BC101 • WEEK THREE • FACULTY LESSON & RESPONSE GUIDE

Knowing before counseling

Introduction to Biblical Counseling | Monday, September 21, 2026

Prepared for Dr. Jeffrey W. Gross • Fall 2026

Governing question

How does Scripture teach us to learn a person's life before we attempt to explain or change it?

An intake is not a spiritual entrance examination or an efficient search for a problem verse. It begins a relationship in which a person can become more truthfully known before God and another person. Listening, asking permission, distinguishing suffering from wrongdoing, and checking an interpretation are already expressions of biblical care—not delays before "real" ministry. (Gross, 2026a, ch. 4; Tripp, 2002, chs. 6–7.)

Place beside the existing Week 3 class

The dated BC101 schedule places listening, presence, and resistance to counselor performance in Week 3. Retain its required readings, Hagar discussion, Psalm 131, and listening laboratory. This companion expands those aims through an intake demonstration. It does not replace the syllabus, change deadlines, or make the later chapters additional required reading. (Gross, 2026b, pp. 195–196.)

Core Week 3 reading	Contribution to this lesson
Gross, Foundations of Scriptural Restoration, ch. 4, pp. 47–58	Covenant presence; whole-person distinctions; permission, scope, humility, and accountable action.
Tripp, Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands, chs. 6–7	Love–Know–Speak–Do; enter the person's world rather than target a problem category.
Powlison, Seeing with New Eyes, ch. 4, pp. 75–89	Psalm 131: relational trust and a counselor who does not need to control the room.
Genesis 16:1–16; Psalm 131	Read together with the scheduled Deuteronomy 6:4–9; Psalm 78:1–8; Luke 24:44–49; Ephesians 1:3–14.

Teaching extensions: Powlison chs. 7 and 13; Tripp chs. 9–10. These support the question bank and emotions lab while previewing later course themes. Hannah remains the next assigned story. Use additional narrative stations selectively or revisit them in Weeks 4–5.

Six separate documents: 01 faculty lesson; 02 Scripture-first axioms; 03 narrative/emotion lab; 04 intake questions; 05 two-reader script; 06 discussion and formulation workbook.

LESSON OUTCOMES AND FLOW

From the biblical text to the person

Students should be able to demonstrate

Read closely. Distinguish a narrative's stated events and emotions from a plausible inference and an unsupported assumption.

Explain the need to know. Derive an intake principle from a whole passage and name a misuse that the passage does not permit.

Listen relationally. Ask one open question, reflect the person's meaning, and invite correction before a follow-up.

Discern without reducing. Hold bodily limits, personal responses, relational power, suffering, hopes, and faith together.

Apply fittingly. Translate a biblical truth into presence, a question, a protective action, or a consent-based Scripture conversation.

Remain accountable. Identify when supervision, qualified assessment, protection, referral, or a repaired misunderstanding is needed.

Suggested teaching movement—no new timed blocks

Begin with the Scriptures in Document 02 before presenting the faculty's sample axioms. Ask pairs to read, observe, argue for a principle, and name its limits. Then introduce the three authors' contributions. Preserve the existing syllabus listening lab; this companion need not replace or extend its assigned timing.

Use Hagar and Hannah first in Document 03. Let groups choose an additional narrative for deeper work rather than rushing through every station. Have them practice two responses: one in which Scripture governs the counselor's conduct without being quoted, and one in which a passage is opened with permission and context.

Give two students Document 05. Other students use Document 06. Read the script as written; pause only at a scene boundary unless a safety concern requires stopping. After the read-through, distinguish what the person reported from what the class inferred. Invite competing formulations supported by specific dialogue turns.

Participation boundary

Use fictional material only. Students may choose an observer or written-analysis role without disclosing personal experiences. Do not record classmates or use actual client stories without the separate permissions and procedures required by the school.

Basis: Gross, 2026a, ch. 4, especially pp. 50–55; Gross, 2026b, pp. 195–196. Activities, sequence, and learning outcomes here are original instructional adaptations.

TEACHING CONTENT

Three contributions—without flattening the authors

Powlison: quiet, motives, and the language of feeling

In chapter 4, quiet is not indifference. Psalm 131 turns the counselor toward humble dependence rather than superiority or mastery. Ask first: "What am I trying to prove by fixing this quickly?" Do not infer that every anxious person is proud, or use the psalm to demand a calm appearance. This counselor-first application is the lesson's use of Powlison, not a diagnosis supplied by the psalm. (Powlison, 2003, pp. 75–78, 88–89.)

