



unitTwo

spiritual foundations



introduction to spiritual foundations

The principles presented in this unit are what give this training its name, *Intimacy Before Impact*. This unit calls us to intentionally spend time with God before moving into service for God. When we seek intimacy before impact, we will be changed. This intimacy with God will cause us to care not just for the unborn babies, but for the mothers, fathers, grandparents, even abortionists. It will help us not to give up when we realize we can't *make* a woman carry her pre-born child to term. It will cause us to enter the counseling room confidently, for though we are not professional counselors, we have experienced God's faithfulness and can speak God's truth into another woman's life. A greater intimacy with God is the most important thing you could gain from this unit.

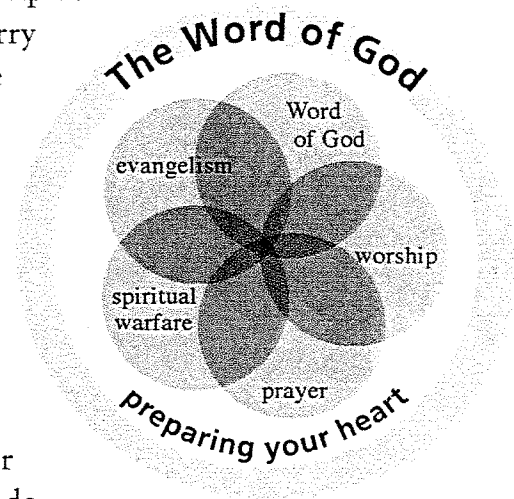
The second most important thing you can learn from this unit is this: your client does not need you. She needs God.

She may find God through you. But how can a counselor help her client find God? The answer lies in these six foundations, all rooted in God's Word:

- Preparing Your Heart
- Depending on Prayer
- Building on the Word of God
- Engaging in Spiritual Warfare
- Beginning with Worship
- Living out Evangelism

These foundations, or disciplines, are essential at the pregnancy resource center. Without them, a volunteer counselor cannot give her client what she needs.

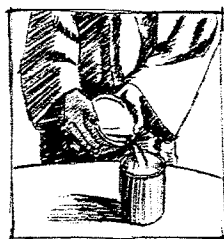
All of these disciplines interconnect. As you read the following chapters, notice how often one subject touches on a different discipline. For example, in worship and spiritual warfare you will need to pray and use God's Word. We will examine these disciplines one at a time to help you better understand their value in helping you minister at the center. We ask God to deepen and blend what you know about truth with your head and heart, for your knowledge and attitude are expressed in how you serve others.



Head Heart Hands

Right knowledge + right attitude = right service



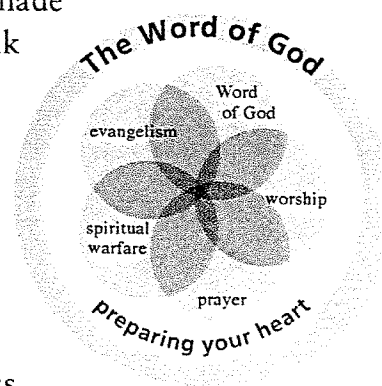


preparing your heart

Take a moment to study the first image above. It depicts the Master washing a cup. Perhaps the cup sat for some time and is filled with dirt and dust. Perhaps it has not been cleaned since it was last used, and there are germs on it. Whatever has made it dirty, one thing is certain: if the Master wants to use the cup again, it must be washed first. Preparation comes before use. In the same way, God is able to use us at the pregnancy resource center after our hearts have been prepared.

Now, examine the other images. Because the cup has been made clean, the Master can first fill it with something good to drink and then use it to pour that beverage into other cups. Similarly, once our hearts have been prepared, God can fill us with Himself and use us to pour Himself into the lives of our clients. This happens through the rest of the disciplines covered in this unit: Bible study, prayer, worship, spiritual warfare, and evangelism.

None of these disciplines can be effectively practiced without the first step of preparation. And without the filling up process, the cup has nothing to pour out. All three steps are vital for us as Christians and as volunteer counselors. An unwashed heart cannot properly hear the Holy Spirit's revelation in the Bible, nor will God hear the prayers or worship of an unrepentant heart. However, we need to dialogue with Him if we are going to make any real difference in the lives of our clients. Satan, our very real enemy, will



laugh at our attempts to fight him off at the center if we are letting him run the show at home or in our heart. Finally, our personal testimony will be hindered if our hearts are full of bitterness, rebellion, and sin, for our lives won't look any different than those living without Christ.

How do we prepare our hearts? Just like the cup was prepared for use by being cleaned, our hearts are prepared when they are clean. We will never connect with God and join Him in His work if we are not willing first of all to be made clean. A clean heart is one that is wholly devoted, humble, repentant, forgiving, generous, and obedient.

I. From a Divided Heart to a Devoted Heart

God loved us so devotedly that even when we were sinners, He laid down His life for us. He is always for us; He is always working for our good. In return, He deserves and desires our wholehearted love and allegiance. Yet the enemy presses in on every side, seeking to divide our hearts with other loyalties. He does this because he knows that no one can serve two masters (Matthew 6:24) without resenting God.

When we have multiple loyalties in our hearts, we will find ourselves in situations where the conflict is intensified and it is much harder to hear God. For example, a Christian wrongly motivated by the love of money may have difficulty wholeheartedly following God if it means financial setbacks. If that same Christian who loves money volunteers as a counselor and perceives that her client might lose her job or apartment because of her pregnancy, abortion may have a stronger appeal.

Imagine a Christian who prizes independence and must always be in control of her life. At the center, she may have difficulty counseling a client to consider her parent's point of view.

Whenever we have multiple loyalties, our counsel will be divided, as will our personal growth. If we are to be victorious Christians and effective counselors, we must discern and remove idols that keep us from serving God alone.



Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.—Deuteronomy 6:5

II. From a Proud Heart to a Humble Heart

Humility is God's way. It is neither self-debasement nor self-hatred. Instead, it is three things simultaneously: delighting in who God is, delighting in who we are, and being willing to set aside our rights for the sake of others. Jesus' example of humility is the strongest model we have.

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!—Philippians 2:5–8

Consider the contrast between yourself and God:

- He is the Shepherd. You are a sheep who often stubbornly goes her own way.
- He is the Master. You are a servant who often tries to take charge.
- He is the Potter. You are clay that often fights molding.
- He is the Holy One. You are grimy with sin yet often pretend you're clean in comparison to others.
- He is the Redeemer. You are a prisoner of sin who often clings to her prison and resists redemption.

But God says you are:

- Not just a stubborn sheep, but a beloved sheep, so precious that He'd leave the ninety-nine to go in search of you,
- Not just a servant, but His dear friend,
- Not clay after all, but a vessel made of silver or gold, worthy of being purified seven times,
- Not grimy any more, but covered in Christ's righteousness, and
- Not merely a freed prisoner, but the future bride of Christ!



Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will lift you up.
—James 4:10

At the center, a humble volunteer can offer acceptance and hope to the client. The counselor extends God's grace and love to the client not because she is an expert in relationships but because she is becoming like the One she adores. Your humility also needs to be evident in your relationships with fellow staff members and volunteers. Humility will keep you tender as you speak and interact with everyone.

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.—Philippians 2:3–4

III. From an Unrepentant Heart to a Repentant Heart

Imagine stealing from your employer each payday and repeatedly lying to your friend. Your employee-to-employer and friend-to-friend relationships would be strained by an invisible barrier caused by the stealing and lying. The same thing is true of our relationship with God; our sins form a barrier between us and God, for He is holy and without sin. He cannot be part of sin. Nor can He ignore it, even if we do. In His love and desire to be in relationship with us, He sacrificed to make a way for the removal of sin. He paid the consequences of our sins. When we ignore the sin in our lives or think that casual or habitual sin is permissible, we build a barrier between ourselves and God. The only way to tear down that barrier is to repent.

Repentance is one of the most positive words in any language. It's a word of relief, for God frees us from the burden of sin and its condemnation. It's a word of renewed purpose, for we can return to the journey we were made to go on even after we've gotten off track. It's a word of God's goodness, for it is His kindness that leads us to repentance (Romans 2:4). It's a word of intimacy with God, for it destroys the sin barrier and draws us near to God to experience His love and forgiveness, which we do not deserve.

When we understand that repentance is good and leads to relief, renewed purpose, and God's goodness, we become willing to repent of all our sins. This draws us into deeper intimacy with God, which pre-

In His love
and desire to be
in relationship with
us, He sacrificed to
make a way for the
removal of sin.

pires us to have impact with people. Having been forgiven ourselves, we can offer this same, undeserved forgiveness to our clients.

I cried out to him with my mouth; his praise was on my tongue. If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened;—Psalm 66:17–18

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.—1 John 1:9

IV. From an Unforgiving Heart to a Forgiving Heart

Jesus was very clear about unforgiveness. He said, “For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins” (Matthew 6:14–15). There’s no way to get around it. If we want to be forgiven, we must first forgive.

Forgiveness does not mean letting the offender off the hook; it means handing the offender over to God, for only He will judge justly. Forgiveness does not say, “It was okay to sin against me”; it says, “I am not willing to go one minute more letting that sin eat me up.” Forgiveness washes us clean of the offense; unforgiveness chains us to it. Forgiveness makes it possible to see that offender as someone like us: a sinner in need of God’s love and forgiveness.

Forgiveness is essential at the center. If you have not forgiven, you can not communicate the whole message of God’s love and forgiveness. For example, if you haven’t forgiven your mother for sinning against you, you will be unable to counsel your client to forgive her mother for abandoning her. If you haven’t forgiven the abortionist, you will communicate bitterness and condemnation to your post-abortion client. If you hold grudges against your sister for teasing you, you will find many opportunities to be offended by other counselors.

The people who serve at the pregnancy resource center tend to be very empathetic, able to feel another person’s pain. For this reason, we’re particularly vulnerable to taking up people’s offenses. If we do not daily forgive, we can develop a critical spirit. This not only destroys the spirit of unity at the center, but it provides a foothold for the enemy. (See Chapter 8, “Engaging in Spiritual Warfare.”) We must forgive our coworkers and those in authority over us. If

we hold grudges against each other, we cannot effectively pray for or worship with each other.

One counselor shared that since she'd had one abortion, she could understand women who'd had an abortion. However, one day she found herself almost shouting at a client who'd had three abortions. In her heart, she had to forgive the client for her sins before she could look past the sin to see a woman in need of God's love and forgiveness too.

V. From a Stingy Heart to a Generous Heart

God is the most generous Person in the world. No one can out-give God; after all, He gave His only Son for us (John 3:16). Every good thing in our lives comes from God (James 1:17).

God wants us to be generous with Him and with other people. He tells us to give Him back the first tenth of our income (called a tithe). Of course, He's so generous that He promises that when we do tithe, He'll increase our provision.

"Bring the whole tithe. . . . Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it."—Malachi 3:10; see also Proverbs 3:9–10

Being truly pro-life means that we use the gifts He gives us for more than just our own benefit. Our spiritual gifts are for building up the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:11–13). Some of our provision is for supplying the needs of God's people (2 Corinthians 9:12), and some is for bringing people to Christ (Luke 16:9). Our physical bodies are for our spouse's enjoyment as well as our own (1 Corinthians 7:4–5). Even our lives are gifts to others (Philippians 1:21–26). As center volunteers, we delight in generously sharing our gifts to our clients, families, and churches.

If a man shuts his ears to the cry of the poor, he too will cry out and not be answered.—Proverbs 21:13

But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.—2 Corinthians 8:7

Being truly
pro-life means
that we use the gifts
He gives us for more
than just our own
benefit.

VI. From a Rebellious Heart to an Obedient Heart

What if you had:

- an employee who would not do her work but demanded a promotion?
- a friend who regularly came for counsel, said you were wise, but never took your advice?
- a child who refused to clean his room but expected treats and favors?

Each of these examples reveals a heart problem, one that is often called rebellion. Obedience is an important element in our relationships, human and divine. King Saul disregarded God's instructions, lied about it, and then attempted to worship God. Samuel rebuked him, "Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the LORD? To obey is better than sacrifice" (1 Samuel 15:22).

[Jesus said,] "Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him."—John 14:21

Our worship, our testimony, our prayers, our service are all meaningless if we won't demonstrate our love for God by obeying Him. If we tell Him one thing but then live another way, we've made our worship and service worthless. In God's eyes, an intimate relationship with Him includes loving the things that He loves and doing things that He does. Genuine worship and service flow out of an obedient heart.

If you are not willing to obey Him, God will not be able to speak through you to your clients.



Personal Assessment

Taken from the *Intimacy Before Impact Manual*, Chapter 4, Preparing Your Heart.

Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.—Psalms 139:23–24

1. From a Divided Heart to a Devoted Heart

Have you fully surrendered to God in all areas of your life? (If not, surrender now.)

Are you growing in your personal devotions and worship? (On most days, when do you plan to personally meet with the Lord? Do you need a new plan?)

2. From a Prideful Heart to a Humble Heart

Where or when is it hardest for you to be humble? (Ask God for opportunities to humble yourself.)

3. From an Unrepentant Heart to a Repentant Heart

Do you have a sinful habit like gossip, criticism, manipulation, greed, laziness, self-centeredness, racism, elitism, or a need to be in control? (If so, confess and repent.)

4. From an Unforgiving Heart to a Forgiving Heart

Is there anyone you need to forgive? (If so, forgive them.)

Is there anyone of whom you need to ask forgiveness? (Go to God in repentance. Make a plan to ask for this person(s) forgiveness.)

5. From a Stingy Heart to a Generous Heart

Are you tithing (giving 10% of your income) to the Lord? (If not, confess this and begin.) Is there some area in your life where you can grow in generosity?

6. From a Rebellious Heart to an Obedient Heart

Do you have any non-biblical relationships now? (If so, get out of them now.)

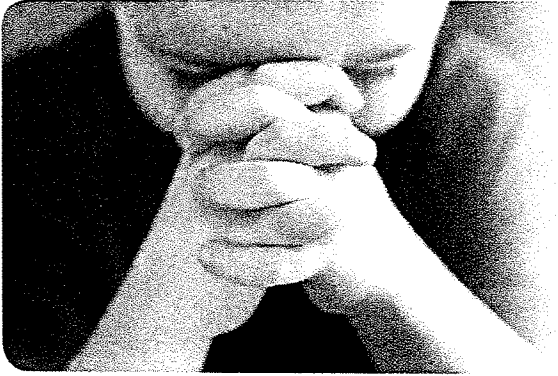
Do you have an area in your Christian walk where you continually fail miserably? It may be in heartfelt worship, church attendance, holy living, Bible reading, prayer, giving, forgiving or witnessing, etc. (If so, repent, and ask God for help to succeed.)

Jesus rebuked Satan when he tempted Him both in the wilderness and through Peter (Matthew 4:10; 16:23). If you continually pray and work at a pattern of behavior in your life, and it doesn't change to some measurable degree, then like Jesus, rebuke the problem and/or enemy behind the problem. You may need to rebuke the enemy behind the problem sharply a number of times. You have God's authority to affirm or declare that you are not subject to such control. Then persevere in doing the will of God. (See Chapter 8, "Engaging in Spiritual Warfare.")

