

Berean Biblical Counseling Ministries Consent Agreement

Please sign and date after reading this form carefully

Our Goal

Our goal in biblical counseling is to help you grow in conformity to the Lord Jesus Christ so that you glorify Him in the challenges of life, becoming like Him in speech, actions, thoughts, and desires, and increasing in your capacity to enjoy Him forever.

The Biblical Basis of Our Counsel

Berean Biblical Counseling Ministries is a ministry of Berean Community Church and is a result of our desire to make disciples of Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:16-20). We believe that biblical counseling is biblical discipleship that takes place in the challenges and crises of life. As a result, our intention through biblical counseling is to help you learn through God's Word how to:

- Meet the challenges of life
- Put off sinful actions, thoughts, and desires
- Develop, cultivate, and live in relationships that please God
- Live in a community of believers in the local church
- Live in conformity to God's Word, the Bible

Because we believe that Scripture is sufficient to teach us how to honor God in every situation (II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:1-4), that it is only the truth of Scripture applied through the Spirit of God that enables change, that there are no problems that the Bible fails to address in either general or specific principles, and that Scripture is the final authority in all matters of truth and life, we will use the Bible in every session, and all ministry will occur under the biblical counselor's understanding of the Scriptures.

Licensing/Certification

Our biblical counseling is based on scriptural principles, rather than those of secular psychology or psychiatry. We are not licensed or certified as psychologists, psychiatrists, mental health professionals, or therapists. However, our biblical counselors are all certified or trained in accordance with the standards of conduct and philosophy of the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors.

Professional Advice

Although our counselors may have professional experience in various fields, they do not provide technical or professional advice. If legal, tax, medical, financial, or other specific assistance is needed, you should seek advice from an independent professional. We will be happy to cooperate with such advisors and help you to consider their counsel in the light of relevant scriptural principles.

Relationship

Our goal is to make you a better disciple of Jesus Christ. While we accept donations, the care that you receive is in no way dependent upon what you are able to donate. A nominal donation may be requested to offset administrative costs and materials that may be provided to you during counseling.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an extremely important part of our ministry. However, while we seek to keep cases and circumstances as private as possible, we do not offer absolute confidentiality. There are

certain situations in which we determine it to be necessary to share information with others. These may include situations such as the following:

- If the biblical counselor needs advice for a particular issue.
- If your church leadership needs to be made aware of an issue that has come up.
- When there is a clear or reasonable indication that someone may be harmed unless others intervene or are consulted.
- In cases where we are required by law to report abuse or neglect of a child, elderly person, or a disabled person.
- If it becomes necessary to seek the assistance of others in the church to encourage repentance, confession, and reconciliation (see Proverbs 15:22; 24:11; Matthew 18:15-20).

Please be assured that we strongly prefer not to disclose your personal information to others and will make every effort to help you find ways to resolve the problem as privately as possible.

Attendance and Church Involvement

Please make every effort to attend every scheduled session. Further, because we believe that change is most effective within the giftedness and support of the local community of believers (Galatians 6:1-3, please encourage your pastor or an approved, mature believer from your local church to accompany you to counseling sessions. In fact, depending on the situation, we may require such attendance as we recognize and respect the authority and discipline of the local church in your spiritual life (Hebrew 13:17. In addition, this makes transfer back to the pastoral care of your church much easier to implement. If you are not attending a church, we expect you to attend a Bible-preaching and believing church weekly for your own benefit and for the benefit of the body of Christ.

Training/Education

We believe that all believers should strive to make disciples for the Lord Jesus Christ. With that in mind, we not only seek additional training and/or education for ourselves, but we seek to train and educate others in the biblical counseling arena. To accomplish both counseling and training, we may have others assist or observe us in sessions (and/or preparation) who will have access to your personal information. Further, there may be times when we deem it appropriate to use what is learned in counseling sessions to seek input from educators and/or students or to convey what is learned to educate others, either in person, online, in print, or through other means. If this happens, care will be taken to protect your identity.

Records

Because this is a training center, sessions may occasionally be recorded for training purposes. Distributions of such recordings are restricted to the supervisor providing feedback to the counselor. Records (digital and physical) of the counseling may be processed at the sole discretion of the counselor.

Resolution of Conflicts

On very rare occasions, a conflict may develop between a counselor and a counselee. In order to make sure that such conflicts will be resolved in a biblically faithful manner (the Bible prohibits lawsuits in court among believers; 1 Corinthians 6:1-8), we require of all of our counselees to agree that any dispute that arises with a counselor or with Berean Biblical Counseling Ministries will be settled by mediation or,

if necessary, legally binding arbitration in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Institute for Christian Conciliation, a division of Peacemaker Ministries. Judgment upon an arbitration award may be entered in any court having jurisdiction. A copy of the Rules of Procedure is available at www.peacemaker.net.

Termination

At any time and for any reason, you or your counselor may terminate counseling. The counselor retains the right to communicate the conditions under which counseling was terminated to relevant individuals.

Donations

Berean Biblical Counseling Ministries is a ministry of Berean Community Church, a not-for-profit tax-exempt church body dedicated to the faithful proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ through ministry to individuals and families who are in need of spiritual help. It is the purpose of Berean Biblical Counseling Ministries to provide competent biblical counsel to those who seek it at no charge for the benefit of the Body of Christ in our local area.

We want to make you aware though, that there are costs that we do incur to provide this ministry, and as such, donations are always appreciated. Checks should be made out to Berean Community Church (BBCM in the memo line), not to any counselor or individual. Members of Berean Community Church or the counselor's church are not expected to make a donation, since it is their membership responsibility to contribute during regular services. For any questions, please see the Director of the Center.

Liability

While we take our responsibility to provide biblically faithful counsel very seriously, ultimately you are responsible to decide what you want to do. We are not liable for the results of counseling or of the oversight of this ministry. If you disagree with the counselor's instruction or interpretation of Scripture, that does not subject the counselor or this ministry to liability in any form for your physical, mental, or medical condition.

By signing this consent, you agree that you will not attempt to subpoena or require any counselor to appear in any legal proceeding related to any matters discussed during counseling; nor will you attempt to subpoena any notes or records related to this counseling. Berean Biblical Counseling Ministries is not required by law or by internal policy to release counseling records.

Agreement

Having clarified the principles and policies of our counseling ministry, we welcome the opportunity to minister to you in the name of Christ and to be used by Him as He helps you grow in spiritual maturity and prepares you for usefulness in His body. If you have any questions about these guidelines, please talk with the Center Director. If these guidelines are acceptable to you, please sign and date below.

All of the above is understood and agreed to.

[PRINT NAME] _____

[SIGNATURE] _____

Date _____