

Biblical Counseling Agreement

Thank you for your interest in Christ-centered, biblical counseling and for allowing me to serve you. I look forward to helping you know and follow Jesus Christ and finding God's help and hope for your problems. The following information will serve as an agreement between us.

My Role and Commitments –I provide Christ-centered, biblically-based counseling and will seek to help you apply God's Word, the Bible, to your life based on my understanding of God's Word. By choice, I am not licensed as a professional or state-licensed therapist, psychologist, or psychiatrist. I do not provide psychological counseling and should not be expected to follow the methods or standards of mental health professionals. I am not representing my school or any other institution.

Not Professional Advice - If you have legal, financial, medical, or other technical questions, seek advice from an independent professional. I will seek to cooperate with such advisors and help you to consider their counsel in light of God's Word. I do not give professional advice.

Discontinuation – At any time during our counseling, for reason(s) sufficient to either of us, you or I can discontinue counseling.

Confidentiality - Confidentiality is an essential aspect of the counseling process and I will carefully guard the information you entrust to me. We desire as much as possible to protect your privacy.

There are situations, however, in which I might believe that it is wise or mandated (biblically or legally) for me to share certain information with others. Some examples might be:

1. When there is concern that you or someone else might be harmed unless others intervene.
2. When abuse or another crime must be reported to the authorities.
3. When your pastor or church leadership is needed to provide pastoral assistance.
4. In counseling minor children, I might need to divulge information to parents or legal guardians.

Please be assured that I strongly prefer not to disclose your personal information to others, and I will try to help you resolve a problem as privately as possible.

I also ask you to agree to not discuss our communications with people who do not have a necessary interest in the counseling process. In addition, where your situation might involve legal issues, you must agree to treat all dealings with me regarding this counseling as settlement negotiations, which means they will be inadmissible in a court of law or for legal discovery. Furthermore, you must agree that you will not try to force me to divulge any information acquired during the counseling process or to testify in any legal proceeding related to the process.

Fee – Biblical counseling is offered at no cost as a ministry through Hallmark Church, although donations are welcome. The counseling process usually includes between-session growth assignments (e.g., reading) that might require you to purchase materials.

Conflict Resolution – In the unlikely event of a conflict between you and me, all parties must seek to resolve it biblically, through discussion, and, if necessary, through mediation and arbitration, according to the Rules of Procedure of the Institute for Christian Conciliation, available at Peacemaker Ministries' website (www.peacemaker.net). It is expressly understood that by agreeing in advance to arbitrate, the counselee is giving up his right to a trial in the civil courts.

Making Counseling Effective – Doing the following will increase the effectiveness of our sessions:

1. Be committed to biblical counseling. Come to each session with a humble spirit, seeking to learn how God wants you to handle your problems based on his Word.

2. Attend each scheduled session. If an emergency arises and you cannot attend a session, please contact me as soon as possible.

3. Be as open and honest as you can. At the same time, I realize that talking about your problems might be very difficult for you and that your trust might take time to develop.

4. Be patient—your problems did not develop in a day. It may take me several sessions to understand your situation well. It is vital for me to carefully listen, to gather needed information, and to build understanding and trust with you.

5. Complete any growth assignments given and review and pray over the matters discussed during previous sessions. I will give you assignments that fit our counseling aims and will help you make progress between sessions.

Agreement by Counselee(s): Please contact me if you have any questions about the above matters. If you are comfortable and agree entirely with the above, please sign below and return this sheet to me before or at the beginning of our first session.

I have read and understand the above guidelines and find them acceptable.

Name _____ Signed _____ Date _____

Name _____ Signed _____ Date _____

Name _____ Signed _____ Date _____

Thank you for allowing us to serve Jesus by helping you find and apply his answers to your problems. May God encourage, bless, and empower you in these coming days!