For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.—2 Corinthians 10:3–5

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.—1 John 1:9

The LORD is with me; he is my helper. I will look in triumph on my enemies.—Psalm 118:7



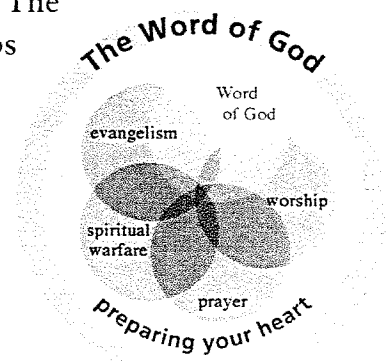
building on the Word of God

Our primary reason for reading the Bible is to know God better. As we come to understand Him and His ways, we will naturally grow in our love for Him. As we grow in love, our desire to be near Him and obey Him grows. By His Spirit, we are also being slowly transformed into the likeness of Jesus. The time that we spend reading and mediating on the Bible helps produce the intimacy with God we so desperately need if we are to have any impact in the world.

How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! I gain understanding from your precepts;—Psalm 119:103–104a

The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.—Psalm 119:130

Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.—Joshua 1:8





I. Why is God's Word Critical for Use in the Pregnancy Resource Center?

A. God's Word saves and heals.

Therefore, we offer this to others. Our clients are in crisis. They have come to the center because they need help. More than just help to patch up their present circumstances, they need salvation from sin, healing from brokenness, and victory over an enemy who threatens to destroy them. We offer what we have received: the salvation, victory, and healing which has come through God's Word.

For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.—1 Peter 1:23

He sent forth his word and healed them; he rescued them from the grave.—Psalm 107:20

B. God's Word provides understanding and direction.

Therefore, we listen and counsel with His insight and direction. How can we possibly understand all the facets of our client's predicament? How can we see into her heart and know what deep-rooted pain or lie goaded her into this crisis in the first place? And if we can't know those things, then how can we know what truth she needs to hear most today? We need the Holy Spirit to guide us with the Word.

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.—Psalm 119:105

C. God's Word increases faith and blessing.

Therefore, we build our faith and gain blessings which help us reach out to others. Counseling can be burdensome. We can grow discouraged, listening to one client's story after another. God's Word encourages our hearts and helps us to see the big picture: in the midst of today's pain, God loves us and is for us. We need all the faith and blessing His Word can feed us.

Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.—Romans 10:17

D. God's Word has power to destroy the attacks of Satan.

Therefore, we have strength to resist evil and bring victory to the battle. We are not the only ones counseling these women. The enemy accuses and lies to our clients daily. To be truly effective, we must shut his lying mouth, and nothing sends the enemy running away like the Word of God.

The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"—Matthew 4:3–4

E. God's Word teaches us how to be more like Jesus.

Therefore, we practice what we study and learn to love like He does. Our clients don't need us as much as they need Jesus. However, in God's wisdom, He has called us to imitate Jesus in each other's lives. Unfortunately, this doesn't come naturally to us! We must dedicate ourselves to Him if we want to become like Him and love others as He loves us. Thankfully, as we study and practice God's Word, we are daily being transformed into His likeness, for our good and for the sake of our clients, who may not be able to know Jesus until they see His love and character in us.

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.—John 1:14

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." —John 14:6



II. How to Study God's Word

If we want to use God's Word in the center, we must begin by having it in our heart and studying it personally.

I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.—Psalm 119:11

There are limitless ways to study the Bible. We can:

- Use a Bible study guide and answer its questions;
- Use a Bible aid, like a concordance, dictionary, or commentary;
- Read the Bible from cover to cover in a set time, like 90 days, six months, or a year;
- Read the same chapter every day for a week, looking for understanding;
- Read one chapter from each of three main sections of the Bible: the Old Testament, the New Testament, and Wisdom Literature (Psalms and Proverbs); or
- Study verses on a certain topic, like humility, faithfulness, sacrifice, etc.

Is there a particular approach that has been helpful for you?

No matter how you choose to study the Bible, remember to:

- Ask God to give you understanding.

Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law.—Psalm 119:18

- Allow God's Word to become personal. Take time to reflect on it and apply it to your own life.

For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit,

joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.—Hebrews 4:12

- Do what it says.

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.—James 1:22

III. How to Use God's Word in the Pregnancy Resource Center

A. Be Led by the Holy Spirit.

Ask the Lord what He wants to say to this client. Listen. If verses come to mind, trust that the Spirit is leading you. The enemy would not suggest you speak God's Truth to your client! The Holy Spirit will lead you with compassion and sensitivity. Through the written Word of God, the Holy Spirit brings many things: conviction, hope, healing, peace, encouragement, to name a few. (To practice listening to God while reading His Word, see "Listening Exercise" at the end of Chapter 7.)

B. Be Sensitive.

1. His Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path (Psalm 119:105). When light is present, we can see. A lamp illumi-



nates the darkness. It should not be used as a spotlight for interrogation. God's Word is a bright lamp; let it show the client the way to go, and do not give into the temptation to shine the light in her eyes.

2. His Word is also a sword (Ephesians 6:17). When used with skill, a sword can keep an enemy away; when handled carelessly, it can injure the person you're trying to rescue. God's Word is a powerful tool for fighting Satan, but it must be used gently and skillfully with clients.

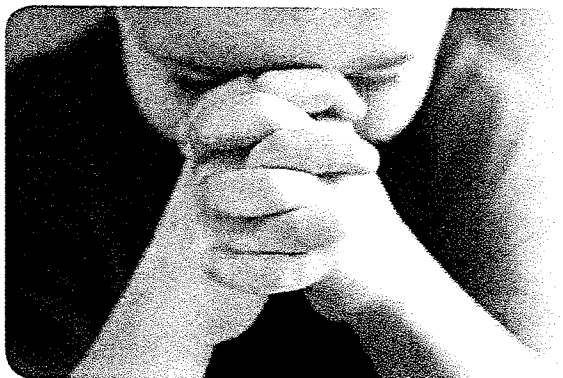
C. Be Intentional.

1. Have a Bible in the counseling room.
2. Have meaningful verses memorized or marked in your Bible. Choose verses about God's presence, promises, love, hope, and forgiveness. It's wise to use verses that are personally meaningful to you as well.

Identify three verses that have personal meaning to you and write them here:

Conclusion

God has recorded His very words in the Bible. Therefore, we rely on them to give us everything we need in our love relationship with Him, in our personal lives, and in ministering to the women who come to the pregnancy resource center. As we are led by the Holy Spirit to speak the encouragement, correction, and hope of His truth, we anticipate falling more in love with the Author and extending His love to others.



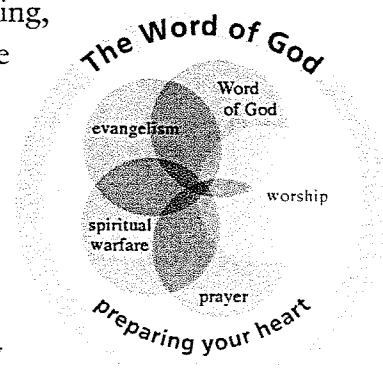
beginning with worship

I imagine your first day as a volunteer counselor. Picture your first client: she's young, too young to be pregnant with her third child. She's not married to any of the three fathers. She's in a panic because she barely survives on a low-paying, part-time job, yet she's been missing work due to morning sickness. Her life is a tangled mess of circumstances that cry out: it is impossible to carry this child to term! She's certain abortion is her only option. She looks at you with her arms crossed, waiting for you to say something.

Are you feeling nervous, imagining this scene? Are you thinking, "I don't know what to say; I can't do this"? If so, pay close attention to these next words: you are exactly right. Listen to this old story about a set of impossible circumstances and how one man responded.

Do you remember King Jehoshaphat? During a turbulent time in his reign as king of Judah, he learned that three great armies had gathered to destroy Israel. Even though he was a powerful king, he was afraid and must have thought, "How can I possibly defeat these three strong enemies? Their superior numbers will crush us! I can't save Israel." His assessment was right. He could not save his people from this assault. But Jehoshaphat wisely remembered there was more to the situation than him and the problem. There was God.

He gathered his people and began to declare how big and faithful and good God was. He responded to the army's threat with remem-





bering God was present and reflecting on what He had done in the past. He remembered God had victory even when the circumstances seemed impossible. Then this king declared to God, “We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you.”

God replied through His prophet, “Do not fear or be dismayed . . . for the battle is not yours but God’s.”

The next day, Jehoshaphat put his worship team in front of the army, and as they marched, they praised God. “As they began to sing and praise, the LORD set ambushes against the [armies], and they were defeated [and destroyed] one another” (2 Chronicles 20:22–23). Notice the timing in that verse: *as they sang*, God moved.

Jehoshaphat knew he couldn’t do it alone. God promised to do the work. Beginning with worship was the key. We cannot be effective counselors on our own. God promises to do the work through us. Let us study worship, for it is key.

Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD;
let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.
Let us come before him with thanksgiving
and extol him with music and song.

**For the LORD is the great God,
the great King above all gods.**

Come, let us bow down in worship,
let us kneel before the LORD our Maker;

**for he is our God
and we are the people of his pasture,
the flock under his care.**

Psalm 95:1–3, 6–7a

I. What Is Worship?

Describe one of your favorite experiences of worship.

Webster's Dictionary defines worship this way: "to reverence, adore, idolize God" and "to perform acts of adoration." Hebrew and Greek words sometimes translated as *worship* in the Bible give us more insight into the meaning of worship.

1. Hebrew

a. *Shachah*: to bow down, prostrate oneself

b. *Abad*: to serve a superior

2. Greek

a. *Proskuneo*: to kiss the hand in adoration

b. *Latreuo*: to serve

Notice how each definition identifies two important parts to worship. Worship involves both adoration of who He is (our heart attitude) and actions that express our love for Him (our behavior). Worship, then, is no small thing. It involves all of our lives, not just time in church or time alone with God. Anything that praises and pleases God is worship.

So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all for the glory of God.—1 Corinthians 10:31

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.—Romans 12:1

When both our attitude and actions honor God, true worship rises to His throne. As we serve women through a pro-life ministry, we want not only our words but our very lives to worship the Worthy One.

In his book, *Let the Nations be Glad!*, John Piper proclaims that worship is both the fuel and the goal of all missions. "Worship is the fuel of missions," says Piper, "because passion for God in worship precedes the offer of God in preaching." Also, the fulfillment of the Great Commission is the establishment of worship



where it does not exist. The nature of mission work, then, is that it is a temporary necessity. At the end of this age, the work of missions will be obsolete, but worship will remain forever!

II. Why is Worship Important at the Pregnancy Resource Center?

We worship God at the center for many reasons. We worship because God is worthy of worship at the center, because we're made to worship Him, because impact flows out of intimacy, because worship wins spiritual battles, because it stirs up our faith, and because it's an opportunity to practice heavenly worship.

A. *He is worthy!*

The main reason worship has priority in this ministry is because of who God is. He is worthy to be honored and glorified in every place and at every time. No matter what the circumstances at the center, God deserves to be praised.

I will sing of the LORD's great love forever; with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known through all generations. I will declare that your love stands firm forever, that you established your faithfulness in heaven itself.—Psalm 89:1-2

B. *We are made for worship.*

We were created to know God and enjoy Him. We have a built-in need to be connected to God and adore Him. We cannot be truly satisfied without worshipping God! Our lives are filled with joy when we fulfill our purpose. Volunteering at the center can be part of our worship through service, as we extend His love to the clients we see.

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.—1 Peter 2:9

Let Israel rejoice in their Maker; let the people of Zion be glad in their King. Let them praise his name with dancing and



make music to him with tambourine and harp. For the Lord takes delight in His people;—Psalm 149:2–4a

C. Impact flows out of intimacy.

Passion for people must never come before passion for God. If we neglect our worship time with the Lord, we can only offer our clients what is ours: limited energy, conditional love, and flawed deeds. It will never be enough. They need what is God's: unfailing love, unlimited power, and perfect deeds. He will always be enough. Before we minister to others, we must be filled up with God Himself through worship. We must drink the living water which Jesus offers; then streams will flow from our hearts.

Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.—John 7:37b–38

As we make worship a priority, the Lord begins to change us and mold us into His image, graciously giving us His heart for others.

D. Worship wins the battle.

Worship causes us to turn our eyes from our circumstances to focus on the One who sits on the throne with power and mercy. It enables us to persevere when our work at the center is discouraging, and it strengthens us to endure when we are mocked and scorned.

Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.—Hebrews 12:2–3

King Jehoshaphat placed his worship team in front of the army because he understood the place of worship in battle: worship comes first. The center is a site of intense spiritual battle. Before we set



foot on the battleground, we need to worship the One who has all authority and power. He works the victory for us. (See Chapter 8, “Engaging in Spiritual Warfare.”)

E. Worship stirs up our faith.

Wholehearted worship causes us to believe God and put all our confidence in His promises. Consequently, as we talk with the women who come to the center, we can pass on a vibrant hope that comes from worshipping our God whose mercy is new every morning.

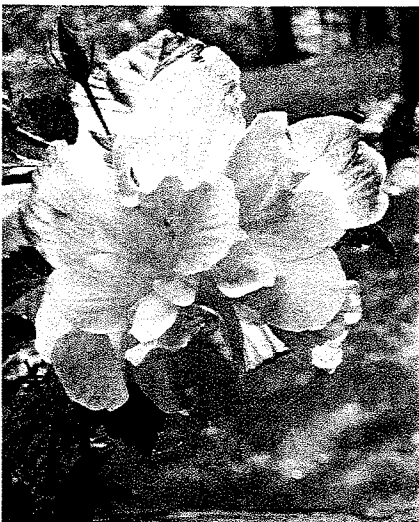
F. Worship is good practice for heaven.

The staff members and volunteers of a pregnancy resource center represent a variety of churches. This means that the kind of worship I am comfortable with may not be the kind of worship you are comfortable with. The temptation is to not worship together, to avoid being made uncomfortable. However, we also recognize that in heaven we will worship together with all races, tongues, classes, and denominations. If we’re going to worship together in heaven, why wait until then to do so? If heavenly (or perfect) worship is cross-cultural in nature, then might not we benefit from experiencing this heavenly worship on earth? The center is a beautiful opportunity to explore different styles of worship. Do not be intimidated by variety; instead, expect to learn more about God as you approach Him from a different angle.

III. Whom Do We Worship?

In a word? God. But who is He? What is He like? By what names does He call Himself? We need to know who God is if we’re going to adore Him. The more we know Him, the more we will love Him and the truer our worship will be. The Bridegroom longs to be known intimately by His Bride. A wise bride studies her man.

God intends for us to personally know and understand Him. He reveals Himself through creation (Romans 1:20), the Word (John 5:39), and our personal relationships with Jesus (Luke 10:22). We worship the God who is both one and three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Comprehending who God is and responding to Him in love is our ultimate purpose. A rich relationship with Him involves growing in our understanding and enjoyment of who He



is. Worship and praise are making much of Him: His attributes and names, His works and ways.

A. *His attributes and names*

God is infinite and has many names. His names portray who He is, what He does, and what we have in Him. When we know who He is through His names, we can't help but respond in worship. Deep faith grows from an intimate knowledge of His names, character, and attributes. Many believers continue to be infants in the kingdom of God because they have a small concept of God.

Jesus teaches us to revere God's name: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name" (Matthew 6:9b). Praising His name is part of a lifestyle of intimacy before impact. God is faithful to His name. Knowing and calling on His name produces many benefits: salvation, forgiveness, help, guidance, protection, preservation, joy, and so much more. In God's names are the promises that He will take care of us. We stand in awe of God, some of whose names are listed below. (Also see "God's Attributes," "God's Character," and "God's Names" at the end of this chapter.)



