



Biblical Soul Care in the Local Church

Biblical Counseling and the Noetic Effects of Sin



“There is no need to create a faithful model of change
beginning with a faithless model of change.”
(Heath Lambert)

Common Grace:

“Every favor of whatever kind or degree, falling short of salvation, which this undeserving and sin-cursed world enjoys at the hand of God.” (John Murray)

Common Grace:

Jesus Christ is “...*the true light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.*” (John 1:9)

Common Grace:

“The knowledge that believers and unbelievers possess about the world is real knowledge that comes from Jesus Christ... [He] is the living Word who illumines all the thoughts of everyone in His world.”
(Heath Lambert)

Common Grace:

“The common grace of God in the intellectual realm also results in an ability to grasp truth and distinguish it from error, and to experience growth in knowledge that can be used in the investigation of the universe and in the task of subduing the earth. This means that all science and technology carried out by non-Christians is a result of common grace, allowing them to make incredible discoveries and inventions, to develop the earth’s resources into many material goods, to produce and distribute those resources, and to have skill in their productive work.” (Wayne Grudem)

Common grace is not saving grace.



The Noetic Effects of Sin

Noetic (*nous*) = mind

- Sin's deceptive and degrading effects on the way unbelievers **think** and **reason** -- no matter how worldly-wise they are

How does worldly wisdom, expressed through psychology and psychiatry, undermine the sufficiency of Scripture in an integrated model of soul care among God's people?



In relation to God and truth, sin reduces our minds to:

Hostility

- Romans 8:5-8
- Romans 1:18ff
- Romans 3:10ff

In relation to God and truth, sin reduces our minds to:

Inability

- 1 Corinthians 2:14

In relation to God and truth, sin reduces our minds to:

Blindness

- 2 Corinthians 4:3-4

In relation to God and truth, sin reduces our minds to:

Deception

- 2 Corinthians 11:3

In relation to God and truth, sin reduces our minds to:

Futility

- Ephesians 4:17-20

The most significant point about the noetic effects of sin is its progressive effects on the mind.

- The noetic effects of sin primarily emphasize the way sin intensifies to militate against the truths of God's existence, authority, and goodness.

General Revelation → **God is**

Common Grace → **God is *good and kind***

The noetic effects of sin distort those interpretations and suppress the truths that God exists and God is good.

(Romans 1:18ff)



A **redeemed** mind means that believers:

- Have the **mind** of Christ (1 Cor. 2:16)
- Live transformed lives by the renewing of our **minds** (Rom. 12:2)
- Set our **minds** on God's interests (Col. 3:1-2; Matt. 16:33)

Counseling that does not apply **God's wisdom** to the heart and mind with the goal of greater **Christlikeness** will ultimately be **unhelpful** and **harmful** because of:

- Unbelief
- The **noetic** effects of sin

“...sinful human thought reverses God’s thought.” (Jay Adams)

“Give me your heart, my son, and let your eyes delight in My ways.” (Proverbs 23:26]