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Study Given by W. D. Frazee

[Recording started in progress]

So, if you're going to be a counselor with others, you must fill your mind with the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. And, you know, it builds confidence when people come for counsel, and you open up a book, turn to a certain page, and let them read the paragraph that has the answer to their question. Doesn't it? That's the thing.

"Well," you say, "but that's my trouble. I don't know very many references." Well, two things: use what you have and then keep adding to the list. That's the thing.

Do you know, there are some of you that at one time your vocabulary was limited to one word? I say some of you—all of you. I used to be that way. We all started with one word. Didn't we? But, what did we do? Well, we kept using that one and kept adding to it, didn't we? And we can do that with references: Bible references and Spirit of Prophecy references.

The man that knows 10,000 Bible texts started with one. And wherever you are in your knowledge of Bible and Spirit of Prophecy quotations and references, if you just follow that simple rule—start using what you have and keep adding, you can become more and more a wise counselor.

Now, let's see. You folks that are just coming in, we're just giving some simple suggestions on counseling—dealing with human minds and souls. If somebody comes to you for advice or counsel, the first thing we said was what? Listen. Let them tell what's on their hearts, and try to understand how they look at the thing. Get their viewpoint. You can never help them with their problem until you see what their problem is.

And then, the second thing is, if possible, help them to find their answer instead of you telling them. Sometimes, you have to tell them. But as far as possible, help them to find their answer. You may do that by asking questions. You may do it by reading references or letting them read references.

Occasionally, I have found it helpful in counseling when a person comes with a certain question to say, "Well, now, brother or sister, there's a chapter in Volume so and so of the testimonies. If you read that through, I think you'll find the answer to your question." There are times when I've left people with it just like that.

I think it best for them under some circumstances to dig through the chapter and find their own answer in it. You see, the Spirit of God can guide them to do that,

especially on things that, shall I say, are moot questions or where you're liable to be misunderstood.

May I say that a great responsibility rests upon everyone who is connected with a work of this kind, not to set forth your own ideas or opinions? "Well," you say, "what shall I give?" Well, if that's all you know to give, the person might be better off without anything. Do you know that?

The wiser a counselor you are, the more often you may say frankly to a person, "I don't know." "Well," you say, "would you say that to somebody that came to you for counsel?" Sure, sure, I would.

Let me read that to you:

"...let all be careful what they say; if they know not the mind of God in some matters, let them never speak from a guess or suppose so. If they know nothing definite, let them say so, and let the individual rely wholly upon God" *Country Living*, page 27.

Isn't that interesting? And how much better it is to do that than to give some guess or idea of your own.

You know, we are told to work for the unity of the church. If people would steadfastly hold to this role of standing on the revealed will of God and in matters where light is not clear of being a bit more cautious about venturing their human opinion, don't you know there'd be a lot more unity? A great deal more unity.

If God has spoken on a matter, the best thing we can do is to echo God's words, isn't it? Certainly, we wouldn't want to put our opinion *instead* of His words, would we? And if God *hasn't* spoken on a matter, our human opinion may not be of a great deal of value.

There are matters, of course, where human advice may be helpful. If I'm going to buy a piece of real estate over here and I'm unacquainted with the area, I might well call on someone who's lived here a long time, and it would be perfectly proper for him to say, "Well, Mr. Frazee, I think that's a good buy," or for him again to say, "No, I think that would be a poor buy," and it might be a wise thing for me to rely on.

But I'm talking especially about matters of the Spirit and character—Christian living—where we have so much counsel in the Spirit of Prophecy. If we can lead people to those precious counsels, we have done them a great service. Oh, how glad people are who really want help when they get some help out of these inspired books. Aren't they?

Now, another very important point in counseling—remember, "counsel" is just what the word suggests, it's counsel, not dictation. It's advice, not making the decisions of others for them.