Abba Father	Awesome
Comforter	Beginning and End
All-Knowing	King of Kings
All-Powerful	Holy One
All-Sufficient	Way-Maker
Bread of Life	Shepherd
Defender	Forgiver
God of All Details	Way, Truth, and Life
The Guide	Lover of My Soul
Slow to Anger	My Redeemer
Joy	Ruler of the Nations
Longsuffering	God Most High
Prince of Peace	Infinite
Provider	Strong
Truth	Vindicator
Wisdom	



Identify one or more of God's names that have been meaningful to you recently and explain why.

When we worship God using His names, we orient ourselves toward the Sovereign One who has the legal jurisdiction, authority, power, and desire to be involved in our lives. Even God's name, "The Name Above All Names," reveals His glory and superiority.

Therefore God exalted [Jesus] to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth.—Philippians 2:9–10

King David responded in worship to God's name:

I will exalt you, my God the King; I will praise your name forever and ever. Every day I will praise you and extol your name forever and ever. Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom.—Psalm 145:1–3

B. His works and ways

God's Word records miracle after miracle. His deeds are powerful and matchless. The more we consider His works, the more we grow in our desire to worship Him, because worship is our natural response to His great goodness.

Identify a favorite miracle from the Bible and describe why it is meaningful to you.

Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done.—1 Chronicles 16:8

God is also performing miracles today. His greatest miracle in our lives is the gift of redemption. Our response is deep praise and worship for our new and eternal lives.

For He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.—Colossians 1:13–14

God is also performing miracles today.

Psalm 111

Praise the LORD.
I will extol the LORD with all my heart
in the council of the upright and in the assembly.
Great are the works of the LORD;
they are pondered by all who delight in them.
Glorious and majestic are his deeds,
and his righteousness endures forever.
He has caused his wonders to be remembered;
the Lord is gracious and compassionate.
He provides food for those who fear him;
he remembers his covenant forever.
He has shown his people the power of his works,
giving them the lands of other nations.
The works of his hands are faithful and just;
all his precepts are trustworthy.
They are steadfast for ever and ever,
done in faithfulness and uprightness.
He provided redemption for his people;
he ordained his covenant forever—
holy and awesome is his name.
The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;
all who follow his precepts have good understanding.
To him belongs eternal praise.

Rewrite a portion of Psalm 111 in your own words.

IV. How and When Do We Worship?

Although we are made for worship, it doesn't always come naturally. Our culture and circumstances, not to mention our past, often intrude. Consequently, we need to learn how to please and honor God in worship.

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness, and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord.—Ephesians 5:8–10

We begin by preparing our hearts. Having clean hearts is an integral part of worship, for we are coming before a Holy God. Then we simply focus on who He is and what He has done and offer Him the honor and praise due to Him.

This is done in limitless ways: through words of praise, prayers, songs, acts of service, reverent silence, glad submission, tithing, instrumental music, giving to the poor, doing the dishes as unto Him, and so on. In all we do, everyday, we have the opportunity to bring



honor and glory to God. Therefore, worship isn't limited to a day of the week or a time of day. We are called to a *lifestyle of worship*. In each of our roles as sister, mother, co-worker, friend, and now as a volunteer, we need to live as though we were in the very presence of Jesus—because we are! He will never leave us or forsake us. Therefore, because He sees all that we do, we can worship Him continually.

[[Jesus said,] “For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. . . . I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.”—Matthew 25:35–36, 40



Your worship at the center flows out of personal and corporate worship times. As a volunteer it is important that you:

- Participate in regular corporate worship at a local church.
- Establish personal times of worship through daily devotions.
- Dedicate each of your volunteer shifts to God through prayer.
- Close each of your shifts with praise to God for the seen and unseen ways He is at work.

V. What Does Worship Do in Us?

While we worship God because He is worthy of all praise, worship also changes us in significant ways. Worship often corrects our thoughts, our emotions, and our actions.

A. Corrects our thoughts: HEAD

Our heads are battlefields, where lies and truths war for our attention. Each time we choose to worship God, we give truth attention. As we give truth attention, truth gets more rooted in us, correcting our thoughts.



Lies wage war in our minds when a client's perplexing circumstances spark thoughts like, "God is not enough. He can't possibly forgive this. He doesn't care about her." These lies obscure God's power, mercy, and love. Choosing to worship, however, will defeat the lies. When we choose to say, "Thank You, God, that You are bigger than this problem. Thank You that You forgive even this. Thank You that You love this woman," the lies wither. Because worship involves speaking the truth about God, it has the power to correct our thinking, realigning it with the truth.

I called on your name, O LORD, from the depths of the pit. You heard my plea: "Do not close your ears to my cry for relief." You came near when I called you, and you said, "Do not fear." O LORD, you took up my case; you redeemed my life.—Lamentations 3:56–58

Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.—Lamentations 3:22–23

B. Corrects our emotions: HEART

When we adore God, we tune out all the other things jockeying for our attention and we focus on Him, His names, and His ways. As we do, we remember that He loves us unconditionally, and our insecurities fade away. We remember that He is our Provider and

our Defender, and our fears dissolve. We remember that He cares about us and has promised to make all things turn out for our good, and our anxieties crumble into dust. At some point, we discover that instead of feeling insecure, fearful, and anxious, we now feel safe, confident, and at peace. Worship corrects our emotions.

C. Corrects our actions: HANDS

Even as Christians, we often have sharp tongues and rough hands. We simply do not love others as Christ loves us, and it shows in our actions. However, as we worship Jesus Christ, He reveals Himself to us. He fills us with His love until we spill over. At some point, we find ourselves looking around, longing to pour this love on others. In this way, we become more like Jesus, who seeks us out to love us. As He daily fills us with His great love, we give that love to people in everyday ways by donating our listening ears, honest tongues, practical helps, valuable time, and fervent prayers. These loving actions are the result of God at work in us.

Watch what God does, and then you do it, like children who learn proper behavior from their parents. Mostly what God does is love you. Keep company with him and learn a life of love. Observe how Christ loved us. His love was not cautious but extravagant. He didn't love in order to get something from us but to give everything of himself to us. Love like that.—Ephesians 5:1–2 (The Message)

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.—1 John 3:16

Conclusion

Worship is key. Through it, we draw near to God, and He draws close to us. As we see Him more clearly, we realize our clients' problems are easily solved by this huge God of ours. As we are tenderized by His love, we begin to truly love our clients. Knowing how loved we are, we are finally free to step back and let Him do the work, and this is when the battle is won.

Truly, Jehoshaphat was wise to trust the prophet's words that the battle was not his to fight but God's, and he was wise to believe God was big enough, for this assured the victory. When we begin volunteering, let's begin with words and lives that worship, for we can be sure He is going to love the client through us and win the victory for her.

. . . the battle
was not his to
fight but God's.

Shout with joy to God, all the earth!
Sing the glory of his name; make his praise glorious!

Say to God, "How awesome are your deeds!
So great is your power that your enemies cringe before you.
All the earth bows down to you; they sing praise to you,
they sing praise to your name."

Come and see what God has done,
how awesome his works in man's behalf!
He turned the sea into dry land,
they passed through the waters on foot—
come, let us rejoice in him.

He rules forever by his power,
his eyes watch the nations—
let not the rebellious rise up against him.
Psalm 66:1-7

God's Attributes

Taken from the *Intimacy Before Impact Manual*, Chapter 6, Beginning with Worship.

God is Faithful

Constant, loyal, reliable, steadfast, unwavering, devoted, true, dependable

Deuteronomy 7:9	Psalms 119:90	Lamentations 3:21–24	2 Timothy 2:13
Psalms 33:4	Psalms 145:13	1 Corinthians 10:13	1 John 1:9
Psalms 89:8	Psalms 146:5–8	2 Timothy 1:12	Revelation 19:11

God is Holy

Spiritually perfect or pure; sinless; deserving awe, reverence, adoration

Exodus 15:11	Psalms 99	Isaiah 57:15–16	1 Peter 1:15–16
1 Samuel 2:2	Psalms 111:9	Luke 1:49	Revelation 4:8
Psalms 77:13	Isaiah 5:16	Acts 3:13–15	Revelation 15:4

God is Just

Right or fair, impartial, upright, lawful, correct, true, righteous

Deuteronomy 32:4	Psalms 89:14–16	Isaiah 30:18	Romans 3:25–26
2 Chronicles 19:7	Psalms 119:137–138	Zephaniah 3:5	2 Thessalonians 1:5–7
Psalms 9:7–10	Psalms 145:17	John 5:30	Revelation 15:3–4

God is Wise

From the root *to know* or *to see*, this wisdom goes past knowledge to understanding and action; having keen perception, discernment; power of judging rightly; always making right choices

1 Chronicles 28:9	Proverbs 2:6	Isaiah 55:8–9	Romans 16:27
Psalms 92:5	Proverbs 3:19–20	Daniel 2:20–22	Colossians 2:2–3
Psalms 147:5	Isaiah 28:29	Romans 11:33–34	James 3:17

God is Eternal

Without beginning or end, existing through all time, everlasting

Exodus 3:14–15	Nehemiah 9:5b	Psalms 93:2	Romans 1:20
Exodus 15:18	Psalms 45:6	Isaiah 26:4	1 Timothy 1:17
Deuteronomy 33:27	Psalms 90:1–2	Jeremiah 31:3	Revelation 1:8, 18

God is the Creator

The one who brought the universe and all matter and life in it into existence

Genesis 1:1	Psalms 104	Jeremiah 10:12	Colossians 1:16
Psalms 95:3–7	Psalms 148:1–6	John 1:3	Hebrews 1:2
Psalms 100:3	Isaiah 42:5	Acts 17:24–28	Revelation 10:6

God is Good

Essentially, absolutely, and consummately good; virtuous; excellent; upright

Psalms 25:8	Psalms 119:68	Jeremiah 33:11	John 10:11
Psalms 34:8	Psalms 136:1	Nahum 1:7	1 Timothy 4:4
Psalms 86:5	Psalms 145:9	Mark 10:18	2 Peter 1:3–4

*Let the righteous rejoice in the LORD and take refuge in him;
let all the upright in heart praise him!—Psalm 64:10*

God's Names

Taken from the *Intimacy Before Impact Manual*, Chapter 6, Beginning with Worship.

*[Jesus said,] "This, then, is how you should pray:
Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name," Matthew 6:9*

The names which God used in Scripture to describe Himself reveal to us His character.

Jehovah—The Self-Existent One, I Am

This name is used 6519 times in the Old Testament, is translated as LORD or LORD God, and means the true eternal God, the One who *is*.

Exodus 3:13-15	Psalms 102:27	Jeremiah 16:19-21
1 Chronicles 16:23-29	Psalms 105:1-7	John 8:58

Jehovah Tsidkenu—The Lord Our Righteousness

There is no one righteous, not even one . . . [but] we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins,—Romans 3:10, 1 John 2:1b-2a

Jeremiah 23:5-6	Romans 3:21-22	2 Corinthians 5:21
Ezekiel 36:25-26	Romans 5:17-19	1 John 1:7, 9

Jehovah M'Kaddesh—The Lord Who Sanctifies

Sanctified means set apart for holy use. It is the Holy Spirit who empowers us to live holy lives.

Exodus 31:12-13	Romans 15:16	1 Thessalonians 5:23-24
Leviticus 20:8	Philippians 1:6	1 Peter 2:9

Jehovah Shalom—The Lord Our Peace

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.—Romans 5:1

Judges 6:22-24a	Isaiah 26:3-4	Ephesians 2:14-18
Isaiah 9:6	John 14:27	Colossians 1:19-20

Jehovah Shammah—The Lord Is There

This name promises His presence. *[Jesus said,] "For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."—Matthew 18:20*

Deuteronomy 31:6	Ezekiel 48:35	1 Corinthians 3:16
Isaiah 12:6	Matthew 28:20	Revelation 21:1-3

Jehovah Rapha—The Lord Heals

He heals our bodies, but more importantly, He heals and restores our spirit and soul.

Exodus 15:22-26	Psalms 103:1-4	Isaiah 53:4-5
Deuteronomy 32:39	Psalms 147:3	Matthew 8:16-17

Jehovah Jireh—The Lord Will Provide

This name comes from the Hebrew root word *to see*, meaning that God would foresee our need of redemption. This name tells us God is willing and able to meet every need of His people.

Genesis 22:8, 13-14	Romans 8:32	Philippians 4:19
Acts 14:17	2 Corinthians 9:8	1 Timothy 6:17

God's Character

Taken from the *Intimacy Before Impact Manual*, Chapter 6, Beginning with Worship.

*Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise;
his greatness no one can fathom.—Psalm 145:3*

Love

Psalm 136	Romans 8:35-39	1 John 3:1
Romans 5:5-8	Ephesians 3:16-19	1 John 4:7-10

Light

Psalm 104:1-2	John 8:12	1 John 1:5-7
Psalm 119:105	2 Corinthians 4:6	Revelation 21:22-25

Our Father

Deuteronomy 1:30-31	Luke 11:11-13	2 Corinthians 6:18
Psalm 68:4-5	John 1:12-13	Galatians 4:4-7

Our Joy

1 Chronicles 16:27-33	Psalm 4:7-8	Psalm 43:3-5
Nehemiah 8:9-12	Psalm 30:1-5, 11-12	Zephaniah 3:17

Miracle Worker

1 Chronicles 16:8-12	Psalm 111:2-5	John 20:30-31
Psalm 77:11-14	Luke 7:20-23	John 21:25

Compassionate

Nehemiah 9:16-21	Psalm 145:8-9	Isaiah 49:13-16
Psalm 103:8-14	Isaiah 30:18	Matthew 9:36

Rock

1 Samuel 2:1-2	Psalm 18:31-36, 46-50	Matthew 7:24-25
2 Samuel 22:47	Psalm 62:1-8	1 Corinthians 10:4

Shield

2 Samuel 22:1-4, 36	Psalm 5:11-12	Psalm 115:9-11
Psalm 3:1-3	Psalm 84:10-12	Proverbs 2:7-8

Fortress

Psalm 18:1-3	Psalm 91:1-8	Proverbs 14:26
Psalm 59:16-17	Psalm 144:1-2	Jeremiah 16:19

Friend

Exodus 33:11a	Isaiah 41:8-10	John 15:9-17
Proverbs 18:24	Mark 3:31-35	James 2:23

Counselor

Psalm 119:24	Isaiah 28:29	John 15:26
Isaiah 9:6	John 14:16-17, 25-27	John 16:7-15

Copyright, Moms in Touch International. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Comforter

Psalm 23:4	Psalm 94:14-19	Matthew 5:4
Psalm 71:17-22	Isaiah 66:13	2 Corinthians 1:2-5

Communicator

1 Samuel 3:9-10	Isaiah 30:19-21	John 10:27-28
Job 33:13-18	Matthew 10:18-20	1 Corinthians 2:9-13

Savior

Psalm 68:19-20	Matthew 1:21	Titus 3:3-6
Isaiah 43:11-13	Acts 5:30-31	1 John 4:14-15

Deliverer

2 Samuel 22:17-20	Psalm 34:1-7, 15-19	Isaiah 46:3-4
Psalm 22:4-5	Psalm 91:9-16	2 Corinthians 1:8-10

Merciful

Micah 7:18-20	Luke 6:35-36	Ephesians 2:3-9
Luke 1:46-55	Romans 9:14-16	Titus 3:5-7

Intercessor

Job 16:19-21	1 Timothy 2:5	Hebrews 9:24
Romans 8:26-27, 33-34	Hebrews 7:25	1 John 2:1

Perfect

Deuteronomy 32:1-4	Psalm 12:6	Isaiah 25:1
2 Samuel 22:31	Psalm 19:7	Matthew 5:48

Way

2 Samuel 22:31-34	Isaiah 48:16-17	John 14:4-7
Psalm 16:11	Isaiah 55:6-9	1 Corinthians 10:13

Truth

Psalm 119:160	John 8:32	John 17:3, 17
John 1:17	John 16:13	1 John 5:20

Life

Deuteronomy 30:19-20	John 5:21	John 11:25-26
Nehemiah 9:6	John 6:35, 47-51	Acts 17:25

Victor

Deuteronomy 20:1-4	Psalm 44:1-8	Proverbs 21:30-31
Joshua 21:43-45	Psalm 118:13-17	1 Corinthians 15:51-57

Hope

Isaiah 40:28-31	Lamentations 3:21-25	Hebrews 6:17-20
Jeremiah 29:11-13	Romans 15:13	1 Peter 1:3

*Praise the LORD, O my soul; all my inmost being,
praise his holy name.—Psalm 103:1*

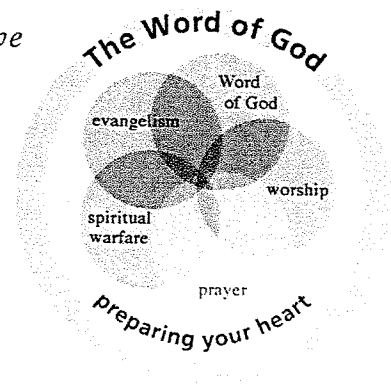


depending on prayer

You can't read God's Word, confess sin, worship, engage in spiritual warfare, or share the good news of God's love without prayer. Prayer is an integral part of your life as a Christian. That's why there are hundreds of books written about prayer. This manual will not attempt to cover all the facets of this vital subject. Whether you know next to nothing about prayer or have read all there is to know about prayer, this chapter will help you consider the value of prayer at the pregnancy resource center.

