem movement.

BC542 Marriage & Family Counseling (3)

Marriage and family problems are present in the majority of counseling cases. This course will give an overview of general marriage and family counseling issues relating to the content and process of counseling. It will then proceed to specifically deal with some of the major difficulties that troubled marriages and families experience from a biblical perspective. Included in the course are discussions of the biblical basis and purposes of marriage, family stages, in-law problems, developing unity, husband/wife roles and responsibilities, correcting communication problems and how to resolve conflicts that arise.

BC548 Counseling & Youth (2)

This course is designed to help the student to understand the intense and frequent problems of young people. A thoroughly biblical understanding of young people and their problems and a functional approach to counseling youth will be presented.

BC552 Marriage & Family Topics (2)

This course will consider such issues as premarital counseling, divorce counseling, financial counseling, mate abuse, rebuilding a marriage after an adulterous affair, dealing with sexual problems and parent/child relationships. Designing and facilitating a marriage or family improvement project will be a part of the student's responsibility for this course. Each student will develop and present to the class a detailed biblical approach for a teacher approved marriage and/or family problem

BC556 NANC Membership Seminar (1)

All students are encouraged to seek membership in and certification by the National Association of Nouthetic

Counselors (NANC). This seminar will prepare the student to take the Theological and the Counselors Exams as part of their NANC membership process.

BC557 Counseling & Medical Issues (2)

This is a survey of the physiological factors that influence areas in a person's life which are of importance when counseling that person.

BC558, 559 Christian Life Issues I, II (3, 3)

This course is designed to help people understand the following: the true nature of the Christian life from its beginning with regeneration to its completion when we enter heaven; the context in which our lives and experiences as Christians take place; the gospel foundation for all Christian obedience; the deceptive character of sin; the manner and ways we are sinned against, the appropriate and effective ways to respond to being sinned against; the procedure for building a biblical framework for defining and dealing with sin, our own and others'; the biblical function and purpose of the church; and the manner in which some people who call themselves Christians erroneously view the Christian life.

BC581, 582 Counseling Issues I, II (1, 1)

Numerous crucial issues in counseling will be discussed: the role of women in counseling, the church and biblical counseling, drugs and biblical counseling, developing a counseling ministry in a local church, preaching and counseling, legal issues and counseling, training lay people to counsel, counseling in everyday life, avoiding legalism in counseling, God's laws and ordained authority and counseling apologetics.

BC583 Discipling Women (2)

This course provides basic training in developing and maintaining a women's ministry within the local church. Topics include the priority of discipleship, a biblical definition of discipleship and training in the how to's of discipleship.

BC590 Counseling Practicum (2)

This course is designed to consider the practical application of the principles of biblical counseling and the various methodological aspects of the counseling process. The course will include student participation in counseling as a counselor, counselee, and an observer. These activities will form the basis of seminar discussions where counseling will be analyzed from a biblical perspective. The goal of this course is to help the student learn, evaluate and sharpen their practical counseling skills. *Prerequisites: BC501, BC503.*

BC584 Problems Women Face Today (2)

This course is designed to cover several specific counsel-

ing problems common to women. Some of the topics discussed will include: the feminist influence, the role of women in the church, misperceptions regarding submission, not having a gentle and quiet spirit, PMS, vanity, hurt feelings, unbiblical manipulation and idolatrous emotional attachments. Special emphasis will also be given to common questions women ask such as “What about chemical imbalance?” and “Why and how should I come off my psychiatric drugs?”

BC591 Counseling Observation (2)

This course consists of observations and discussions of video tapes of counseling sessions. It is designed to help the student learn practical skills in counseling by observation, evaluation, critique and discussion.

BC592 Counseling Internship (4)

This is a supervised and evaluated internship, consisting of at least two actual counseling sessions per week and a total of 25 hours of counseling. Assistance will be provided for the student in obtaining counseling opportunities.
Prerequisites: BC501, BC503.

BC598 Research Seminar Presentation (1)

This guided independent research requires the student to produce the present a counseling topic in a seminar format. The presentation must deliver biblically researched solutions to a precise counseling problem, taking the form of at 20 to 30 page, fully documented outline.

BC599 Counseling Research Project (2)

This guided independent research develops a biblical understanding of a counseling approach to a specific problem that could be encountered in counseling. The problem areas must be precisely stated in written form, must be pursued under faculty supervision and must be approved by the chairperson of the Biblical Counseling Department. A fully documented research project of 100 pages in length is required for students in the Thesis Track. A fully documented research paper of 20 pages in length is required for students in the Non-Thesis Track.
This course is only open to students first enrolling in the MABC program prior to Summer 2011

BC600 Counseling Research Thesis/Project (3)

This guided independent research requires the student to advance a thesis, presenting the biblical understanding and counseling methodology for a specific problem that could be encountered in counseling, taking the form of a 100 to 120 page, fully documented paper. Thesis topics are approved by the Department Chair and the Thesis Coordinator; research and composition are pursued under an appointed faculty advisor. *Prerequisites: All core courses*