Chapter 7 examines the difference between the God someone professes and what actually commands trust, fear, hope, or allegiance in a situation. Powlison explicitly limits the helper: questions investigate; they do not confer access to another person's heart. Begin with a particular incident and test a pattern across life. Do not label an ordinary need for safety, food, or affection an idol simply because it matters deeply. (Powlison, 2003, pp. 129–132; Gross, 2026a, p. 50.)

Chapter 13 distinguishes bodily experience, emotion, belief, and desire within "I feel." "I feel abandoned" may carry sorrow, an interpretation, memories, and a wish for someone to stay. Understand each without either silencing feeling or treating every accompanying conclusion as fact. Powlison's position is morally evaluative, not "all feelings are automatically right" and not "feelings do not matter." (Powlison, 2003, pp. 211–223.)

Tripp: a person, not a project

Love–Know–Speak–Do names overlapping elements of ministry, not four rigid stages. Knowing includes beliefs, goals, values, hopes, and desires. His "entry gate" is the person's experience of the problem, not the category into which the counselor sorts it. Listen for emotional language, interpretation, self-talk, and God-talk. (Tripp, 2002, chs. 6–7.)

Tripp distinguishes general biblical knowledge of people from knowing this particular person. Ask for definitions, concrete examples, and the person's reasons; use both survey and focused questions. His four organizing categories are Situation, Responses, Thoughts, and Motives. Emotion runs through all four. The body, safety, resources, and uncertainty columns in this packet are an additional teaching overlay, not a reproduction of Tripp's diagram. (Tripp, 2002, chs. 9–10.)

Gross: accountable presence and proportionate application

Chapter 4 requires text in context, a distinction between suffering received and actions chosen, and a response proportionate to the evidence. It adds visible consent, role clarity, safeguards, supervision, and follow-through. These commitments constrain how this lesson applies the older texts; they are not silently attributed to every statement in those books. (Gross, 2026a, pp. 47–58.)

FACULTY RESPONSE GUIDE • DOCUMENT 02

Possible axioms and their limits

Release these examples after students have worked from Scripture. “Axiom” here means a defensible working principle derived from the text; it is not a quotation, a diagnostic rule, or an exhaustive law of human behavior. Other answers may be stronger if they show better textual reasoning.

Text / textual anchor	Defensible intake principle	Limit and a fitting question
Genesis 1:26–28; 2:7, 18–25 Dignity, embodiment, relationship	Learn more than the presenting fault: a person has embodied life, relationships, gifts, and responsibilities.	Do not reduce personhood to marital status. “What gives your day meaning, and who shares it?”
Genesis 16:1–16 Power, affliction, being addressed	Ask who has power, what has happened, and how the person understands being seen or unseen.	Do not generalize the return command into advice to return to abuse. “What becomes difficult or unsafe when you disagree?”
Proverbs 18:13, 15, 17; 20:5 Hearing, inquiry, drawing out	Understanding requires listening and testing a first explanation.	A proverb does not authorize interrogation or contacting an alleged abuser. “What am I missing in what I have heard?”
1 Samuel 1:1–20 Anguish misread by Eli	Let the person explain the meaning of what you observe.	Tears or silence do not prove a motive or diagnosis. “What is happening for you while we sit here?”
Psalm 131 Humility and relational quiet	The helper need not perform certainty; trust allows patient presence.	Quiet is not a demand for emotional suppression. “Would words, a pause, or a little space be most helpful?”
Luke 24:13–35 Conversation, disappointed hopes, opened Scripture	Ask about events and expectations before offering an interpretation.	The counselor is not the risen Christ and cannot claim his knowledge. “What had you hoped would happen?”
Romans 12:15; James 2:15–17 Shared emotion and concrete care	Attend to grief and practical needs; care must take an embodied form.	Empathy is not agreement with every conclusion. “What support would help you get through this week?”
Galatians 6:1–5; Ephesians 4:15, 29 Gentleness, burdens, fitting speech	Truthfulness and responsibility belong with humility and help.	Gentleness does not erase wrongdoing or safety limits. “What is yours to repair, and what is not yours to carry?”

Principles and sample questions are original applications. Biblical references are the primary evidence. Compare Gross, 2026a, pp. 48–52; Tripp, 2002, ch. 9. Do not reward a principle solely because it uses familiar Christian language.

FACULTY RESPONSE GUIDE • DOCUMENT 03

Deep narrative knowledge changes the response

Ask groups to demonstrate what they noticed in the text before evaluating their counseling language. A strong application is not simply a true sentence; its timing, proportion, and effects also matter. (Gross, 2026a, p. 52.)

Hagar | Genesis 16; compare Genesis 15 and 21. Look for unequal power, Sarai's treatment, Hagar's affliction, God's address, and the covenant setting. The passage does not provide a universal safety plan. A fitting response asks what has happened and what protection is needed, rather than making endurance of mistreatment a test of faith. Students must distinguish the divine command in this event from their authority as helpers.