"I strongly suspect that if we saw all the difference even the tiniest of our prayers make, and all the people those little prayers were destined to affect, and all the consequences of those prayers down through the centuries—we would be so paralyzed with awe at the power of prayer that we would be unable to get up off our knees for the rest of our lives!"—Peter Kreeft

Tell of a prayer God answered for you.





I. What is Prayer?

God made us to know and enjoy Him forever. In the Garden of Eden, He had an intimate relationship with Adam and Eve as they walked and talked together. God wants this walking, talking kind of relationship that He began in the Garden. He invites us into a heart-to-heart relationship.

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. . . . Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.”—Jeremiah 29:11–12; 33:3

A healthy relationship requires a lot of communication, both quality and quantity. Think about your own relationships: aren't the best relationships those in which you can talk about the trivial, everyday things as well as the deep, important things? Prayer is simply communication between God and us. It's a vital part of a growing relationship with Him. He invites us to pour out our hearts to Him, ask Him our deepest questions, express our frustrations and dreams, laugh, and even rest quietly with Him. This is all prayer. In return, He tells us what's on His heart. This is prayer too. You talk with God, and God talks with you. Talking and listening, that's prayer!

II. Prayer Pointers

When we realize that through prayer we get to come into God's very presence, learn about Him, and be known by Him, we no longer see prayer as an activity we “should do.” Prayer becomes the key to a relationship that we cannot live without. Being a better *pray-er* is not the goal. Knowing and loving God more is the goal. And while prayer is just talking and listening, which anyone can do without instruction, it is helpful to keep in mind some pointers.

A. Talk to God

Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge.— Psalm 62:8

1. *Pray all.* “And pray . . . on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. . . . always keep on praying for all the saints” (Ephesians 6:18). God cares about the universe, but He also knows the number of hairs on your head. He cares about everything that affects you. Like a caring parent, God listens compassionately. He delights in you. What’s important is not how you talk but that you talk.
2. *Be honest.* God invites you to honestly share your struggles, joys, and challenges. Nothing you can say will shock or dismay Him. Nothing you can say will make Him stop loving you. His love is far better than any earthly father can offer. Honesty with God builds trust and is an important part of building intimacy with Him.
3. *Use God’s Word.* One of the simplest ways to pray is to pray one of the prayers recorded in the Bible, like a prayer of King David’s, Hannah’s, Moses’, or Paul’s. Another simple prayer is to ask for something He has already promised. You can pray for anything written in the Bible and not taken out of context. (See “Using God’s Word in Prayer” at the end of this chapter.)
4. *Believe that He hears and answers you.* Your relationship and communication with God are based on trust. When you pray, trust God to hear and answer you (James 1:5–8). In the areas where you struggle to believe, pray, “I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief” (Mark 9:24).
5. *Pray in Jesus’ name.* Jesus told you to use His authority when you pray: “I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name” (John 16:23b).
6. *Pray for your enemies.* God desires all people to come to a saving faith in Jesus Christ, even those who mistreat you or take innocent lives, for He created and loves them. Imitate Jesus,



who prayed for His enemies even as He was being murdered: “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing” (Luke 23:34). The God who redeemed you can also redeem your enemies.

7. *Pray alone and with others.* God loves to spend time alone with you; it is an important aspect of being in relationship with Him. He also wants to meet with you in a community of believers. Through corporate prayer, you can give and receive encouragement and ministry (Ecclesiastes 4:12). Jesus promised, “If two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them” (Matthew 18:19–20).



B. Listen to God

He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being taught.—Isaiah 50:4b

1. *Find a quiet place* where you won't be disturbed. When it's quiet, it is easier to recognize His voice and hear His heart. When you've learned how to recognize His voice in a quiet place, it becomes easier to hear Him while you are working or with others, and gradually it becomes easier to hear God's voice while you are interacting with a client.
2. *Focus on God and ask Him to speak.* Begin your listening time by picturing God, reading about Him in your Bible, or thinking about His goodness. Then imitate Samuel, who said, “Speak, for your servant is listening” (1 Samuel 3:10b), and quietly listen for thoughts or impressions from God. If you have trouble with straying thoughts, write down any thoughts you don't want to forget, and return to listening. If your mind continues to wander, refocus on God by praising Him (2 Corinthians 10:5b). Then grow quiet again. This takes time, especially when you are just learning.
3. *Expect to hear from Him.* God wants to talk with you, tell you secrets, and express His love to you. The enemy wants you to believe He won't talk to you, that somehow God doesn't love you like He loves others. It's a lie. You are His beloved daughter. “Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great

and unsearchable things you do not know” (Jeremiah 33:3).

4. *Trust that you will recognize His voice.* “[T]he sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. . . . his sheep follow him because they know his voice” (John 10:3b–4). You are His sheep. He talks to you, and you instinctively know His voice. The more you intentionally take the time to listen, the better you’ll recognize His voice in any situation.

5. *Check what you hear with God’s Word.* God is not the only one who speaks to you. Satan also whispers thoughts to your mind. Learn to discern between them, to reject the lies, and to follow God’s voice. The Bible will help you discern who is speaking: God will never disagree with His written Word. What you hear in prayer must agree with the Bible. If you have checked the Bible and are still unsure, ask a mature Christian. “Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God” (1 John 4:1a).

6. *Be patient. Sometimes God uses silence.* Sometimes God speaks immediately; sometimes He doesn’t. When you’re waiting for Him to speak, remind yourself who He is: He is your loving Father. He is committed to you. His ways and thoughts are higher than your ways and thoughts. Therefore, He must be silent for a purpose. You don’t need to doubt Him even if you can’t hear Him. Remember that God sees the big picture and promises to work it all out for your good. After Job endured a difficult season of God’s silence, God spoke to him. Job replied, “I know that you can do all things; no plan of yours can be thwarted. . . . Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me to know. . . . My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you” (Job 42:2, 3, 5).



Praying Pointers

Talking to God	Listening to God
Pray <i>all</i> .	Find a quiet place.
Be honest.	Focus on God and ask Him to speak.
Use God's Word.	Expect to hear from God.
Believe that He hears and answers you.	Trust that you will recognize His voice.
Pray in Jesus' name.	Check what you hear with God's Word.
Pray for your enemies.	Be Patient. Sometimes God uses silence.
Pray alone and with others.	

Do not give up! Because prayer is all about relationship, don't quit talking and listening. God treasures those times when you sit with Him, willing to "waste" your time seeking His face, willing to stay hungry instead of feeding it with lesser things. He sees that though you love the good feelings and sweet words His presence gives, what you want most of all is Him.

III. Why is Prayer One of the Highest Priorities in the Pregnancy Resource Center?

If it were just you and your client in the counseling room, you would both be in trouble. Fortunately, you aren't alone. You and God are a team communicating back and forth, working together to help your client. He has a plan and all the resources; you have the physical presence.

A. *Prayer supplies us with God's resources and plan.*

We ourselves come in great need. We know God. We love God. We want to reach out in His name. But we aren't God—we don't have the wisdom, resources, or ability to be of great help on our own. We enter the mission field of abortion as servants, not as saviors. So as we meet clients and learn about their crises, we know we do not have all the answers. Instead, we come as servants, ready to listen and do what God directs us to do.

We obtain the direction and resources we need to do our job through prayer. He will give us the resources we need to do the tasks He sets before us, if we will simply ask, confident in His love for us.



[Jesus said,] “You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.”—John 15:16

For example, in the counseling room we need God to strengthen and protect us as we engage in a spiritual battle for the lives of our clients and their children. (See Chapter 8, “Engaging in Spiritual Warfare.”) Among other things, we also need God’s answers for the client who comes to see us, God’s guidance in our conversations, and God’s encouragement.

In the counseling room, we ask God to . . .	Because . . .	Reference
Strengthen and protect us	We’re in a battle for life.	<i>The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and I am helped. Psalm 28:7a</i>
Give us wisdom	We don’t have all the answers.	<i>If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. James 1:5</i>
Guide our time with our client	We don’t know what she needs most.	<i>You guide me with your counsel. Psalm 73:24a</i>
Encourage us	We can get discouraged.	<i>May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus. Romans 15:5</i>

B. Prayer places the client in direct contact with God.

Sometimes the client’s immediate needs seem so urgent that we focus on them. But it’s not just answers that your client needs. She needs to experience true love and forgiveness, meaning and purpose. Thankfully, God gives more than just answers to problems—He gives Himself. It is His pattern to do exceedingly, abundantly, beyond all we can ask or imagine. For example, when we were separated from God because of our sin, God did something abundantly beyond all we could have asked or imagined: He came to us in the flesh to die on our behalf in order to remove the barrier and make a relationship with God possible. No one expected the Messiah to do such a thing! Therefore, when you pray for your client, expect Him to do more than she is looking for.



We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so we despaired even of life. . . . But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead.—2 Corinthians 1:8a–9

Why is your client at the center? It's not just because she's unexpectedly pregnant. God is at work in her life, whether she recognizes it or not. He is drawing her to Him, because He loves her and wants her to live in His love. Therefore, He's not merely interested in solving her problems. He is saying, "Here I am! I love you!" Though she is looking for help in response to a difficult situation, God wants to enlarge her focus so it includes not just her problem but also her solution, which is Him. Your prayer can enable her to see and experience His love. He says to her,

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.—Matthew 11:28–30

God wants her to know that He is present in the midst of her trouble. He wants her to know that He is thinking about her and considers her precious. Your prayers for her can remind her of that fact.

Praying out loud for your client, which is going together to talk to God, can profoundly encourage her and minister to her deepest needs.

Recall a time when someone prayed out loud for you when you were struggling. How did it make you feel?

A Prayer Story

Miriam, a 17-year-old African refugee, was pregnant. She was heart-broken, apologetic, and ashamed. What would happen to her dreams of college via scholarships? How could her father support an eleventh person with his assembly-line job? She and her mother determined an abortion was essential. On the way to the abortion clinic, a Pregnancy Resource Center sign caught their eyes, and Miriam's mother suggested they first check out "that resource center," not realizing those resources did not include abortion.

A volunteer counselor sat down with them and listened to their story. Miriam's mother shared that her days as a young, inexperienced mother had been difficult. Miriam's mother did not want Miriam to experience the same hardships when so much awaited her in scholarships. God prompted the volunteer to ask about the child born to this mother at such an early age; was the child a blessing to this woman? Miriam's mother quickly answered with a strong "Yes!"

At the end of the session, the volunteer asked if she could pray. "Yes." She thanked God that Miriam came to the center first. She thanked God for their obvious love for each other, for safety in leaving Africa, and for establishing a home in the U.S. She prayed for wisdom to make a wise decision and for openness to receive God's love. She also prayed for the child's life. After they left, the volunteer continued to pray.

The day the abortion was scheduled, Miriam's mother called the center with a question. They returned to the center for an ultrasound to clear up their questions, providing another opportunity to pray with them. Miriam's mother recalls feeling a wave of resistance to prayer. "I didn't want to be brought into God's presence. I knew He was probably furious with me, and I thought He wanted to punish Miriam and me for pushing for abortion. But, oh, that prayer touched me and gave me new eyes and a hope that this child might not ruin our lives."

Miriam and her mother both see God's hand of love and know He does work out all things for good. Seven months later, a healthy baby boy joined their crowded home, long after they had developed a child care and school plan.



IV. Prayer in the Counseling Room

A. *You and prayer*

1. *Recruit two or three friends* to be your prayer partners on the days and during the times you volunteer. “Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel” (Ephesians 6:19).
2. *Pray with other volunteers and/or staff members* before you meet with the client.
3. *Be in an attitude of prayer* as you are talking with and listening to your client. Internally, ask God what He would have you say. Mentally turn to God and ask for His guidance with quick, short, silent prayers.

B. *Your client and prayer*

1. *Ask, “Can I pray for you? How can I pray for you?”* Unless you have strong encouragement from the Holy Spirit or the client herself, prayer should be saved until the end of the session. In addition to the things that God lays on your heart to pray, be sure to ask what you can pray for her. Remember to lift up all her prayer requests, even if they seem unrelated to the topics you’ve discussed. Praying out loud for your client can have a powerful affect on her heart and mind. Your prayer gives her a glimpse of the intimate love between the Father and His daughter.

A Volunteer’s Story

After awhile I couldn’t keep from laughing. Time after time, when a session was ending, I’d ask, “What can I pray for you?” . . . I would pray out loud and when I said, “Amen”, instead of getting ready to leave, the client would begin to share additional feelings and concerns, often through tears. I learned to pray and wait for how she wanted to begin again. The last part of the counseling session was often the most real and beneficial.

2. *Be sensitive to the length of your prayer.* Let it be determined by how much time your client has, her situation, and the rela-



relationship you have formed with her. Jesus packed a lot into a short prayer (Matthew 6:9–13); you can too.

3. *Talk to God when you pray, not your client.* Do not use prayer as an opportunity to tell your client what you want her to do with her life. Let your counsel be your counsel and your prayer be your prayer. Compassionately speak to God on her behalf, and let Him speak to her Himself.

4. *Pray for her after she leaves.* Write down her requests, and be faithful. Also, when the Holy Spirit brings her to mind, trust that she needs help at that moment and pray for her. If you share her prayer requests with your prayer partner, be confidential. (See Chapter 19, “Confidentiality.”)



