

Understanding People - Chapters 5 & 6, pp 77-96. Class Notes
How Can People Truly Change? & People Bear the Image of God

1. Crabb states the need to develop “*a model for understanding people, problems, and solutions that is broad enough to apply to situations generally and practical enough to apply to situations specifically*” (Pg. 77).

The breadth of a model encompasses the needed general understanding of the characteristics of people - the general nature of people and how they function.

The specificity of the model is needed to make practical application of truth to the particular person we are trying to help within their particular circumstances.

2. Crabb states “*an adequate appreciation of solutions depend on an adequate understanding of people and their problems*” (pg 78-79).

Restated, if we do not have a clear understanding the person and their problem, we will most likely miss the proper solution, and even if we gave the proper solution, the person would not recognize its importance and value. (His example. If you do not understand the problem of sin, you can understand the importance of its solution of Calvary).

This requires a clear understanding of how people function and how problems develop.

Other examples:

3. Describe a change that has taken place in your own life. What specifically was responsible for that change?

This will reveal your current thoughts / beliefs about how people change. Is your model specific or left to something mystical? Are your ideas Biblically based or founded on something else?

4. Crabb condenses the hundreds of ideas about understanding people into three basic models.

A. *The Dynamic Model:* (Pages 81-82)

Human nature: People are controlled by hidden internal processes that were set during childhood. The past is the key to the present.

Basic problem: Problems occur because of bad past experiences.

Basic solution: Get more insight into the hidden roots of the problem. pp 81,82

B. *The Moral Model:* (pages 82-83)

Human nature: The core of man is his willfulness.

Basic problem: People have problems because they choose the wrong things.

Basic solution: Strip away the excuses used to continue irresponsible behavior and exhort them to right behavior.

C. *The Relational Model:*

Human nature: People are designed for relationships in which they can love and be loved.

Basic problem: Problems occur because of unsatisfying relationships.

Basic solution: Affirm the counselee with a relationship with the counselor, and then help the person to be self-expressive of their feelings. pp 83

Summary		
Model	Problem	Solution
Dynamic	<u>Sickness</u>	Treatment
Moral	Irresponsibility / Sin	Exhortation to change <u>behavior</u>
Relational	<u>Loneliness</u>	Affirmation / self-expression

5. Crabb states, *The assumptions we accept will determine what we do when we counsel* (pg 84)

Every counseling model makes assumptions, but if those assumptions are not true, then the result will be improper / inadequate counsel.

All three of these general models fail to be Biblical though all may have some aspects of truth within them. All fail by themselves because of an inadequate understanding of the complex nature of man as presented in Scripture.

Dynamic model - 1) While childhood experiences will affect a person's understanding of life, exposing them without changing the beliefs based on them accomplishes nothing. 2) People experiencing the same childhood traumas pursue different approaches to life.

Moral model - stripping away the excuses for irresponsible behavior and exhorting to responsible behavior is helpful, but unless motives are changed, the heart is left sinful, and often one sinful behavior is simply exchanged for a more socially acceptable sin.

Relational model - helping people to overcome the fears and tensions that exist in relationships to developing characteristics such as openness, courage, vulnerability and assertiveness to that they can have more satisfying relationships is nice. However, unless there is also the developing of righteous motivations, this will result in people who are very good at manipulating others

6. Crabb states that it "*enormously important*" and "*thoroughly practical*" to answer the question, "*who am I?*" in reference to human nature because "*every effort to help people live responsible, productive, and joyful lives assumes some position or other on that question.*" (Page 86)

7. Crabb's basic assumptions about human nature (pp. 87-88)

A. People are similar to God since they were made in His image. (Genesis 1:26-28)

B. Something terrible has happened to distort that similarity - sin. (Genesis 3f)

8. Crabb discusses four ideas about what it means for man to be made in the image of God (pages 88-93). The strengths and weaknesses of them are as follows:

Dominion/Representative - (page 89) acting on God's behalf in exercising authority over creation as God's representatives. Man is to faithfully reflect God's character and purposes in all he does.

Strength - It is directly stated in Genesis 1:28-30

Weakness - This explains man's responsibility as an image bearer, not what it means to be made in the image of God

Moral Virtue - (pages 89-90) the moral excellency which mankind enjoyed at Creation, lost in the Fall, and regained in Christ

Strength - The scriptures describing God's moral character, man's depravity and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.

Weakness - This means man's image was wholly lost in the fall, yet 1) man still reflects aspects of personhood that belong to God and separates him from the animals, and 2) God still commands man to act morally and brings judgment for failure

Amoral Capacity - (pages 90-91) Man was created morally neutral and given extra grace by God to rise above his lower appetites and live commendably before God. This extra grace was lost in the fall, and is regained through the grace dispensed in the sacraments administered by the Roman Catholic Church

Strength - it allows the development of a system of salvation by man's works

Weakness - it allows the development of a system of salvation by man's works

Similarity - (pages 91-92) both God and man possess qualities that distinguish both from nonpersonal beings

Strength - Man is different from nonpersonal objects and life forms (rocks, trees, animals, etc.) by sharing attributes of personhood with God including rationality, emotion and volition. These were not lost in man's fall.

Weakness - Man does not share God's incommunicable attributes of perfection and infinity, but man does reflect moral characteristics of God and those have been affected by man's fall.

6. Crabb discusses four *Capacities of Personhood* (pages 94-96)

A. Personal: man has longing for satisfying relationships and impact. (Hosea 11:8; Matthew 23:37 cf. Psalm 42:1; 63:1)

B. Rational: Man capacity for both logical and abstract thought. (Isaiah 1:18 - *come let us reason together. . .*)

C. Volitional: Man capacity to make moral choices. (Deuteronomy 7:6-7; John 15:16; Ephesians 1:4-5, 9-11; cf. Joshua 24:15; 1 Corinthians 7:37)

D. Emotional: Man capacity to "feel." (Anger - Jeremiah 25:6; cf. James 1:20. Sorrow - Genesis 6:6; cf. Romans 9:2. Pleasure - Psalm 149:4; Isaiah 46:10 cf. Ecclesiastes 8:15. Etc.)