

# **Biblical Counseling Agreement**

*Scottsburg Baptist Church*

Thank you for your interest in church-based, Christ-centered, biblical counseling, and for giving me the opportunity to serve you. I look forward to helping you find God's help and hope for the personal or relational problems you are facing. The following information will help you further understand my ministry and will serve as an agreement between us.

## I. General Comments:

Before reading this agreement form, please read our other document, "Interested in Biblical Counseling at Scottsburg Baptist Church?" to understand what I mean by church-based, Christ-centered, biblical counseling.

I am a church-trained biblical counselor, not a licensed psychologist, therapist, or psychiatrist, and I offer Christ-centered, biblically-based counseling, not psychological counseling. If you have significant legal, financial, medical, or other technical questions, you should seek advice from an independent professional. I will seek to help you apply God's Word to your life, based on my understanding of God's Word.

I may choose to discontinue counseling at any time, without explanation.

## II. Making the Process Most Effective:

To increase the effectiveness of the ministry process, I ask the following of you:

1. *Be committed to biblical counseling* as described on this sheet and any other accompanying materials your counselor gives. Come to each session with a humble spirit, seeking to learn how God wants you to handle your problems based on his Word.

2. *Attend each scheduled session.* Allow 50-60 minutes for a session. If an emergency arises and you cannot attend a session, please contact me as soon as possible at (843) 610-8234 and leave a detailed message including your name and phone number so I can get back to you. I do not usually do telephone counseling and cannot reply to frequent phone calls, email, or postal correspondence.

3. *Be as open and honest as you can.* At the same time, I realize that talking about your problems may be very difficult for you and that your trust in me may take time to develop.

4. *Be patient*—your problems did not develop in a day. It may take me several sessions to obtain a good understanding of your situation. It is vital for me to carefully listen and gather needed information and to build understanding and trust with you.

5. *Complete any growth assignments given, and review and pray over the matters discussed during previous sessions.* I will give you assignments that fit our counseling aims and will help you make progress between sessions. Failure to complete them may indicate lack of commitment to the process, and may result in discontinuation of the process.

6. *Attend one Sunday morning worship services and one of our adult Bible fellowship classes each week.* I can discuss these options with you. Regular participation in a Christ-centered, biblical church like ours provides you with vital complements to our counseling: God-centered worship, solid Bible teaching with practical life application, pastoral care, and meaningful friendships with other people needing—and learning—God's grace together.

## III. Confidentiality and Legal Concerns:

Confidentiality is an important aspect of the counseling, and I will carefully guard the information you entrust to me. I desire as much as possible to protect your privacy.

At the same time, you must realize that this confidentiality is only within the limits of biblical and civil law. I cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality in every situation. For example, to ensure that you are receiving consistent counsel and support, your counselor might need to discuss your situation with appropriate leaders of Open Door Baptist Church, or, in some cases, with your attorney, if you have one. Furthermore, I might need to divulge information to appropriate civil authorities if there is indication that you or someone else might otherwise be harmed.

I also ask you to agree not to discuss our communications with people who do not have a necessary interest in the counseling or conciliation process. In addition, where your situation might involve legal issues, you must agree to treat all dealings with me in regard to this counseling as settlement negotiations, which means they will be inadmissible in a court of law or for legal discovery. Furthermore, you must agree that you will not try to force me to divulge any information acquired during the counseling process or to testify in any legal proceeding related to the process.

In the unlikely event of a conflict between you and I, all parties must seek to resolve it in a biblical manner, through discussion, and, if necessary, through mediation and arbitration, according to the *Rules of Procedure* of the Institute for Christian Conciliation, available at Peacemaker Ministries' website ([www.peacemaker.net](http://www.peacemaker.net)). For further information about confidentiality, see the *Guidelines for Christian Conciliation* at the same website.

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Agreement by Counselee(s): If you have any questions about the above matters, please talk with your counselor or our church leaders. If you agree to these terms, please sign below and return this sheet to your counselor before or at the beginning of your first meeting.

*I have read and understand the above guidelines and find them acceptable.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve Jesus by helping you find and apply his answers to your problems. May God encourage, bless, and empower you in these coming days!**