Prayer in the Counseling Room

You and Prayer	Your Client and Prayer
Recruit prayer partners.	Ask, “Can I pray for you? What can I pray for you?”
Pray with others before counseling.	Be sensitive to the length of your prayer.
Be in an attitude of prayer.	Talk to God when you pray, not your client.
	Pray for her after she leaves.

Conclusion

As you counsel women who come to the center with heavy and difficult needs, it is a relief and a joy to know you are not alone. God, the best Counselor, is with you. Our wise and powerful God stands ready to communicate all of His love to this client. As you talk and listen to God, He will direct you and give you all the resources you need to minister to your client. He will do exceedingly and abundantly beyond all you could ask or imagine.

Listening Exercise

Lectio Divina (Holy Reading)

Taken from the *Intimacy Before Impact Manual*, Chapter 7, Beginning with Worship.

I. How to Do a Holy Reading

The process of *lectio divina* or *holy reading* grew out of the need to hear God's Word in the era before the printing press made the Bible accessible to many people. Since that time, a large segment of the church has lost the transforming power of hearing the Word of God read. Yet Paul declared that "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of Christ." Eugene Peterson writes, "Hearing a word is different from reading a word. When we hear, we are poised for response; something is happening."

II. The Process of Listening

The reader selects a short text, two or three verses at the most, to read three times. The listeners, formed into small groups of three or four, are encouraged to sit in a relaxed position in a receptive spirit to hear God speak to them. They should sit comfortably in a chair, feet flat on the floor, hands palms up, as if ready to receive something. They should also close their eyes, take a few deep breaths, relax their muscles, and wait for God to speak, expecting God to personally speak to them.

A. OPENING AND FIRST READING

- The reader opens with prayer, asking the Father to speak personally to each of His children and to give them ears to hear His voice.
- The reader asks the people to listen for a word or phrase that jumps out to them.

The reader invites them to repeat the word or phrase silently to themselves, for this is the Father's word for them.

- The reader reads the text slowly and clearly, followed by brief silence.
- The listeners tell each other the word or phrase that spoke to them, without commenting.

B. SECOND READING

- The reader directs the hearers to ask the Father to show them how the word or phrase they received is related to the present condition of their lives.
- The reader reads the text slowly and clearly, followed by brief silence.
- The hearers briefly (in one or two statements only) share how the word connects with their present state of life.

C. THIRD READING AND BLESSING

- The reader asks the people to listen for the Father's invitation to them. Ask, "What is the Father inviting you to do in light of the word or phrase you have received?"
- The reader reads the text slowly and clearly, followed by brief silence.
- The hearers briefly share God's invitation to them.
- The hearers pray a brief blessing upon each other to help them respond to the Father's invitation.

Using God's Word in Prayer

Taken from the *Intimacy Before Impact Manual*, Chapter 6, Beginning with Worship.

Our prayers are based on our perceptions of God's character and our need, but we don't always perceive things accurately.

How can we be sure that what we are asking for is in agreement with God's will? Every page of the Bible reveals His will, and when we pray according to Scripture (in context), we pray confidently, knowing we are asking for the very things He wants to give us.

[Jesus said,] "And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father."—John 14:13

If God has already said He wants you to have something, then you can surely go to Him and ask for it! In fact, the Bible contains hundreds of promises, and He is waiting for us to claim what He has already decreed is ours. However, Bible verses are not magical spells. Praying Scripture is not about saying verses perfectly and then magically getting what we want. Instead, it's about taking a verse that has become real to us in our hearts—we know it's what God wants for us—and trusting Him to give it to us.

I. Three Examples of Center Volunteers Praying Scripture

A. BEFORE THE COUNSELING SHIFT

It was Sarah's first day as a volunteer at the pregnancy resource center. Her hands were clammy, and she kept thinking, "I can't do this. What will I say?" Then she remembered the following verses:

For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.—2 Timothy 1:7

I can do everything through him who gives me strength.—Philippians 4:13

For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict.—Luke 21:15

Sarah immediately closed her eyes and said, "Jesus, I thank you that you haven't given me a spirit of fear. I ask you to remove all fear from me. Thank you for giving me your spirit of power, love, and self-discipline. Thank you that I can do all things through You. Give me the right words and your love for my clients today. I wait and trust in You. In Jesus' name, Amen."

B. IN THE COUNSELING ROOM

Joanne had just learned her client Marie was heartbroken. Marie claimed to be a Christian yet repeatedly had sexual relationships with her boyfriends. Marie's test was positive. Joanne remembered God's promise:

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you,"—Jeremiah 29:11–14a

When it was time to pray out loud, Joanne began with this prayer, “Dear Lord, thank You that You know and love Marie. Thank You that You have a plan for her life that includes prosperity and hope. Thank You that You invite Marie to come talk to You and that You promise to listen to her. God, thank You for promising that when Marie seeks You, You will let her find You!”

C. AFTER THE COUNSELING SHIFT

And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.—Ephesians 3:17b–19

Hannah, felt compassion for the client she had seen that morning. Josie had struggled to believe Jesus could love her, even after Josie asked Jesus to be her Savior. Though it was evening now, Hannah couldn’t stop thinking about her. So she prayed, “Jesus, I pray that Josie would be rooted and established in Your love, have power to grasp how wide and long and high and deep Your love is, and know Your love that surpasses knowledge, that she may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.”

II. Practice Scripture Prayers

A. PRAY WITH PHILIPPIANS 1:9–10.

And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ.

“I ask you, Lord, to increase _____’s (insert person’s name) love. I ask that her love

would be wise and insightful, so she may be pure, blameless, and able to discern what is best.”

B. PRAY WITH JEREMIAH 15:16.

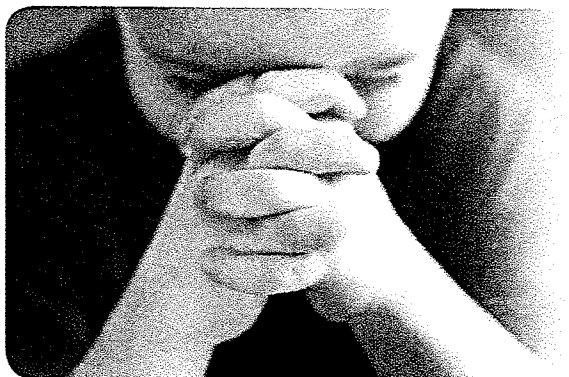
When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart’s delight, for I bear your name, O LORD God Almighty.

“Dear God, please feed _____ with your Word today. May it be a joy and a delight to [his/her] heart.”

C. USE YOUR OWN VERSES TO PRAY.

1. Use _____ to pray:

2. Use _____ to pray:

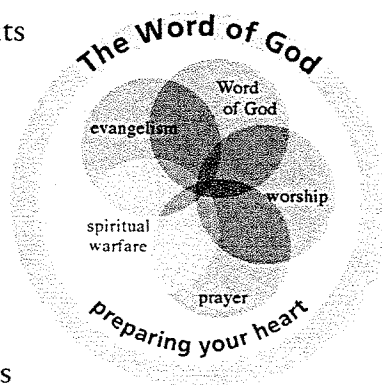


engaging in spiritual warfare

Our world is physical—we can see it, taste it, touch it. But it also has a spiritual dimension. It may seem odd to talk about it, but God's Word clearly establishes this truth. It reveals that God is a spirit, we have spirits, and there are evil spirits at work in the world.

Spiritual warfare is happening all the time. Some regard it as superstitious or ignorant to believe in a devil. Others focus far too much energy and emotion on fearing Satan and the spirit world. Neither extreme is wise.

Volunteering is more than gaining knowledge about abortion, refining communication skills, and perfecting a presentation on abortion alternatives. You are engaging an enemy who walks around like a roaring lion, seeking people to devour (1 Peter 5:8). Engaging in spiritual warfare moves you into another level of ministry for the client. Her crisis is not just about difficult circumstances; the enemy is trying to destroy her life and the life of her child.



I. Why Is it Essential to Wage Spiritual Warfare at the Pregnancy Resource Center?

A. You cannot win the battle for life by ignoring it.

Satan wants to destroy your client's baby and, through that murder, destroy your client's physical, emotional, and spiritual life. As a



volunteer, you have the opportunity and privilege to stand in the gap against the unseen enemy, and speak truth and hope when he hurls lies, confusion, and despair. Out of your secure place of intimacy in your relationship with God, you wage war, and, because Christ won against all onslaughts of Satan, you too will win.

[Jesus said,] “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”—John 10:10

B. You cannot win the battle for life by fighting the wrong enemy.

Who exactly is the enemy of life? It is neither the abortionist, nor the clinic staff, nor the baby’s father, nor friends, nor family members who pressure for abortion. Although they are making sinful choices, they are not the enemy. They too have believed lies about God, lies that He is not strong enough, compassionate enough, wise enough, or relevant enough to be of help in this situation. Your enemy and your client’s enemy is God’s enemy, Satan, who opposes God and His work among mankind.

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.—Ephesians 6:12

II. What Do We Need to Know to Engage in Spiritual Warfare?

A. Know God, Your Commander-in-Chief

How awesome are your deeds! So great is your power that your enemies cringe before you.—Psalms 66:3b

There is no one like God. No one is His equal. He could obliterate His enemies with one word, but He chooses not to. Instead, He trains us to fight alongside Him, and His unconventional methods are unbeatable. They include speaking the truth in love at all times, overcoming evil with good, and offering forgiveness and healing.

Jesus understands spiritual warfare from a human's perspective, because He experienced it. However, in every battle, Christ won. In the war between Satan's kingdom of darkness and Jesus' kingdom of light, Satan's greatest attack was to crucify Christ. It was also Satan's greatest defeat, for three days later Jesus Christ rose from the dead. Through His crucifixion and resurrection, the Lord Jesus paid the penalty for mankind's sins and defeated Satan and his kingdom. It was a powerful spiritual confrontation, and Christ won decisively.

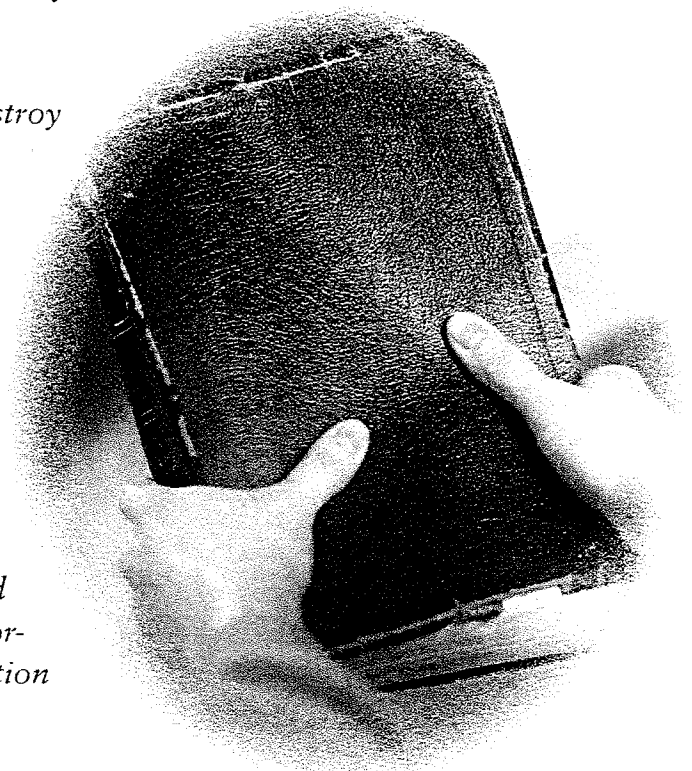
*And having disarmed the powers and authorities, [Jesus] made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.
—Colossians 2:15*

The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.—1 John 3:8b

B. Know Satan, Your Enemy

Satan is not equal to God. He is lower than God, a created angel who rebelled against God and was ejected from heaven. Satan is a defeated rebel who has no more power than God allows him. Someday God will throw him into the lake of fire.

And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.—Revelation 20:10



God wants you to overcome your enemy. To do that, you must recognize Satan's strategies and know God's countermeasures. According to Genesis 3:1, this enemy is more "crafty than any of the wild animals." Satan uses a variety of tactics depending on the people and circumstances involved, but with experience you'll find that he has only so many lies. When he finds a lie that works, he often uses it over and over simply to wear us down. Some of Satan's basic tactics include:

1. Attacking your identity—"You know you're just going to fail as a counselor. Since when are you good with strangers?"
2. Attacking God's character—"God's going to leave you all alone in that counseling room, and you'll have nothing to say."
3. Shifting your focus—"The budget's getting awfully tight. Perhaps you'd better quit thinking about volunteering and start thinking about getting a paying job."
4. Cutting off your relationships—"God hasn't spoken to you in months. Why bother waking up early to listen to Him be silent?" or "Remember how Shawna snubbed you at the mall? She obviously doesn't like you as much as you like her. Don't call her today; you know she won't have time to talk to you."
5. Draining your resources—"If one child isn't up all night with a fever, the other child is. You can hardly function even on three cups of coffee. What makes you think you've got the energy to be a counselor on top of everything else?" Keep in mind that trials and challenges are not automatically satanic. Rather, they are a matter for discernment and prayer.

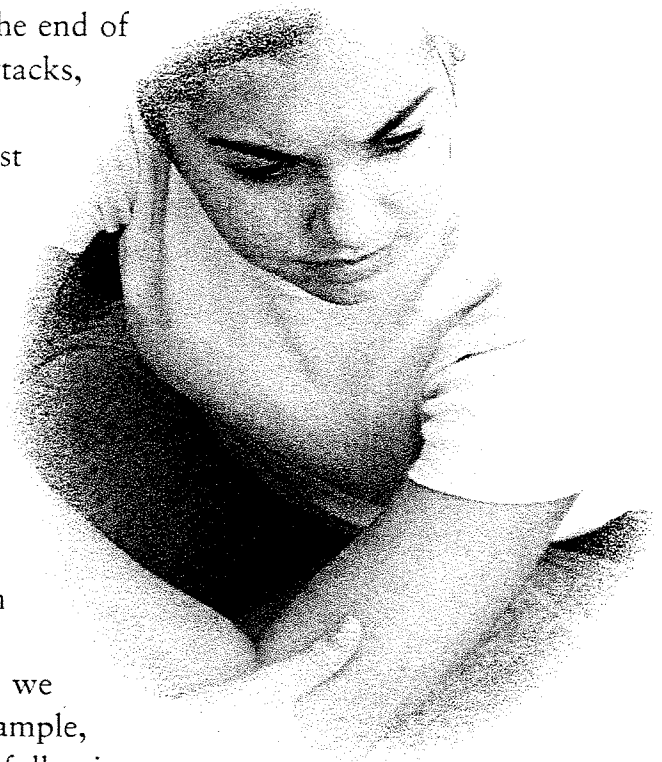


Take time to review “Methods of Warfare” at the end of this chapter. It identifies some of the ways Satan attacks, though it is not exhaustive.

Give an example of an attack Satan has used against you.

Note that Satan attacks with lies, though admittedly his lies are usually more subtle than stated in the chart. Spiritual warfare is characterized by an attack on your mind. Wrong thinking begins small and often goes undetected, but the errors you believe, sometimes unconsciously, lay the foundation for what you feel and the decisions you make.

As counselors who engage in spiritual warfare, we must be quick to identify truths from lies. For example, what if you or your client are thinking one of the following lies?



