



## CONSENT TO BIBLICAL COUNSELING

Grace Church, Greeley, Colorado

*Please read this form carefully. You will be signing at the end to confirm that you understand and agree to it. If you want or need separate counsel (legal or otherwise), you may obtain it prior to signing this document and participating in counseling.*

**Biblical Counseling:** This is a ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and is part of our practice of religion. You have indicated that you are a Christian, you are a member of Grace Church, Greeley, Colorado, and you are voluntarily seeking religious guidance (i.e., biblical counseling) from one or more other Christians. The goal of biblical counseling is to help Christians mature in Jesus Christ in attitude, thought, and action. With that in mind, biblical counseling is the same as discipleship, which is the mandate of Christ for all Christians, that we obey all that He commanded (Matt. 28:18-20).

Our goal in providing Christian counseling is to help you live your entire life in a God-pleasing/God-honoring way. This includes, but is not limited to, providing biblical counsel to assist you in meeting the challenges of your life, shedding sin that so easily entangles, learning to develop, cultivate, and live in relationships that please God, giving thanks to God in all circumstances, living in a community of other believers as you participate in your local church, and learning to rely on the Holy Spirit for direction as you seek to know God through His Word (the Bible).

The biblical advice we provide is intended to be practical, and it is entirely your decision how to (and whether to) implement that advice. We want to help you love God and love others as we walk with you through this process. During the course of the counseling relationship, we may counsel you from the Bible that certain conduct is sinful and must be stopped in order to please God, and we may counsel you in how the Scripture directs Christians to put off that sin and, instead, to live a life characterized by self-control and godliness. By signing below, you are specifically agreeing to such counsel and are affirmatively asking that we provide it. As stated above, we will counsel you from our deeply held Christian, religious beliefs, and this counseling is part of our practice of religion. We do not charge for this counseling, and in no way shall it be construed as a sale of services.

**Biblical Basis:** We believe that the Holy Scriptures (the Bible) provide sufficient guidance and instruction for faith and life. Therefore, our counseling is based on scriptural (biblical) principles rather than those of secular psychology or psychiatry. We are not licensed or certified as psychotherapists, psychologists, psychiatrists, mental health professionals, marriage and family therapists, or social workers, nor are we acting in such capacities. If you are unwilling to use the Bible as the final authority in counseling or are unwilling to do the homework assigned, you should not proceed with this counseling. However, we do want to help and we pray that you will decide to look to

God's Word for guidance as we follow the loving example of Jesus Christ. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we believe that your life can be transformed.

**Professional Advice, Etc.:** We do not provide legal, tax, medical, financial, or other technical or professional (non-psychological) advice; although we do advise that you handle all matters in a biblical, Christ-like, and ethical way. Even though you are agreeing to participate in biblical counseling, there may be times when you need such professional advice. Although we undertake no duty to recognize when or if such advice is actually needed, if we opine that such professional counsel would be helpful (e.g., medical, financial), we may encourage you to seek it. We are happy to cooperate with such advisors and help you to consider their counsel in the light of relevant scriptural principles. We are not responsible for, nor shall we be liable for, any physical, mental, or medical condition of any counselee, whether or not such condition is affected in any way by the counseling process or counsel provided.

No professional-client or fiduciary relationship is created between any counselee and counselor. The parties recognize that the counselor may have training in matters and/or employment beyond the scope of biblical counseling. However, the counselor is not acting in that other capacity on behalf of the counselee. Further, it is agreed that no church or school or any third party will incur any liability for counsel provided by us, even if such an institution is providing supervision, generally or specifically, over this counseling and/or this ministry. Although we may take into consideration any applicable laws that you bring to our attention, it is intended that the Holy Scriptures (the Bible) shall be the supreme authority governing every aspect of the counseling process, and that God's glory is the ultimate goal. However, failure of the counselor to interpret or apply the Bible in any particular way shall not subject the counselor to liability, or give rise to complaint by any party. There shall be no legal or other liability that attaches to any counselor or institution for any advice, methods, conduct, or any act or omission related in any way to the service that is provided, and you acknowledge that you are voluntarily seeking this counsel (i.e., free from coercion, duress, or pressure).