Hannah | 1 Samuel 1:1–20; read into chapter 2. Anguish is expressed amid repeated provocation, longing, misunderstood prayer, and family responses. Eli's conclusion needs correction. Receive the person's account before interpretation. The narrative's childbirth is not a promise that sufficient prayer produces the same outcome for every person.

Elijah | 1 Kings 18–19. Notice the threat, exhaustion, wish to die, provision, questions, and renewed relation to a wider community and calling. Avoid importing a diagnosis. The modern safety application is a separate ethical responsibility: a person's wish to die requires direct attention and qualified support, not merely food, sleep, or a devotional.

Jonah and Jesus | Jonah 3–4; Mark 3:1–6. Both texts include anger, but their objects and directions differ. Jonah resents mercy; Jesus' anger is accompanied by grief at hard-heartedness. Emotion must be understood in context. Do not assume an angry person's concern is either righteous or selfish before learning what happened and how the person acted.

Peter | Luke 22:31–34, 54–62; John 21:1–19. Include denial, grief, Jesus' initiative, provision, questions, and a renewed charge. Linking three questions with three denials is a plausible literary connection, not an explicit statement of John's explanation. The narrative does not automatically reinstate any leader after serious harm or replace accountability.

Two sons | Luke 15:1–2, 11–32. Attend to the audience and to both sons. Track shame, resentment, welcome, comparison, and the invitation to shared joy. The elder brother's final response is not narrated. The father in this parable must not be equated with every human parent; reconciliation with a harmful parent cannot be presumed safe.

What to listen for in presentations

Can the group name an explicit detail, an inference, an unknown, and a forbidden shortcut? Does its response make room for the person to disagree? Does it include joy, attachment, and hope—not only pathology and sin?

Primary evidence: the biblical units named above. Interpretive and practice prompts are original teaching applications. Compare Powlison, 2003, ch. 13; Tripp, 2002, ch. 10; Gross, 2026a, pp. 48–53.

FACULTY RESPONSE GUIDE • DOCUMENTS 05–06

What the role-play gives—and does not give

Claire Bennett is entirely fictional. All case facts must come from the dialogue, not from students' memories of a similar person. The script models several intake visits and a supervisor-led safety interruption, not a complete intake or a crisis protocol in one sitting.

Listen in the scene	Teaching judgment / follow-up
A • Permission, privacy, student role	Strength: role is named and questions are invited. The spoken opening follows an already reviewed form; it must not be used as a substitute consent form.
B • Immediate concerns and safety	Strength: direct questions and a pause when relationship danger emerges. "No suicide thoughts" is not proof that every other safety issue is resolved. The specialist consultation is intentionally not acted out.
C–D • A day and a recent incident	Look for bodily limits, financial constraints, shame, and words spoken to Lucy. Responsibility for that response is distinct from responsibility for Daniel's conduct.
E–F • Family, belonging, work, culture	Do not call childhood a complete cause. Her history offers possible learned meanings alongside strengths, alternatives, and present circumstances.
G • Relationships and a mistaken formulation	The counselor labels fear of disapproval too soon. Claire's correction changes the understanding: some fear concerns concrete intimidation. Apology is necessary; the error is not praised because it is repaired.
H • God-talk and prayer	Claire's theological words and lived expectation of disappointment are both explored. No forced conversion testimony, denominational stereotype, or prayer exercise.
I • Hannah conversation	Scripture is opened with permission and context; the counselor admits Eli's misreading and refuses an outcome guarantee. A different text—or no text yet—could also be fitting.
J–K • Summary, repair, tentative plan	The counselor's summary is corrected. Claire helps name goals. Referrals and practical care do not cancel spiritual formation; they belong beside it.

Tempting inferences to reject

"She has an anxiety disorder"; "her father caused everything"; "both spouses are equally responsible"; "all her sadness is unbelief"; "she secretly wants divorce"; "her church is entirely unsafe"; "the children are definitely unharmed." None is established. Note indications, specific reports, and unanswered questions instead. A student does not diagnose from this script.

Script is an original fictional teaching case. Analysis uses Tripp's four categories (2002, ch. 10) with Gross's distinctions among report, observation, interpretation, scope, and unknowns (2026a, pp. 50–53).

FACULTY RESPONSE GUIDE • FORMULATION AND FEEDBACK

A beginning understanding, not a verdict

One defensible provisional formulation

Claire reports grief after her mother's death, reduced work hours, financial strain, insufficient sleep, separation, and frightening conduct by her husband. She values her children, responsibility, faith, and a dependable home. She reports learned pressure to keep family problems private and difficulty asking for help. These may contribute to overextension and concealment; that connection remains a hypothesis to check, not a proven cause.

