

# “Elders and Counseling” (week #3)

By Prof. B. Gritters

Sponsored by Hudsonville PRC Consistory

Sunday, 2PM, October 7, 14, **\*\*21\*\***, November 4

**Class Overview: *The Lord willing, we will treat the following topics, subject to the will of those who attend:***

Week #1 (Oct 7): The *Need for* and the *Ability of* Others (elders especially) to Help Pastors in Counseling

1. Pastors are not able to handle all the counseling needs in a church. Statistics in the PRC.
2. Elders are called to do this work, but are qualified for it, too. The congregation must learn this.
3. Scripture teaches that all the members have a “competency to counsel.” If so, elders certainly do.
4. How, specifically, can the elders take on this work in their office?
  - a. Elderly, shut-ins, etc.
  - b. Counseling with the minister
  - c. Supervising the counseling done by professionals

Week #2 (Oct 14): The *Elements* of a Good Counseling Session/Visit

1. How to schedule meetings; how often to meet.
2. An outline of any visit should include.... How to make an agenda.
3. The absolute necessity of using Scripture. And how to use it.
4. Developing the skill to listen in order to make judgments. Taking notes....
5. Giving assignments to the members we counsel.
6. Footnote: May an elder counsel a woman? Alone?

Week #3 (Oct 21): ***Change*** in Counseling: The Primary (and Hopeful!) Doctrine of *Conversion*

1. **Most of counseling involves dealing with problems that require *change*...**
2. **The doctrinal foundation of our approach to change.**
3. **Essential elements from LD 33.**
4. **Requiring change and growth, “more and more.”**
5. **When to bring to the body of the elders for discipline?**

Week #4: **(Nov 4):** *Marriages*: Problems & Prevention (please e-mail questions, suggestions) [gritters@prca.org](mailto:gritters@prca.org)

!!!! Notice the “off-week” NEXT WEEK. I will be in Redlands, DV, for a Reformation Day lecture. Thus, the last meeting is November 4.

Please invite others who may be interested in this class. It is not limited to elders or prospective elders. Also, be aware that these sessions are recorded and can be found through Hudsonville PRC’s web-site, where the lecture outlines are also posted.

# ***“Elders and Counseling” (Week #3)***

*(Outline Notes)*

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## ***Week #3: The Fundamental Doctrine of Conversion***

### **Introduction:**

- A. Review; response to two e-mail questions.
- B. Additional note from last week’s subject: Deal on two tracks; use a “two-pronged” approach in visits.

## ***The Fundamental Doctrine of Conversion***

### **I. The Reformed Doctrine of Conversion is outlined well in Lord’s Day 33. (we are counseling *Reformed* Christians)**

A. The doctrine of conversion has two parts: Mortifying the old man; quickening the new man.

1. Mortification of the old man (key texts: Eph. 4:21-24; Col. 3:5; Rom. 8:13)

a. The old man is:

b. *Mortifying* the old includes three elements: (key text: II Cor. 7:10)

1) ***Sorrow:***

2) ***Hatred:***

3) ***Flight:***

2. Quickening the new man (key texts: Rom 14:17; 15:13; I Thess 1:2-6; Isa 29:19, etc)

a. The new man is:

b. Quickening (making alive) the new man includes three *parallel* (but opposite) elements:

1) ***Joy:***

2) ***Love:***

### 3) *Pursuit:*

B. Then, *these* two elements of conversion are always in our minds:

1. Conversion is a very painful activity: It's dying to myself. It's living to another.
2. There must always be growth in all elements of this activity: It's "more and more." Required?

## II. Conversion should be taught in the context of the whole of Scripture. Never in Isolation from:

A. KNOWLEDGE OF OUR THREE-FOLD—MORTAL—ENEMY (fight without knowing the enemy?)

1. The devil (key texts: II Tim 2:24,25; II Cor 2:11; II Cor 11:14,15; I Pet 5:8,9; Eph 6:12)
2. The wicked world (key texts: Psalm 1 (!); Psalm 101; II Cor 6:14-16; James 4:4; etc.)
3. Our own sinful flesh (key texts: Psalm 51:5 → Psalter # 140,141; Rom 7:18!; etc.)

B. THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION—the forgiveness of sins. Here is hope!!!

1. Sanctification (or daily conversion) is always related to, and follows from, justification. And it DOES follow
2. Key texts: Romans 12:1,2; II Cor 7:1.
3. Applied to counseling:
  - a. There are many other motivating factors to turn from sin. This one must be predominant!
  - b. Let this truth lead in your calls to repentance, holiness, change: I am sorry for sin, I seek forgiveness, I am thankful to God for the free grace of His forgiveness of me.
  - c. And if we're justified by faith, think about I John 5:4!! Here is hope!!

C. THE NEED **\*\*I\*\*** HAVE FOR THE VERY SAME MEDICINE I BRING TO THE TROUBLED CHILD OF GOD