**Confidentiality:** Although confidentiality is often one aspect of the counseling process and we intend to guard the information you entrust to us with loving discretion, absolute confidentiality is not scriptural in all circumstances. There are at least five situations when it may be necessary (as determined by us in our sole discretion) for us to share information with others:

1. When we are uncertain how to address a particular problem and need to seek advice from another pastor, educator, counselor, professional, or Christian;
2. when a counselee attends (or attended) another church and we believe it is important to talk with his or her pastor, elders, or others at that church and/or in leadership;
3. when we have reason to believe that someone may be harmed unless others intervene or are consulted;

4. when a person refuses to renounce a particular sin and confess it to those impacted and it becomes necessary to seek the assistance of others in the church to encourage repentance, confession, and reconciliation (cf. Matthew 18:15-20; Proverbs 15:22; 24:11);
5. and/or when criminal activity has occurred and the counselee refuses to bring it to the attention of the authorities.

Information also may be shared for education/training purposes (see below). Nothing shall impose any obligation or legal duty on a counselor to disclose or maintain confidential any particular information.

**Attendance/Training/Education:** You must make every effort to attend every scheduled session and to complete the assigned homework. We expect you to attend Grace Church, Greeley, Colorado, weekly for the duration of biblical counseling for your own benefit and for the benefit of the church body.

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 (2 Tim. 2:2). To accomplish both counseling and training, we may have others assist us in counseling sessions, preparation, and/or follow-up, 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 exercise discretion and protect your identity.

**Termination:** At any time and for any reason, the counselor and/or the counselee may terminate counseling. However, termination of counseling will not preclude the counselor from making the disclosures set forth above (in the paragraph entitled, “Confidentiality”) if deemed appropriate by the counselor, or if compelled by other legal means. Although it is understood that we may (but are not required to) keep records of sessions and their subject matter, it is expressly agreed that we may destroy any and all such records of any counseling sessions or issues at any time that we deem appropriate, without incurring any liability.

**Resolution of Conflicts:** On rare occasions, 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 (the Bible prohibits lawsuits in court among believers; 1 Cor. 6:1-8), we require all of our counselees to agree that any dispute that arises with a counselor or with any person or entity associated with the counselor and related in any way to his/her biblical counsel, will be settled in accordance with Matthew 18:15-20 under the oversight of the elders of Grace Church, Greeley, Colorado, with mutual accountability to the membership of Grace Church, Greeley, Colorado.

In light of the fact that this counseling is voluntary and not for compensation, the counselee waives all rights to special and consequential damages of any nature, and waives all claims for negligence arising out of any act or omission of the counselor or anyone working with him/her. This agreement and the issues raised in counseling are not matters of public interest; they are private and relate to personal faith and scripture. This entire agreement shall be binding upon the counselee and his/her family members, assigns, and heirs.

**BY SIGNING THIS DOCUMENT, YOU ARE IRREVOCABLY WAIVING ANY RIGHT THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE TO A TRIAL BY JURY OR JUDGE IN A JUDICIAL PROCEEDING.**

If any provision of this agreement shall be held invalid, illegal, or unenforceable, only that provision shall be stricken and the remainder of the agreement shall be in no way affected.

*I, the counselee, have understood and agree to all that's written above:*

[PRINT NAME] \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

[SIGNATURE] \_\_\_\_\_

For the counselee who is a legal minor, signatures of parents or legal guardians are also required. All of the above is understood and agreed by me, the parent or legal guardian of the counselee:

[PRINT NAME] \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

[SIGNATURE] \_\_\_\_\_

[PRINT NAME] \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

[SIGNATURE] \_\_\_\_\_