

JOSH BLOUNT QUOTES

SGPC 2025

“Scripture is about understanding and helping people.”

— *David Powlison*

“You are called to do something so simple that only a Christian can do it. Hearts may be unsearchable and insane, but the word of God reveals the thoughts and intentions of the heart (Heb. 4:12-13). My self-righteous reaction to criticism may be an unsearchable morass of iniquity, but I can learn to name it for what it is, to turn for needed mercies, to seek and find the God who humbles me. We can come to know ourselves truly (though never wholly). Similarly, though the purposes and intentions of another’s heart are deep water, a man of understanding draws them out (Prov. 20:5). You can learn what you need to know. Though you have no privileged access into any soul, though every strategy or truth can be resisted, though you have no power to open blind eyes or to make deaf ears listen, God uses your ministry to cure souls. Human beings are idiosyncratic in every detail, yet there is no temptation that is not common to all; you can comfort others in any affliction with the comfort that you receive in your particular affliction (1 Cor. 10:13; 2 Cor. 1:4). Fundamental unities make us comprehensible enough to significantly help each other. These are things a mere Christian can do.”

— *David Powlison*

“Counseling usually starts with immediate, troubling experience, and moves toward the God whose person, words, and actions bring light. In contrast, preaching usually moves from Bible exposition toward life application. The two aspects of ministry demand different, but complementary, skill sets. The Lord and his prophets and apostles move freely in both directions. Pastors need the complete skill set.”

— *David Powlison*

“...the professional self-image of the talking-cure professions...shapes our culture’s implicit belief that ‘psychotherapy/counseling’ is essentially analogous to medical doctoring. But this complex of meanings profoundly misshapes assumptions of what counseling really is and ideally ought to be. Counseling per se is not like medical

doctoring. It is pastoring....Counseling is not essentially a technical enterprise calling for technical expertise. It is a relational and pastoral enterprise engaging in care and cure of the soul. Both 'psycho-therapy' and 'psychiatry' attempt pastoral work. They engage in 'care and cure of the soul' as their etymologies accurately signify. Sigmund Freud rightly defined therapists as 'secular pastoral workers.'...But they serve in pastorates with no God and no church. They aim to restore straying, suffering, willful, dying human beings. But they consider Christ unnecessary to their pastoral work. As a matter of principle, they will not lead strugglers to the Savior of strays. *You know better.*"

– David Powlison

"...the church must not give over the care and cure of troubled souls to other voices. Those voices may be well-intended, but when they try to fix 'with God' problems using a 'without God' message, *you have a problem with that*. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Ps. 111:10; Prov. 9:10). Consciousness of God is the starting point, the system-aligning principle, the architectonic prerequisite for making good sense of life. When friends, family, coworkers, the mass media, self-help books, or psychotherapeutic professionals ignore reality, they inevitably miscounsel. In Jeremiah's metaphor, they heal wounds lightly, "saying 'Peace, peace,' when there is no peace" (Jer. 8:11). I will say it again. Pastors must not hand over care and cure of souls to other voices. Any number of people, paid and unpaid, are more than willing to do your work for you."

– David Powlison, emphasis added

"I have a commandment to resist sin, to overcome evil, to fight the good fight of faith: and I pray, with whom should I fight this good fight, if not with Giant Despair? I will therefore attempt the taking away of his life, and the demolishing of Doubting Castle."

– John Bunyan