1. God does not care about the problems I’m facing.

What is the error in this thought? _____

What feelings would this thought produce? _____

How do you know this is a lie? What is the truth? _____

2. I can’t be forgiven this sin.

What is the error in this thought? _____

What feelings would this thought produce? _____

How do you know this is a lie? What is the truth? _____

C. Know Yourself, Mighty Warrior

Today Satan continues to harass us. But because of Christ’s victory at Calvary, we also have victory! We are no longer victims. We are more than conquerors (Romans 8:37). But how is this possible? God declares we are able to overcome our enemy because we are in Christ and because Christ has given us His power and authority. This is part of the grace which we received when we believed in Him.

But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.—1 Corinthians 15:57

For everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.—1 John 5:4–5

1. You are in Christ.

When you believed in Christ, you were crucified with Him (Galatians 2:20). You were also resurrected with Him, though your sins remained dead. Christ is in you, and at the same time you are in Christ (1 Corinthians 1:30). Imagine you are a sponge, and you have been dropped into the ocean, which is Christ. You are immediately filled with Him, yet you are also surrounded by Him. Christ is in you, and you are in Christ. Everything He has, you have also. He is Righteous, therefore you are righteous. He is absolutely victorious over the enemy; you are absolutely victorious. Everything God did for Christ the Head, He did for us, the Body. (See “Who I Am in Christ” at the end of this chapter.)

2. You have Christ’s power and authority.

When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.—Luke 9:1–2

Jesus prepared his disciples for everything, including war. He cast out demons and then sent out the disciples to do the same. As a modern-day disciple, He expects you to join this battle too.

[Jesus said,] “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised which you have heard me speak about. . . . But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”—Acts 1:4b, 8

At Jesus’ ascension, His parting words included instructions for receiving power. Through the Holy Spirit, we have all the power we

need to defeat the enemy. It is important that each of us, as well as the entire Church, accept this commissioning gift of power and authority. With the power and authority of God Himself girding us, there is no place for fear or a small view of our strength in Christ.

For nothing is impossible with God.—Luke 1:37

III. How Do We Engage in Spiritual Warfare in the Counseling Room?

As a volunteer in a pregnancy resource center, you are in a life-and-death ministry. The battle is intense. But there is no need to fear. God calls us to be mighty warriors, and He always equips those whom He calls.

It is true that I am an ordinary, weak human being, but I don't use human plans and methods to win my battles. I use God's mighty weapons, not those made by men, to knock down the devil's strongholds. These weapons can break down every proud argument against God and every wall that can be built to keep men from finding him. With these weapons I can capture rebels and bring them back to God, and change them into men whose hearts' desire is obedience to Christ.—2 Corinthians 10:3–5 (The Living Bible)



A. Remember the Need for Spiritual Foundations

1. *Personal Heart Preparation*—Satan is rebellious, proud, unforgiving, sinful, and loyal to himself rather than to God. We need to be like our Commander, not like our enemy. God gives us the ultimate victory over sin, but we must regularly confess the sin in our daily lives. Satan will not be intimidated by our attempts to fight him on behalf of our clients if unconfessed sin keeps growing in our own hearts.



2. *Use of God's Word*—Even Jesus was attacked by Satan, but He was not unprepared. No matter what Satan said, Jesus cut down his lies and evil suggestions with God's Word. He fought each lie with a specific truth. To the degree that we absorb God's truth, we will be free. We can fight the enemy with the Word, stand on promises from the Word, and train others in the Word.
3. *Worship*—The work of the devil is to draw our eyes away from Jesus. Keep your focus on God. Praise Him for all He is and has done. Our difficult circumstances or problems are put in proper perspective as He is lifted up. This is especially true for you as a counselor. You have both the problems in your own life and the problems in your client's life trying to weigh you down. Worship helps you cast those burdens on the Lord, reminding you that He will take care of it all.
4. *Prayer*—Soldiers succeed in battle when they have ongoing dialogue with their commanding officer. Even after the initial plans for war are established, they still need to communicate regularly with their leader, who can give them updated intelligence and orders. Although the enemy's attacks are fairly predictable, we must pay close attention to the moment-by-moment directions God makes clear to us. Listen and pray strategically, so you can overrule the work of the enemy.

B. Stand in Courage

No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. . . . Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.—Joshua 1:5, 9b

Battles require courage. It takes courage to face difficult, life-altering circumstances—your own and your client's. It takes courage to be compassionate. It takes courage to speak the truth. You can be strong and courageous, for:

- Jesus won the ultimate battle on the cross, disarming your enemy (Colossians 2:15),
- Our Commander guards and delivers you (Psalm 97:10),

- God heals all your battle wounds and promises to work all things for your good (Jeremiah 30:17; Romans 8:28), and
- God knows and has recorded the end of the war, and we are victorious (Revelation 21:4).

Because you have God's promises and His very presence, you can be courageous. In fact, you must be courageous for the sake of your client. Who else will tell her that, in the midst of her troubles, God not only exists but loves her?

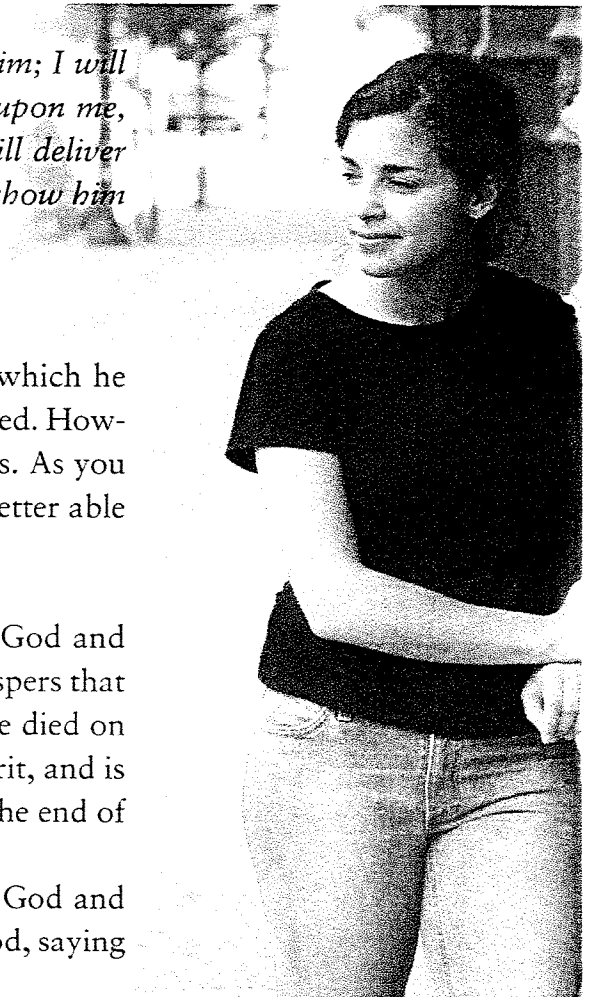
It takes courage to refuse to retreat. As you stand firm against the enemy, refusing to succumb to his lies and attacks, he must flee (James 4:7). In fact, when Paul tells us in Ephesians to put on the armor of God, he exhorts us four times to *stand firm*. This makes sense when you recall that the enemy is already defeated and merely a thief—he can only steal your victory if you run from the battle. All you have to do is stand firm and remind him that you know you're the victor, and he'll slink away for another day.

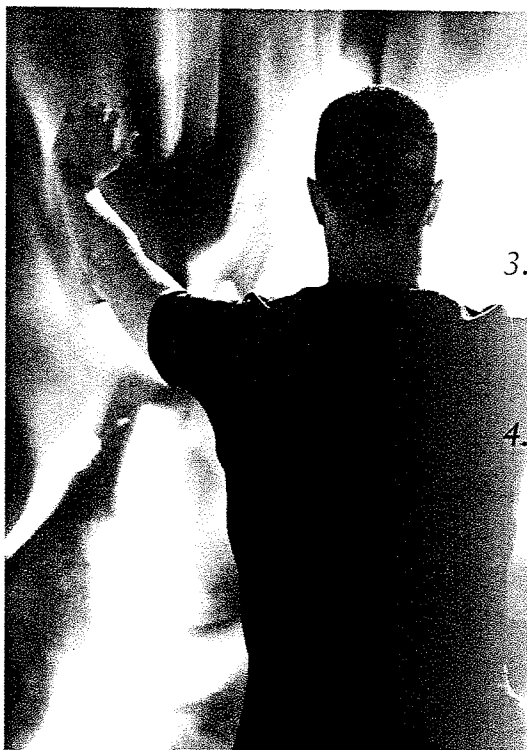
“Because he loves me,” says the LORD, “I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name. He will call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him and show him my salvation.”—Psalm 91:14–16

C. Practical Steps

As you recall, Satan has a limited number of tactics, which he modifies depending on the circumstances and person involved. However, there are basic countermeasures for each of his tactics. As you practice using them in your own life, you'll find yourself better able to use them on behalf of your client as well.

1. *When Satan attacks your identity*, use the Word of God and declare who you are in Christ. For example, if he whispers that God hates you, reply that God loved you so much He died on the cross for you, has adopted you, given you His spirit, and is with you all the time. (See “Who I Am in Christ” at the end of this chapter.)
2. *When Satan attacks God's identity*, use the Word of God and stand firm on what you know is true. If he slanders God, saying





that He will abandon you in the counseling room with nothing to say, counteract the lie by saying that God is faithful and ready to give you wisdom the moment you ask for it. (Review “God’s Attributes,” “God’s Character,” and “God’s Names” at the end of Chapter 6.)

3. *When your focus or your attitude is shifting*, take charge over your thoughts and feelings through prayer and worship. Remember that worship has the power to correct your thoughts, feelings, and actions.
4. *When you are cut off from godly relationships*, take action. If you have neglected God, then repent, and return to Him through prayer, worship, meditating on His Word, and talking about Him with other believers (Revelation 2:4–5). If you discover you’re getting cut off from godly human relationships, then repent, and reestablish those relationships as best you can. Make time to spend with other Christians, and make a point to talk with them about God.
5. *When your resources are drained*, pray against Satan. (Remember, not all trials are caused by Satan; sometimes they are the result of our own sin or foolishness, and sometimes they are a consequence of this broken world.) Seek godly counsel, and consider if there are sin issues in your life through which he is gaining authority to harass you.

Conclusion

Spiritual warfare is happening all the time. As you volunteer in a pregnancy resource center, you are in a battle to save lives. Because you desire to help save lives, you will be personally assaulted by the enemy in your weak points. But this is what you were born for—to be a soldier of the cross. You do not need to fear warfare; God promises you will overcome. However, there is no shortcut to becoming a skilled warrior. You must train. As you battle, remember that:

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.—Romans 8:38–39

Methods of Warfare

Taken from the *Intimacy Before Impact Manual*, Chapter 8, Engaging in Spiritual Warfare.

Satan Attacks God's Character

The Lie	The Client Might Say:	The Truth	The Word
God is not really good.	"Why did He let all this junk happen to me?"	God is good all the time!	<i>Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him.—Psalm 34:8</i>
God does not care about me.	"I tried praying, but I don't hear a thing from God. It seems He'd talk to me if He loved me."	God's love is unending. He sees me and even knows my thoughts.	<i>For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.—John 3:16</i>
God can't help. He's not really enough.	"I'm in this too deep!"	Nothing is too hard for God.	<i>Ah, Sovereign LORD, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you.—Jeremiah 32:17</i>
God is just like my father.	"My dad always puts me down and reminds me how often I disappoint him."	God the Father is great and good. Compared to Him, every earthly father is evil.	<i>Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!—Luke 11:11–13</i>
God is too restrictive.	"We just wanted to be together."	God's boundaries are always for my good.	<i>So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good.—Romans 7:12</i>
God should fix my problems right away.	"If God loves me so much, why doesn't He _____?"	God can remove my struggles, but when He doesn't. He is sure to use them for my good.	<i>In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.—1 Peter 1:6–7</i>
God won't listen to me.	"I pray, but nothing happens."	When I pray, God hears me and answers me.	<i>The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles.—Psalm 34:17</i>

Satan Attacks My Identity

Taken from the *Intimacy Before Impact Manual*, Chapter 8. Beginning with Worship.

The Lie	The Client Might Say:	The Truth	The Word
I am unforgivable.	"What I've done is unforgivable."	Jesus died so that all my sins could be forgiven.	<i>If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.</i> —1 John 1:9
I am unlovable.	"God could never love me."	God proved His love by dying for me when I was still a sinner, before I cared about Him.	<i>But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.</i> —Romans 5:8
I am worthless.	"It's not like I really matter anyway."	I am made in God's image. I am very good and precious.	<i>I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.</i> —Psalm 139:14 <i>[The Lord says,] "You are precious and honored in my sight, and . . . I love you."</i> —Isaiah 43:4
I am too weak, too irresponsible, or not smart enough to handle this crisis.	"I can't do this (be pregnant and give birth to a child)!"	I can receive strength from God when I feel unable to cope because He is a rock and a fortress.	<i>The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge. He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.</i> —Psalm 18:2 <i>I can do everything through him who gives me strength.</i> —Philippians 4:13
I am not good enough to earn good things.	"I can't expect _____, because I still sin."	Because of the cross, I am righteous. Though I can't earn good things, I am eligible to receive all of God's gifts!	<i>God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.</i> —2 Corinthians 5:21
I was born a failure. Things always go bad for me.	"This is the story of my life! Everything I touch is ruined."	In His love, God has designed a plan for my life that is good. Even if I face trials, I don't have to be fearful.	<i>"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."</i> —Jeremiah 29:11

Satan Attacks My Relationships

Taken from the Intimacy Before Impact Manual, Chapter 8, Engaging in Spiritual Warfare.

The Lie	The Client Might Say	The Truth	The Word
Strong family rejection will be impossible to overcome.	"My mom and dad will kill me!"	I can have a secure relationship with God as my Heavenly Father, and He is at work in the lives of the people around me.	<i>You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.—Genesis 50:20</i> <i>And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.—Isaiah 9:6b</i>
Preserving my relationship with the baby's father has priority over the life of my child.	"If I don't abort, my boyfriend/husband will leave me!"	God calls me to protect innocent life.	<i>There are six things the LORD hates, seven that are detestable to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a false witness who pours out lies and a man who stirs up dissension among brothers.—Proverbs 6:16–19</i>
Potential rejection and condemnation are impossible to overcome.	"I don't want anyone to know, especially not _____!"	God's way of relating to people includes love and forgiveness.	<i>Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.—Romans 15:7</i> <i>Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.—Colossians 3:13</i>
I will be all alone.	"Even if I wanted this baby, I can't do this all by myself."	I am not alone. God has promised His presence at all times, especially when things in my life get tough.	<i>As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.—Joshua 1:5b</i>

Satan Attacks My Resources (and Increases My Demands)

Taken from the *Intimacy Before Impact Manual*, Chapter 6, Beginning with Worship.

The Lie	The Client Might say	The Truth	The Word
My challenges—finances, physical, emotional—are too big to overcome.	“I already have four children! I just can’t imagine handling one more!”	God won’t allow me to have more than I can bear.	<i>We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. . . . So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.—2 Corinthians 4:8–9, 18</i>
	“My scholarship could be cancelled!”	God uses my trials for my good.	<i>Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.—James 1:2–4</i>
	“My roommate will kick me out.”	God provides for me during my trials.	<i>But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”—2 Corinthians 12:9a</i>
	“I’ll have to be on complete bed rest during the last weeks of my pregnancy.”	God provides for me during my trials.	<i>God has said, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.” So we say with confidence, “The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?”—Hebrews 13:5b–6</i>
	“I am so mad at my boyfriend. He has not been around or talked to me since I told him I was pregnant!”		

