BC101 • WEEK THREE • STUDENT OBSERVATION & DISCUSSION WORKBOOK

Was the care actually biblical?

Introduction to Biblical Counseling | Monday, September 21, 2026

Prepared for Dr. Jeffrey W. Gross • Fall 2026

Test the response, not only the vocabulary

A response may quote Scripture accurately yet apply it carelessly. Another may quote no verse while embodying patient hearing, truthfulness, practical mercy, or protection. Explain how the text, the person's actual story, and the response fit—or fail to fit—together.

Use with the two-reader script in Document 05. Record dialogue identifiers, such as D08 or G05, so your judgment can be examined. Do not diagnose the character or supply facts that were never spoken. Different interpretations are welcome when they are proportionate to the evidence.

While you listen

Watch for	Record a scene / turn and what actually happened
A question that made the person more known	
A reflection the person confirmed or corrected	
A fact that complicated the first explanation	
A safety, consent, or scope decision	
Scripture shaping conduct without being quoted	
A passage discussed with context and permission	

Which counselor response made you most confident—or most uneasy—and why?

Evaluation framework: Gross, Foundations of Scriptural Restoration (2026), ch. 4; Tripp, Instruments (2002), chs. 7, 9–10; Powlison, Seeing (2003), chs. 4, 7, 13. Biblical references in your analysis should support the reasoning, not decorate it.

AFTER THE READING • ORGANIZE THE INFORMATION

A person in a fallen world—not a problem label

Begin with Tripp's four organizing categories. Include emotions in every relevant category; they are not absent simply because they are not a fifth box. Then use the additional whole-person questions below. Attribute information to Claire's report or to what the class actually observed.

Category	Case evidence + dialogue ID	An unanswered question
Situation Past and present context	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Responses Actions and patterns	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Thoughts Meanings and beliefs	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Motives Desires, values, hopes	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____

Whole-person overlay: What bodily limits, material needs, relational power, dangers, gifts, faith resources, or sources of joy need to remain visible?

Distinguish what has been done to Claire from what Claire has done. What is hers to repair, and what must not be assigned to her?

Write one hypothesis, the evidence for it, evidence that complicates it, and a question that would test it.

Four categories: Tripp, Instruments, ch. 10, "Organizing the Information Biblically." Whole-person and evidence distinctions: instructional adaptation from Gross, Foundations, ch. 4, especially pp. 50–53. Do not attribute this added worksheet layout to Tripp.

DISCUSSION • EVALUATE SCRIPTURE IN ACTION

Alignment, mismatch, and uncertainty

Select three moments. For each, explain the biblical reasoning in context. “It felt loving” and “it mentioned God” are starting impressions, not sufficient arguments.

1. An aligned response

Dialogue ID and the counselor’s actual action:

Biblical passage and its contextual claim:

Why the response fits or fails; how Claire received it; what should happen next:

2. A response that needs correction

Dialogue ID and the counselor’s actual action:

Biblical passage and its contextual claim:

Why the response fits or fails; how Claire received it; what should happen next:

3. An ambiguous response or a reasonable alternative

Dialogue ID and the counselor’s actual action:

Biblical passage and its contextual claim:

Why the response fits or fails; how Claire received it; what should happen next:

Questions for the group

Where did Alex infer too much, and how should repair continue? Where is challenge appropriate without victim-blaming? Did the Hannah conversation preserve the story’s meaning? Defend an alternative response, including choosing not to quote Scripture.

Possible biblical anchors to examine, not automatic answers: Proverbs 18:13, 17; James 1:19; Romans 12:15; Ephesians 4:15, 29; Galatians 6:1–5; Psalm 131; 1 Samuel 1:1–20.

PRACTICE • REPAIR THE DIALOGUE

From a religious shortcut to a fitting response

These are deliberately flawed sample responses, not quotations from Powlison, Tripp, or the role-play. Rewrite each into two or three sentences. State the text's actual claim, the missing information, or the immediate safety action as appropriate.

1. A bodily problem reduced to a spiritual verdict

Person: "I am exhausted, worried, and having headaches."
Helper: "Psalm 131 says to quiet yourself. You need to stop trying to control everything."

Rewrite without dismissing spiritual questions or neglecting bodily care:

Name the passage's contextual claim and one limit on your application:

2. A narrative turned into an unsafe command

Person: "He has blocked the door when I tried to leave."
Helper: "Hagar went back. You should return and trust God."

Rewrite with a sound interpretive limit and appropriate protection:

What information or qualified help takes priority over further spiritual interpretation?

Compare Psalm 131 and Genesis 16 in context; Gross, Foundations, ch. 4. The question is not whether Scripture is authoritative, but whether the helper's proposed use is actually warranted.

PRACTICE • REPAIR THE DIALOGUE CONTINUED

Grace does not erase responsibility or protection

Continue revising the deliberately flawed responses. Write language a person could actually hear. A true biblical claim still needs an appropriate next action.

3. Responsibility replaced by reassurance

Person: “I said something cruel to my child.”
Helper: “You are stressed, so do not feel guilty. Just remember that God loves you.”

Rewrite to hold grace, truthful responsibility, and a child-centered repair together:

Which biblical passage supports your response, and what does it not authorize?

4. A safety concern treated as a devotional topic

Person: “Sometimes I wish I would not wake up.”
Helper: “Elijah felt that way. Eat something, sleep, and pray. We can talk next week.”

Rewrite with direct inquiry and prompt qualified support, not a student-led crisis assessment:

What must happen before an ordinary counseling conversation can continue?

Modern safety action is not inferred solely from an ancient narrative. Consult the school’s current procedure and qualified supervisor; NIMH, 5 Action Steps (2024) and Help for Mental Illnesses (2026). Do not wait for a volunteered plan before taking a possible suicide concern seriously.

INTEGRATION • A SHARED NEXT STEP

Know enough to begin—and know what you do not know

Write a provisional understanding

In a short paragraph, hold Claire's dignity and gifts, suffering, own actions, body, relationships, interpretation, desires, faith, and sources of hope together. Include one explicit uncertainty. Do not use a diagnosis or claim to know what God intends to accomplish through a particular harmful event.

Choose one response and make it observable

One agreed first step, its biblical rationale, and why it fits Claire's expressed concern:

How progress could be noticed in an ordinary day; what would make us revise the step:

What requires qualified referral, ongoing protection, or supervision rather than independent student action:

Let the counselor be known too

What did I want to do quickly—fix, preach, rescue, take sides, withdraw, or appear wise? What would I bring to supervision?

Closing discussion

Complete this sentence with something observable: "In this intake, Scripture became relational care when…" Then name one limitation you will carry into your next practice conversation. Revise your working definition of biblical counseling in light of what you learned.

This is formative companion work, not a new grading requirement or an assessment instrument. Sources: Gross, Foundations, ch. 4; Gross, BC101 Full Textbook, dated Week 3, pp. 195–196; Tripp, Instruments, chs. 6–7, 9–10; Powlison, Seeing, chs. 4, 7, 13. Full references and faculty discussion guidance appear in Document 01.