Do not feel, when people come to you for counsel, that you must make their decisions for them. If you do, you'll undertake a job God never gave you, and you'll do a poor job of it. And don't let them *think* you're trying to make their decisions for them. If you do, it's liable to put them in one of two places, either one of which is too bad. Either they'll resent it, and thus, it'll be difficult for them to get any help out of your counsel, or else they'll lap it up and ask for more, and *you* will become the decision maker for them instead of developing their individuality. Either way is too bad.

When people come for counsel, if you have some counsel, give it to them. But make plain to them in the giving of the counsel, "Now, this is a decision that *you* must make with the Lord." You must do this.

Not very long ago, somebody came to me for counsel about a certain matter, and after I had given the best counsel I had, they began to tell me all the reasons why it was better to do something else. I listened very carefully, and then I didn't say any more about it. There was nothing more for me to say.

I just looked at them, and I said, "Well now, brother, you know, I very seldom give counsel to anybody unless they ask me. The next thing is, I don't think that I know all the answers, and if they ask me for counsel, I just give them the best I have and then leave it with them." But I said, "You don't need to feel for a minute that you'll offend me if you do something different. I've told you just what you asked me. You seek the Lord and do what He needs you to do."

And when you take that attitude in counsel, it's relaxing both to you and to the person that is seeking the counsel. It takes you off the strain and takes them off the strain. It's the proper relationship.

The book *Ministry of Healing* has been of as much help to me as perhaps any other part of the Spirit of Prophecy on this matter of dealing with souls. I'd like to suggest to you this wonderful chapter, "Helping the Tempted," on page 161.

One of the problems in home leadership, institutional leadership, and any phase of the work is the problem of dealing with people who have failed, who have slipped, who have made a mistake. It may be a little thing like misspelling a word; it may be a very serious thing like breaking one of God's Ten Commandments in a serious way. But whatever the mistake or fault or secret sin or open failure, there is a great deal of help for us in the study of this chapter on "Helping the Tempted."

On page 165, it says:

"We are saved by hope' ...The fallen must be led to feel that it is not too late for them to be men. Christ honored man with His confidence and thus placed him on his honor"
Ministry of Healing, page 165.

Oh friends, nobody, no matter what they've done, needs to be kicked out. Jesus didn't kick Judas out, did He? No. The time came when Judas left. I know there are times that people have to be disfellowshipped from the church, and I know

that there are times that people have to be cut off from the institution. We've been plainly told that. But even then, it can be done in love and sympathy, and usually, in a way that the individual himself recognizes that, under the circumstances, the only thing to do is for him to make a change of location. That has to be done sometimes.

But oh, so many times, if we're faithful in revealing the love of Christ, along with firmness, they can be reclaimed, they can be helped, to go on the Christian way rejoicing.

Well, I see it's a little after 6:00, and we've had this interesting interruption with fighting the forest fire. That's one of those providences that we just have to leave with our Lord. I'm sure that God understands the reasons.

But as we close this little class, I had expected to have you do a little writing this afternoon, but since we've had this interruption and all are not here, we won't have that now. We'll just have a prayer in closing that God will be with us. I trust that each one of you, either as a home head or as a helper in a home, will help make the home of which you are a part a representation of the home above. Every one of us can do that. Can't we, folks? A representation of the home above, and as we do, it'll be a preparation for the home above. Won't it? Yes.

All right. We'll kneel together now and seek the Lord.

Our dear Father in Heaven, we thank Thee with all our hearts for the precious counsels that we have shared together. Looking into Thy word and the testimonies of Thy Spirit through these classes, and we thank Thee for the Holy Spirit, who has been promised to lead us into Thy truth.

We pray Thou wilt rightly interpret to our hearts all the great principles we've studied and their applications. Keep us from being men and women of narrow minds, who seize upon isolated statements, either human or divine, and twist them and pervert them or stretch them farther than they were ever meant to be stretched.

Help every one in this program to develop a balanced mind. A mind that thinks as God thinks and comes to the same conclusions that God comes to. Oh, what a wonderful opportunity we have, dear Lord! We thank Thee for hearing us. In Jesus' precious name, amen.

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