



## **BIBLICAL COUNSELING MINISTRIES CONSENT TO COUNSEL**

***Our Goal:*** Biblical counseling is intensive discipleship using God's sufficient Word in believers' lives to give hope and bring about biblical change.( Ephesians 4:22-24)

***Biblical Basis:*** We believe that the Bible provides sufficient guidance and instruction for faith and life. Therefore, our counseling is based on scriptural principles rather than those of 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 should seek independent professional counsel. Our pastoral and lay counselors will be happy to cooperate with such advisors and help you consider their counsel in the light of relevant scriptural principles. Some of our lay counselors may be lawyers, doctors or other professionals, but the counselee understands and agrees that such counselors are not providing advice in those areas during the counseling process.

***Fees and Resources:*** We want to bless our community by providing these counseling services. Since the counselors volunteer their time, we can offer the counseling free of charge. In order to provide good, helpful resources, we ask, if you are able, to pay for the reading materials you will need. Out of respect for our staff we require a \$25 deposit which will be refunded to you should you keep all your appointments or cancel at least 48 hours in advance of your appointment. When you arrive for your first counseling session you will be required to submit this deposit in cash. If you should ever cancel upon less than 48 hours notice, you would forfeit you cancellation fee. You would need to submit another \$25.00 before continuing your counseling sessions.

***What to Bring:*** Please bring with you (one for each person being counseled) a Bible (a literal translation such as NASB, ESV, etc. rather than a paraphrase such as The Living Bible), notebook, pen.

***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:

- 1) During team meetings and prayer - The Counseling team meets on a regular basis to pray and confer with each other to ensure sound biblical doctrine and direction. Confidentiality will be maintained within the Counseling team.
- 2) When a counselee attends another church, and it is necessary to talk with his or her pastor or elders;
- 3) When there is a clear indication that someone may be harmed unless others intervene;
- 4) When required by law
- 5) 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 Matthew 18:15-20; Proverbs 15:22; 24:11).

Are you willing to have counseling sessions recorded for training purposes only: Yes \_ No \_  
 Are you willing to have counselor trainees observe counseling sessions: Yes \_ No \_

Be assured that our counselors strongly prefer not to disclose personal information to others, and will make every effort to help you find ways to resolve a problem as privately as possible.

***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, all of our counselors, including Pastors, counsel under and submit to the authority of a group of Elders that have committed to faithfully walk according to God’s word (the Bible). Therefore we require all of our counsees to agree that any dispute that arises with a counselor or with the church as a result of counseling follow the biblical principles laid out in Matthew 18:15-17. The first step is to attempt to work it out with your counselor directly. If that fails we would ask one or two other Pastors or Elders to meet with you and your counselor. If you and or the counselor still are not satisfied at the way the issue was addressed the full Elder Board will give a final biblical counsel on the issue that all parties involved agree to submit to.

*If you have any questions about these guidelines, please talk with Andy Brown, Executive Pastor, GPBC. (973-697-0990 x. 11). If these guidelines are acceptable to you, please sign below.*

Signed: _____	Signed: _____
Print Name: _____	Print Name: _____
Date: _____	Date: _____