In a recent interaction she interpreted her daughter's spill as one more demand and spoke hurtfully. Her exhaustion and fear help us understand the context without making the words harmless. She identifies sorrow, anger, guilt, loneliness, and small experiences of joy. Her concern about being judged coexists with reports of real intimidation; it cannot responsibly be reduced to an approval idol. Her faith includes belief in Christ and a painful expectation that God is disappointed with her.

Protective possibilities include her help-seeking, insight, affection for her children, work skills, Ruth's support, and willingness to use qualified help. Begin with safety follow-through, access to medical and mental health care, practical support, and an appropriate repair with Lucy. Continue learning Claire's understanding of God, suffering, responsibility, hope, and needed change. Do not infer a diagnosis, custody recommendation, or reconciliation outcome. (Role-play A–K; biblical interpretation guided by Gross, 2026a, ch. 4.)

Feedback guide—formative, not a new grade

Dimension	Evidence of readiness	Needs revision when…
Textual reasoning	Names context, evidence, inference, and limitation.	A verse is used as a slogan or an outcome guarantee.
Relational accuracy	Uses Claire's meanings and checks a summary.	The counselor's preferred theory replaces her account.
Whole-person attention	Includes body, relationships, resources, faith, gifts, and actions.	All distress is called sin, or all responsibility disappears.
Fitting application	Explains why this response fits this moment; welcomes feedback.	Correct doctrine is delivered without listening or permission.
Scope and protection	Stops routine work for danger; uses supervision and referral.	A student manages danger alone or presses unsafe reconciliation.
Self-awareness and repair	Names a premature conclusion and makes a concrete correction.	The helper defends an error or demands the client's reassurance.

Debrief the helper as well as the case

Where did I want to impress, rescue, preach, withdraw, take sides too quickly, or feel certain? What would I bring to supervision before meeting this person again? Psalm 131; Matthew 7:3–5; Galatians 6:1.

SOURCE RECORD AND USE BOUNDARIES

References and transparent adaptations

Biblical passages are cited by book, chapter, and verse. Students should read them in their own ESV Bible, the primary BC101 translation. Narrative descriptions, sample questions, activities, and dialogue are original instructional paraphrases and applications, not quotations from Scripture or the authors.

Course and book sources

Gross, J. W. (2026a). Foundations of Scriptural Restoration: Expanded Teaching Edition. Restoring Hope School of Biblical Counseling. Chapter 4, “Covenant Presence and Faithful Care,” pp. 47–58.

Gross, J. W. (2026b). Introduction to Biblical Counseling: Full Textbook, Fall 2026. Restoring Hope School of Biblical Counseling. Dated Week 3 syllabus, pp. 195–196. The dated schedule governs this packet; older chapter-by-chapter schedules in compiled materials are not used to redefine Week 3.

Gross, J. W. (2026c, September 16). Intake-training discussion [user-supplied informal transcript, Note_20260916_18-54-17_iRecord.pdf]. Especially pp. 4–7 and 9–12: ordinary-day inquiry, pacing, relationship with God, developmental story, relationships, and collaborative hopes.

Powlison, D. (2003). Seeing with new eyes: Counseling and the human condition through the lens of Scripture. P&R Publishing. Chapter 4, pp. 75–89; chapter 7, especially pp. 129–132; chapter 13, pp. 211–223. Page numbers refer to the printed book, not PDF page numbers.

Tripp, P. D. (2002). Instruments in the Redeemer’s hands: People in need of change helping people in need of change. P&R Publishing. Chapters 6–7 and 9–10, especially “Love, Know, Speak, Do,” “Recognizing Entry Gates,” “The Problem of Assumptions,” “Making Sure Your Conclusions Are Correct,” and “Organizing the Information Biblically.” Chapter/section locators are used because the supplied ebook pagination differs from the print edition.

Safety references and limits

National Institute of Mental Health. (2024). 5 action steps to help someone having thoughts of suicide. Official NIMH public education resource. National Institute of Mental Health. (2026, April review). Help for mental illnesses. Both consulted September 16, 2026. In the United States, 988 provides crisis support; life-threatening situations require 911 or emergency care. These resources do not make a student independently qualified to assess or manage danger.

The informal transcript is a teaching source, not a verified legal or records policy. This packet does not reproduce its improvised legal examples, denominational generalizations, or recording-retention assurances. Actual informed consent, supervision arrangements, reporting duties, emergency procedures, and storage/deletion practices must be explained accurately from the current approved policy and qualified guidance before service.

Additional boundaries: No diagnosis of biblical characters or the fictional client; no medication direction; no compelled spiritual disclosure; no promise of a particular outcome. This supplement does not authorize unsupervised practice or amend school/ministry policy.