The Bible and Spiritual Warfare

Taken from the *Intimacy Before Impact Manual*, Chapter 8, Engaging in Spiritual Warfare.

- Joshua 1:5-9 *No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. . . . Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.*
- Psalms 22:3-5 *Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One; You are the praise of Israel. In you our fathers put their trust; they trusted and you delivered them. They cried to you and were saved; in you they trusted and were not disappointed.*
- Psalms 82:3-5 *Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed. Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked. They know nothing, they understand nothing. They walk about in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are shaken.*
- Psalms 91:14-16 *“Because he loves me,” says the LORD, “I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name. He will call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him and show him my salvation.”*
- Psalms 97:10 *Let those who love the LORD hate evil, for he guards the lives of his faithful ones and delivers them from the hand of the wicked.*
- Psalms 144:1 *Praise be to the LORD my Rock, who trains my hands for war, my fingers for battle.*
- Isaiah 43:13b *No one can deliver out of my hand. When I act, who can reverse it?*
- Isaiah 54:17 *“No weapon forged against you will prevail, and you will refute every tongue that accuses you. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and this is their vindication from me,” declares the LORD.*
- Matthew 16:18-19 *[Jesus said,] “On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”*
- Matthew 18:18 *[Jesus said,] “I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”*
- Luke 9:1-2 *When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.*
- Luke 10:19 *[Jesus said,] “I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you.”*
- John 10:10 *[Jesus said,] “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”*
- Acts 26:17b-18 *[Jesus said,] “I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.”*
- Romans 8:37-39 *No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*
- Romans 12:21 *Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

- 1 Corinthians 15:57–58 *But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.*
- 1 Corinthians 16:13–14 *Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong. Do everything in love.*
- 2 Corinthians 10:3–5 *For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.*
- Ephesians 6:11–17 *Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*
- Colossians 1:12–14 *. . . giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*
- Colossians 2:15 *And having disarmed the powers and authorities, [Jesus] made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.*
- 2 Timothy 1:7 *For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.*
- 2 Timothy 4:7 *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.*
- Hebrews 2:14 *Since the children have flesh and blood, [Jesus] too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil.*
- Hebrews 13:5b *God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."*
- James 4:7–8a *Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and He will come near to you.*
- 1 Peter 5:8–9 *Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.*
- 1 John 3:8b *The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.*
- 1 John 4:4 *You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.*
- 1 John 5:4–5 *. . . for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.*
- Revelation 12:11 *They overcame [the accuser] by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.*
- Revelation 20:10 *And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.*



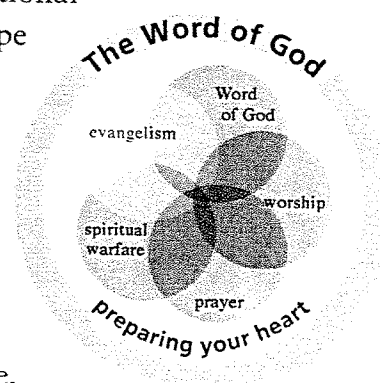
living out evangelism

Your time in the counseling room with your client is a divine appointment. God is at work in her life, even if neither you nor she can see it. Therefore, you will want to be intentional about listening to her, caring for her, and speaking words of hope to her. As you do, remember that the most significant word of hope you can offer her is the news that God loves her, no matter how difficult her circumstances are. He sees her struggle, and He is there for her.

This chapter will talk about living out evangelism, a holistic way to demonstrate care and speak love and truth. This is the pro-life approach to evangelism, and it is especially helpful for people during a time of crisis. In the midst of your client's struggle, she may need both a cup of cold water and the Living Bread.

[Jesus said,] "And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward."—Matthew 10:42

[Jesus said,] "I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."—John 6:51



Living out Evangelism Means:

- Listening
- Being encouraging
- Being kind
- Being well-informed about abortion, pregnancy, biblical sexuality, and other life issues
- Having an ongoing, love relationship with God
- Being sensitive
- Being compassionate
- Being bold
- Taking time out for others
- Lending a hand
- Praying
- Telling the story of God's redemption
- Giving respect
- Being patient

I. What Does it Mean to Live out Evangelism?

Evangelism comes from a Greek word which merely means “to bring good news.” Evangelism is, therefore, our privilege to share the good news: God loves us and died that we might experience His love!

We all share good news regularly, and we love doing it: “My boss said I did a good job on that project.” “Did you hear John’s getting married?” “Maria loves being a counselor.” “I bought this sweater for \$2!” Why should telling the good news about Jesus be any different?

Yet many of us cringe at the thought of evangelizing, because we have made it into something it was never meant to be. Some of us think of evangelism as a pushy sales approach to get the unsaved into heaven. Because it feels stiff and unnatural, we avoid doing it even though we feel that we should, and we feel guilty for avoiding it. Others of us imagine that evangelism is a ministry for the gifted and are happy to leave it to the professionals.

Instead of thinking of evangelism like that, try thinking of it as something we live out in everything we do and say around non-Christians. It is the process of bringing the good news to the whole person: spiritual, emotional, mental, social, and physical. It means being compassionate, doing what we can to meet their needs, and caring about their lives. And it means sharing the hope we have in Christ in a way that is relevant to them and in doses that are helpful, not overwhelming.

II. Why is Living out Evangelism Important in a Pregnancy Resource Center?

A. *Only God can meet your client’s deepest needs.*

Increased sexual activity, unplanned pregnancies, and abortions have created a vast mission field: millions of women need to hear about Jesus’ love and forgiveness. Therefore, it is urgent that we respond with the message of life and hope found in Jesus.

When a woman in crisis visits a pregnancy resource center, she comes seeking solutions to urgent and pressing needs of her life. By listening to her, offering confidential counsel, and providing direct and practical care, the volunteer counselor helps relieve her trauma.

Who I Am in Christ¹

Taken from the *Intimacy Before Impact Manual*, Chapter 8, Engaging in Spiritual Warfare.

I am Accepted.

John 1:12	<i>I am God's child.</i>
John 15:15	<i>As a disciple, I am a friend of Jesus Christ.</i>
Romans 5:1	<i>I have been justified.</i>
1 Corinthians 6:17	<i>I am united with the Lord, and I am one with Him in spirit.</i>
1 Corinthians 6:19–20	<i>I have been bought with a price, and I belong to God.</i>
Ephesians 1:3–8	<i>I have been chosen by God and adopted as His child.</i>
Colossians 1:13–14	<i>I have been redeemed and forgiven of all my sins.</i>
Colossians 2:9–10	<i>I am complete in Christ.</i>
Hebrews 4:14–16	<i>I have direct access to the throne of grace through Jesus Christ.</i>

I am Secure.

Romans 8:1–2	<i>I am free from condemnation.</i>
Romans 8:28	<i>I am assured that God works for my good in all circumstances.</i>
Romans 8:31–39	<i>I am free from any condemnation brought against me and I cannot be separated from the love of God.</i>
2 Corinthians 1:21–22	<i>I have been established, anointed, and sealed by God.</i>
Colossians 3:1–4	<i>I am hidden with Christ in God.</i>
Philippians 1:6	<i>I am confident that God will complete the good work He started in me.</i>
Philippians 3:20	<i>I am a citizen in heaven.</i>
2 Timothy 1:7	<i>I have not been given a spirit of fear but of power, love, and a sound mind.</i>
1 John 5:18	<i>I am born of God, and the evil one cannot touch me.</i>

I am Significant.

John 15:5	<i>I am a branch of Jesus Christ, the true vine, and a channel of His life.</i>
John 15:16	<i>I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit.</i>
1 Corinthians 3:16	<i>I am God's temple.</i>
2 Corinthians 5:17–21	<i>I am a minister of reconciliation for God.</i>
Ephesians 2:6	<i>I am seated with Jesus Christ in the heavenly realm.</i>
Ephesians 2:10	<i>I am God's workmanship.</i>
Ephesians 3:12	<i>I may approach God with freedom and confidence.</i>
Philippians 4:13	<i>I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.</i>

1. Used by permission from Freedom in Christ Ministries, Knoxville, TN. All rights reserved.

Warfare Prayer

Written by Victor Matthews

I Give Thanks.

Heavenly Father, I worship You. You are worthy to receive all glory and honor and praise. Thank You for loving me from past eternity. Thank you for sending Jesus into the world to die as my substitute. Thank you that through Him You have completely forgiven me, adopted me into Your family, given me eternal life, made me complete and righteous, and offered to be my daily help and strength.

I Make Wise Choices.

I affirm that the Word of God is true; I choose to live today in its light. I choose, Father, to live in fellowship and obedience to You. Open my eyes. Show me the areas of my life which do not please You. Cleanse me from all that would give Satan a foothold against me. Thank You, Jesus, for triumphing over all principalities and powers. I claim Your victory for my life today. I reject all of Satan's insinuations, accusations, and temptations. In every way, I stand in all it means to be the King of Kings' adopted child, and I welcome all the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

I Take off the Old and Put on the New.

I thank You, Father, that by faith I have received the victory of the Crucifixion, so I put off the old nature with its selfishness, fear, weakness, deceitfulness, and lust. In exchange I receive the victory of the Resurrection, and I put on the new nature with its love, courage, strength, honesty, and holiness. I am Your temple.

I Invite the Holy Spirit to Work in Me.

Blessed Holy Spirit, I pray that You would fill me. Come into my life, break down every idol, and cast out every foe. Open my eyes that I might see how great You are and how complete Your provision is for this day. I claim all of Your will for me today. Thank You that I can live today with You, filled with love, joy, and peace; with longsuffering, gentleness, and goodness; with meekness, faithfulness, and self-control. Since I recognize this is Your will for

me, I reject and resist all endeavors of the enemy to rob me. I refuse in this day to believe anything that contradicts Your Word, whether they are feelings, accusations, or lies.

I Reject Satan and Choose Christ.

Heavenly Father, show me the way Satan is hindering me, tempting me, lying to me, and distorting the truth in my life. In Jesus' name, I tear down the strongholds of Satan formed against my mind—I surrender my mind to You. Holy Spirit, I choose to be transformed by the renewing of my mind. I demolish the strongholds of Satan formed against my emotions—I give my emotions to You. You have given me the Spirit of power, love, and a sound mind, not a spirit of fear. I smash the strongholds of Satan formed against my will—I give my will to You. I determine to make right decisions of faith. I crush the strongholds of Satan formed against my body today—I give my body to You and recognize by faith that all wicked spirits are under my feet. I bring the blood of Jesus Christ between them and me, and I command them in Jesus' name to leave my presence. Heavenly Father, I surrender myself completely to You. I take my place with Jesus in the heavenlies.

I Put on God's Armor.

I am thankful for the Armor You have provided. I put on the Girdle of Truth, the Breastplate of Righteousness, the Sandals of Peace, and the Helmet of Salvation. I lift up the Shield of Faith against all the fiery darts of the enemy, and I take in my hand the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, against all the forces of evil in my life.

I Ask for Help.

Enable me to be the kind of person that pleases You. Enable me to be aggressive in prayer and faith and think about Your Word. Enable me to make the practice of Your Word a priority. I refuse to be discouraged. You are my hope. I rejoice in Your goodness and mercy.

In Jesus' name, amen.

As she does, she is living out evangelism. Sometimes that is the most a volunteer can do.

Other times, due to the very nature of a client's crisis, she is tender and open to considering her deeper, spiritual needs and discovering God's purpose for her life. A woman may be silently screaming, "I cannot do this on my own. There must be more to life than my dismal circumstances!" In this case, sharing the good news becomes an integral part of how a volunteer lives out evangelism. Many volunteers have experienced the joy of leading clients to new life in Jesus Christ and encouraging them on the road of discipleship.

B. God wants His love to be expressed to your client.

God loves your client. He wants the best for her, and that includes salvation, a life of purpose, and an intimate relationship with Him. As His servant at the center, He has commissioned and commanded you to pass on His message of love. It is your privilege and responsibility to share this good news with the clients you see.

- Share when you have an opportunity to testify to truths about God.

Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke, and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.—2 Timothy 4:2

- Be intentional about sharing.

*[Jesus said,] "Therefore go and make disciples."
Matthew 28:19a*

God has this wonderful way of matching people up. He knows what a particular client needs to hear, and He brings her and the volunteer together at the center. You will be amazed how your background, circumstances, and daily experiences with God will supernaturally connect with a client's own background, circumstances, and need for encouragement. There are no coincidences with Jesus.



God has this
wonderful way
of matching
people up.

III. What is the Good News?

When you became a Christian, there were four basis truths you believed: 1) God exists and loves you, 2) you needed a savior, 3) Jesus is God and died for you, and 4) you needed to make a decision. The following list reviews these four truths in some detail. Take time to review and remember these truths.

A. *The truth about God*

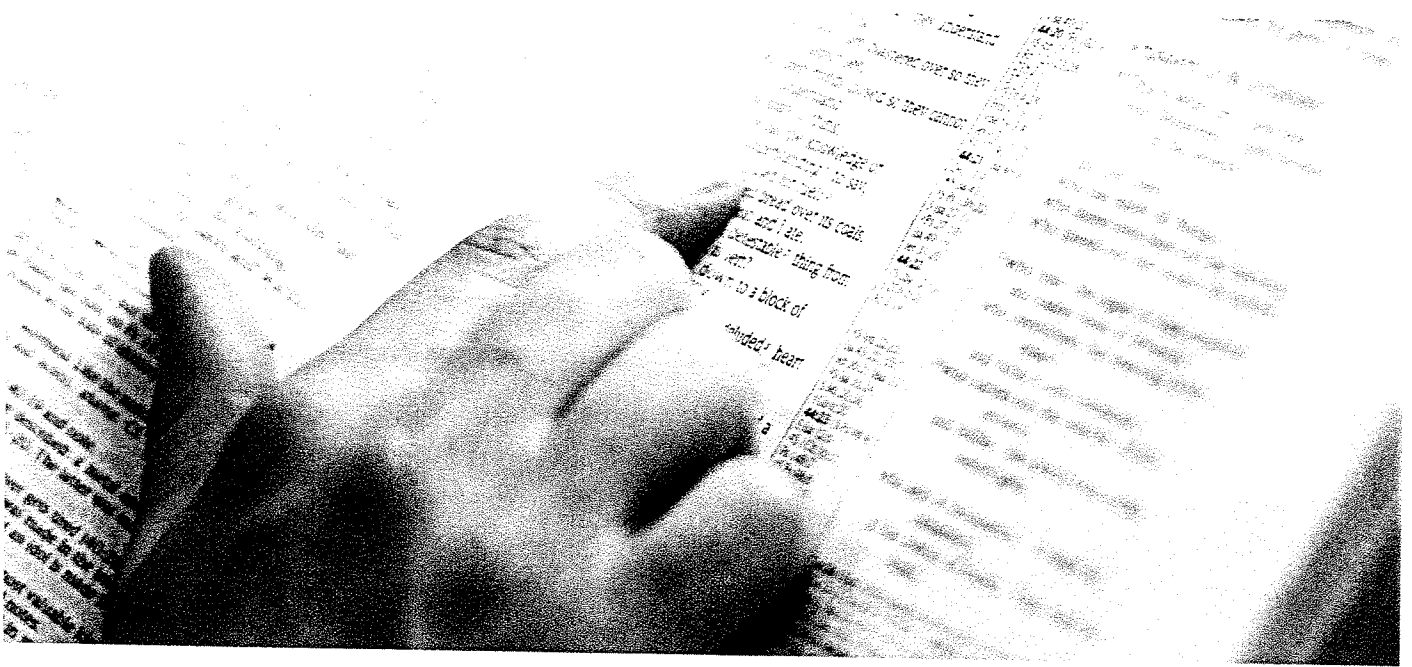
- *God is the Sovereign Creator of all.* He is the One who brought the universe, matter, and all life into existence (Psalm 104).
- *God loves us* (1 John 4:7–10).
- *God is Holy.* God is perfect, and He deserves our adoration (Revelation 4:8).
- *God is always at work.* God is never sleeping or taken by surprise by the events in our lives. Instead He is actively working on our behalf (Psalm 121:3–8; Philippians 1:6).

