

BETHANY BAPTIST CHURCH

1150 Hilfiker Lane SE Phone: (503) 362-2488
Salem, OR 97302 Fax: (503) 585-1280
www.bethanybaptistchurch.com

COUNSELING AGREEMENT

If you are interested in receiving biblical counseling at Bethany Baptist Church, please read and sign the following statement.

The biblical counselors at BBC are available to take a limited number of counseling cases. Our counselors (by design) are not certified by the state of Oregon; rather, they have received or are receiving extensive training in biblical counseling. Our primary counselors are certified by or are in the process of becoming certified by the National Association of Nouthetic Counselors.

If you seek counseling at BBC, we want you to know that **all counseling will be conducted in accordance with the counselor's understanding of the Scriptures**. Your counseling will be **biblical**, meaning that the Bible will be the authority in all cases. If you are not sure that you will be interested in biblically based counseling, you may first attend one or two sessions to better understand what biblical counseling is like. If you are unwilling to use the Bible as the final authority or are unwilling to do the assigned homework, the sessions will be terminated.

If you attend a church other than BBC, we encourage you to invite your pastor or another leader from your church to contact our pastor, and to accompany you to the counseling sessions. We recognize and respect the authority and discipline of your church. The attendance by your pastor or other leader will make the transfer back to the pastoral care of your church much easier. If you are not attending a church, or if your pastor or another leader from your church does not accompany you to the counseling sessions, or if your church is not structured or willing to provide the kind of counseling received at BBC, we will expect you to attend BBC on a weekly basis while you are in counseling here. Lasting change is more effectively realized when people also receive help from the church's ministry of preaching, teaching, and fellowship and when those ministries complement the help given in counseling.

Confidentiality is practiced in our counseling sessions; however, absolute confidentiality is not scriptural. In certain circumstances, the Bible requires that facts be disclosed to select others (Matthew 18:15-17). If your church leadership should inquire, we will disclose to them only the information that we believe is necessary for them to effectively and biblically fulfill their responsibility to shepherd you. If you have a problem with this procedure, please discuss your concerns and reasons for those concerns with your counselor.

At any time during the counseling, either the counselor or the counselee—for reasons sufficient to himself or herself—shall have the option of terminating the counseling.

BBC currently does not charge a fee for counseling. However, there are costs associated with maintaining this ministry. If you would like to express your appreciation and make a contribution, please make donations to Bethany Baptist Church (counseling ministry), not to the counselor. Also, you may be required to purchase homework materials in the course of counseling. Biblical counseling involves giving scriptural teaching and making practical application to the counselee. **The counselee is held fully responsible for how he implements that counsel.**

Bethany Baptist Church is also committed to training biblical counselors. This means that one or two people may sit in the sessions with the counselor for training purposes.

We are confident that the Bible has all the information necessary for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3). There are no problems between persons or in persons that the Bible fails to address either generally or specifically. Our counselors are not infallible, nor do they pretend to know all there is to know about biblical teaching and its applications to life. But they are well-equipped and competent to help people change. They will make a point to differentiate between God's commands and their suggestions. Counselors will also honestly tell you if they are stymied and will seek help. Please note that we do not give medical or legal advice.

If a conflict should arise between the counselee and the counselor, both parties agree to resolve the dispute outside the secular court system. Conciliation will be sought under submission to and at the direction of the elders of Bethany Baptist Church. If you are willing to enter into this kind of counseling, please sign below and mail this form along with your completed Personal Data Inventory

I have read the conditions for counseling set forth in this document and agree to enter into counseling in accordance with them:

Signed: _____ Signed: _____ Date: _____