

CONSENT TO COUNSEL

Our Goal

Our goal in providing Christian counseling is to help you meet the challenges of life in a way that will please and honor the Lord Jesus Christ and allow you to fully enjoy his love for you and his plans for your life.

Biblical Basis

We believe the Bible provides guidance and instruction for faith and life. Therefore, our counseling is based on scriptural principles rather than those of secular psychology or psychiatry. Neither the pastoral nor the lay counselors of this ministry are licensed as psychotherapists or mental health professionals.

Professional Advice

In the process of Biblical counseling there are often times when there is a need for significant advice with regards to legal, medical, financial or other technical areas. In those cases you will be encouraged to seek independent professional counsel. Our lay counselors will be happy to cooperate with such advisors and help you to consider their counsel in the light of relevant scriptural principles.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an important aspect of the counseling process and we will carefully guard the information you entrust to us. There are five situations, however, when it may be necessary for us to share certain information with others:

- On the rare occasion when a counselor is uncertain how to address a particular problem and needs to seek advice from another pastor or counselor
- When a counselee attends another church and it is necessary to talk with his or her pastor or elders
- When there is a clear indication that someone may be harmed unless others intervene
- When a person persistently refuses to renounce a particular sin and it becomes necessary to seek assistance of others in the church to encourage repentance and reconciliation (see Matt. 18:15-20; Prov. 15:22; 24:11).
- Because all counselors are mandated reporters, if something should be divulged that requires involvement from the local authorities, we will notify them as necessary.

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Resolution of Conflicts

On the rare occasion a conflict may develop between a counselor and a counselee. In order to make sure that any such conflicts will be resolved in a biblically faithful manner, we require all of our counselees to agree that any dispute that arises with a counselor or with the church as a result of counseling, will be settled by mediation and, 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 arbitration award may be entered in any court having jurisdiction. The parties understand that these methods shall be the sole remedy for any controversy or claim arising out of this agreement and expressly waive their right to file a lawsuit in any civil court against one another for such disputes, except to enforce an arbitration decision.

Virtual Counseling

We are currently conducting counseling via private video conference rooms during this period of social distancing. We utilize a number of different technology platforms that are in keeping with our policies and procedures.

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 to grow in spiritual maturity and prepares you for usefulness in his body.

If you have any questions about these guidelines, please contact the [Assistant Pastor of Soul Care](#).

If these guidelines are acceptable to you, please sign below.

SIGNATURE _____ **DATE** _____

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