B. *The truth about us*

- *All people were created in God's image.* God declares each person to be “very good” (Genesis 1:26–27, 31).
- *We were designed for fellowship with, worship of, and service to our Creator* (1 John 1:3; Isaiah 43:7; Ephesians 2:10; 4:24).
- *We all sin against God* (Romans 3:10–18, 23; 5:12).
- *Sin's penalty is death.* Death is eternal separation from God (Romans 6:23).
- *People are powerless to remove sin* and its consequences (Psalm 49:7–9).

C. *The truth about Jesus Christ*

- *Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man* (Philippians 2:6–8).
- *Jesus died on the cross in our place.* He took our sin on Himself, bore our punishment, and eternally satisfied God's justice (Romans 5:6, 8–10).
- *Jesus was miraculously raised from the dead* and now sits at God's right hand where He intercedes for us (Romans 8:34).



- *Through faith in Jesus Christ, we have forgiveness of sin, are declared righteous, are reconciled to God, and are made fit for eternal life with God (Ephesians 2:8–9).*
- *Jesus Christ will never reject anyone who comes to Him (John 6:37).*

D. The truth about our personal response

- *To receive salvation, we must agree that we are sinners who deserve death, yet Jesus died for our sins, and therefore we are forgiven (Romans 3:21–26).*
- *Faith in Jesus Christ requires us to stop trying to save ourselves (religion, good deeds, etc.). Instead, we place our entire confidence in His ability to save us. Knowing He has saved us generates a wellspring of love and thankfulness within us, causing us to want to draw close to God, do good works, and stop those activities which pull us away from Him (Ephesians 2:8–10; Romans 6:23; James 2:17).*
- *If we reject Jesus Christ, we remain alienated from God and under His righteous condemnation of sin (John 3:18).*

You will want to become comfortable talking about these four foundational gospel truths, for they are part of your own transformation story. Therefore, you may want to practice telling them in a shortened version and in your own words to a friend or family member.

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.—2 Timothy 2:15

IV. How to Live out Evangelism in the Pregnancy Resource Center

A. Before you enter the counseling room

1. *Pray.* Ask God to bring to the center women who need to hear the gospel (John 12:32). Ask Him to give you His love for the clients you will see. Pray for direction, sensitivity, and boldness to know how to love her and what and when to speak.
2. *Prepare for spiritual warfare* (Ephesians 6:11–12). The last thing Satan wants is for this woman to hear about Jesus.
3. *Familiarize yourself with your center's materials* (Bibles and tracts) that clients can take home, so you can determine which ones will meet a particular client's needs.
4. *Practice using a tool to help you share the good news.* Consider using “Your Testimony” or “The Bridge to Life” at the end of this chapter to develop your own testimony. You could also read one of the books suggested below to help you feel more confident. Remember, though, tools are just tools. Let the Holy Spirit guide you in how to speak and demonstrate His love. It is the internal work of God Himself who draws men and women to Himself; the method is not nearly as important.

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.—1 Corinthians 13:1

B. Suggested Reading on Evangelism

- *Becoming a Contagious Christian* by Bill Hybels (Zondervan, 1994)
- *More than a Carpenter* by Josh McDowell (Tyndale House Publishers, 1987)
- *The New Evidence that Demands a Verdict: Fully Updated to Answer the Questions Challenging Christians Today* by Josh McDowell (Thomas Nelson, 1999)

- *The Case for Christ: A Journalist's Personal Investigation of the Evidence for Jesus* by Lee Strobel (Zondervan, 1998)
- *Out of the Saltshaker & into the World: Evangelism as a Way of Life* by Rebecca Manley Pippert (InterVarsity Press, 1999)

C. Suggested Reading on Comparative Religion

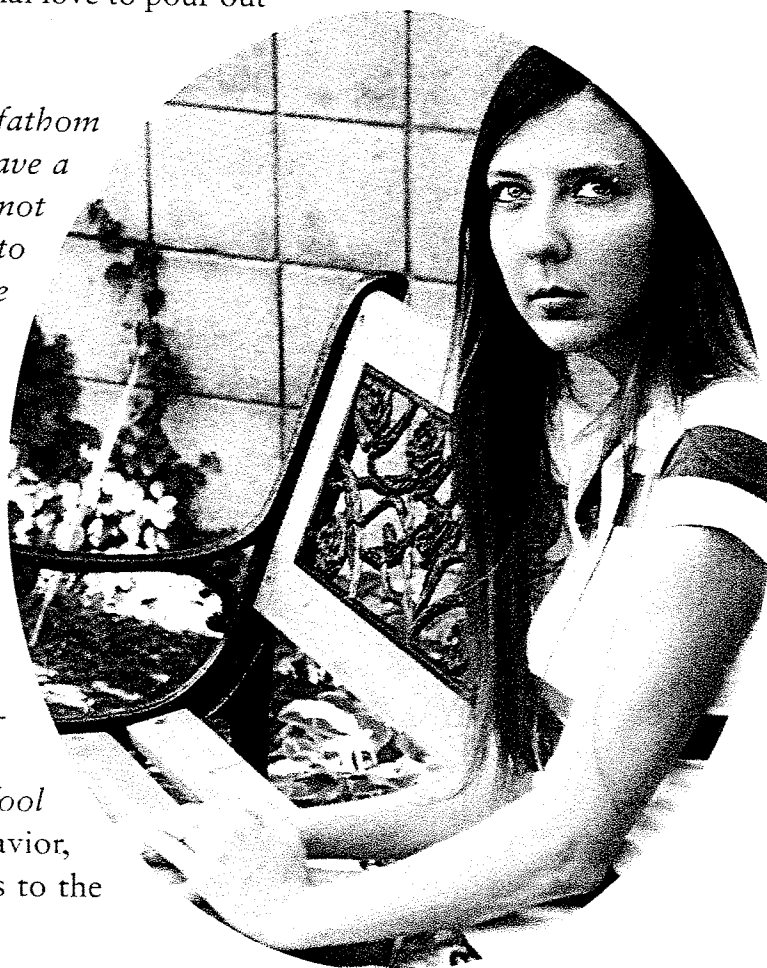
- *So what's the Difference?* by Fritz Ridenour (Gospel Light Publications, 2001)
- *Handbook of Today's Religions* by Josh McDowell (Thomas Nelson, 1992)
- *But Don't All Religions Lead to God? Navigating the Multi-Faith Maze* by Michael Green (Baker Books, 2002)
- *The Compact Guide to World Religions* by Dean C. Halverson, editor (Bethany House Publishers, 1996)

D. In the counseling room

1. Above all else, allow God's unconditional love to pour out of you.

If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.
—1 Corinthians 13:2–4

2. Listen and respond to your client as she tells her story. Details like her church background, view of God, interest in spiritual things, and knowledge of the Bible can be good springboards for broaching the topic of Jesus Christ's love with your client. (See Chapter 18, "Communication and Counsel.")
3. Do not let her outward appearance fool you. Though a woman's lifestyle, behavior, or speech may signal unresponsiveness to the





gospel, she may still be open. Her conduct or appearance may be calculated to intimidate or give an air of self-sufficiency when, in fact, she feels insecure and frightened.

4. *Be sensitive to your client's response.* Your goal is not to pressure your client to accept Christ but rather to be intentional about sharing and to provide her with an opportunity to move closer to Christ in every way possible. Not everyone in crisis is ready to hear the full gospel story. Perhaps your client had a bad, religious experience, or perhaps you are having a difficult time connecting with her. In these cases, you might choose not to tell her the gospel, but you can still live out evangelism by expressing God's loving kindness through other words or actions. Be sure to ask permission to pray for her. Clients rarely refuse prayer when a volunteer has listened well and expressed care. Your prayer provides her with an opportunity to expand or correct her view of God.
5. *God can use even our mistakes* as we minister to clients. Results don't come from sharing the gospel perfectly. Results come from God at work in you and in your client.

[Jesus said,] "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him."—John 6:44a

6. *You can offer to meet again.* A client who remains in contact with the center for its supportive services will be in regular contact with Christians and able to hear the gospel in many different contexts. You can also arrange to meet with her again to talk more in depth. God's love is patient and persistent!

One Volunteer's Story

Judy and I had such a good conversation and time of prayer about her pregnancy that I hated to see the time end. I was not sure she had a relationship with Christ and knew she did not have any Christian friends for encouragement. The pressure she faced to talk to her parents and boyfriend were a huge burden. Judy was frightened, convinced that her mother would "kill her" and kick her out of the house. When I suggested she return the next week at the same time to pray again, she smiled her biggest smile yet. Over the course of three months, she came by at least four times to pray. Slowly I watched Judy's relationship and faith in the Lord grow. When she finally did tell her mother

she was pregnant, not only did her mother open up her home for Judy to live, she purchased healthy food to replace the junk food which always filled the refrigerator, stopped smoking, and began planning to change her job so she could help care for her grandchild. Judy learned trusting God takes time. I learned that too!

Conclusion

We have the privilege of expressing God's heart and being His hands to women in crisis. Even so, it is God's job to draw a person to Himself and lead her to repentance through kindness (Romans 2:4). When you come as a volunteer, God gives you a job. It is your job to listen, assess what your client's needs are, and care for her. This includes careful listening and sharing the gospel when you can. Practicing good communication skills (See Chapter 18, "Communication and Counsel.") will help you do this well. But keep in mind that everything you do at the center, not just what you say, is an expression and reflection of God's love. She is getting God's message of love and hope in word *and* deed and that is living out evangelism.



Personal Assessment

Taken from the *Intimacy Before Impact Manual*, Chapter 9, Living Out Evangelism.

How comfortable are you with sharing the gospel? Why?

Fear of not knowing the Bible well enough. (You'll never know it all. If you don't know something, admit it. Offer to find out and get back with the client.—2 Peter 1:3)

Fear of not presenting the Gospel the "right" way. (You'll never improve if you never try. More importantly, trust God to give you the words.—Colossians 4:3-4)

Have you led someone to the Lord? When?

Fear of rejection. (Measure your success by how well you obeyed and not by your hearer's response. Your job is to speak the message God gives you.—Ezekiel 3:16-21)

How did you see God at work?

Fear of not knowing enough about other religions. (You don't have to be an expert to confidently tell how Jesus has changed your life.—John 4:39)

Other:

Who are the non-Christians you spend time with? Pray for?

What is your personal prayer request for yourself in the area of evangelism?

What is your greatest fear regarding sharing God's truth and love?

Check all the fears which have hindered you in the past.

Your Testimony

Taken from the *Intimacy Before Impact Manual*, Chapter 9, Living Out Evangelism.

Your conversion story is personal and reflects the unique way you met the Lord. In preparing your testimony, begin by thinking through the following questions. Write out your answers in two or three sentences. The goal of putting your personal testimony into words is to help you quickly and briefly share as the Holy Spirit leads you. Practice condensing your personal testimony so that you can tell it to someone in two or three minutes.

But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,—1 Peter 3:15

What was your life like before you knew you needed Christ?

What circumstances led up to your decision to follow Christ?

What changes have occurred in your life since you became a Christian?

What Bible verse(s) had special meaning to you when you first followed Christ?

If you do not have an astonishing conversion story, do not make the mistake of thinking you have a poor testimony. David says, “Tell of all His wonderful acts” (Psalm 105:2b). When it comes to telling of the joys of an ongoing relationship with Jesus, you have many testimonies.

Tell how Christ got you through a difficult time.

Tell of a Bible verse that recently meant a lot to you and why.

Tell of a time when God healed your heart.

The Bridge to Life

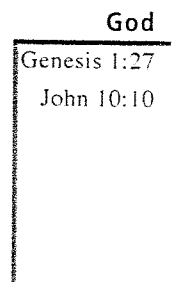
Taken from the *Intimacy Before Impact Manual*. Chapter 9, Living Out Evangelism.

This Bridge illustration can be sketched out anywhere in 15 or 20 minutes. As you draw, turn to each Bible verse and have your client read it. Asking her questions will help you understand what she thinks about her relationship with God.

Step 1—God's Love and His plan

God created us in His own image and wants us to experience a full life assured of His love, abundant and eternal. But He didn't make us robots—He gave us the freedom of choice.

- Since God planned for us to have peace and abundant life right now, why are most people not having this experience?
- What do you think it means to fully live life?
- How are God and mankind different?

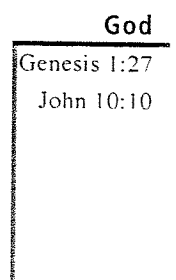
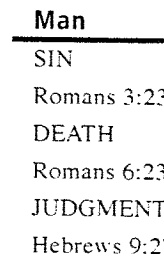


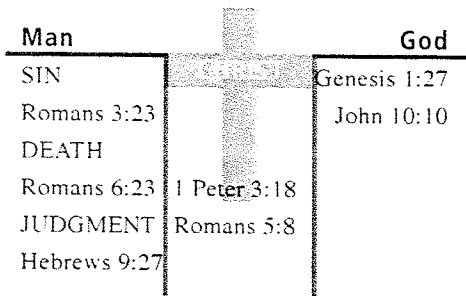
Step 2—Our Problem: Separation from God

God created us in His own image to have abundant (meaningful) lives. He did not make us robots to automatically love and obey Him, but He gave us a will and the freedom of choice. We chose to disobey God and go our own way. We still make this choice today. This results in separation from God.

On our own, there's no way we can attain the perfection needed to bridge the gap to God. Through the ages, individuals have tried many ways, without success: good works, religion, money, morality, philosophy, etc.

- Have you ever wanted to talk to God but He seemed far away?
- When you think of death, what do you think of?

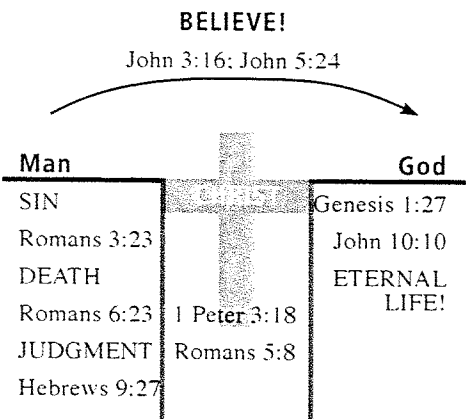




Step 3—God’s Remedy: The Cross

Jesus Christ is the only answer to this problem. He died on the cross and rose from the grave, paying the penalty for our sin and bridging the gap between God and people.

- If death can be defined as separation from God, what is life?
- Why did Christ die?



Step 4—Our Response

To believe means to trust and be committed: acknowledge our sinfulness, trust Christ’s forgiveness, and let Him control our life. Eternal, abundant life is a gift for us to receive.

- Where would you place yourself in this illustration?
- Is there any reason why you shouldn’t cross over to God’s side and be certain of eternal life?