

PurposeHouse Christian Counseling
FACTS ABOUT BIBLICAL, CHRISTIAN COUNSELING AWARENESS FORM

1. **BIBLICAL, CHRISTIAN COUNSELING: A MINISTRY** – Biblical Christian counseling is a ministry. The range of problems with which biblical, Christian counselors deal is very wide. It includes broken marriages, parent-child relationships, depression, alcohol and drug abuse, tension, turmoil, anxiety, fear, worry, and any number of other problems resulting in mental and physical distress.
2. **TRAINING OF THE BIBLICAL, CHRISTIAN COUNSELOR** – The biblical Christian counselor is trained in the use of the Scripture and the principles of biblical counseling and in mental health treatment approaches that are not in opposition to the scriptures. She or he is a board certified or licensed clinical pastoral counselor but because of the biblical/ministry nature, focus and approach of the counseling may not be licensed by the state. He or she is committed to the position that the Scriptures are the *only* authoritative standard for faith and conduct (*II Timothy 3:16-17*). He does not base his counseling knowledge on his own or others' opinions, experience, or concepts of behavior (*Isaiah 55:8-11*); but, instead, he seeks to marshal the full range of biblical truth and relevant treatment approaches to bear on the counselee's need (*Hebrews 4:12*). In counseling sessions, she will hold to the essential truths of Scripture without particular theological emphasis on any practice not specifically advocated in the Scriptures (*Titus 2:1*).
3. **THE FOCUS OF THE BIBLICAL COUNSELOR** – Biblical counselors provide their time and energy as a service to God and a labor of love to individuals (*based on I Thessalonians 2:7-8; I Timothy 1:5*). PurposeHouse Christian Counseling charges fee that are well below the industry rate and provides a further discounted rate to pastors and pastor's spouses with active congregations.
4. **TEAM COUNSELING: A BIBLICAL CONCEPT** – Typically, you will find that biblical counselors work in teams; since team counseling has many biblical benefits, both for the counselee(s) and the counselors (*Proverbs 11:14, 15:22, 18:17, 20:18, 24:6; Matthew 18:16*). Normally, sessions are conducted by only one counselor. Because we also want to train other counselors, **you will be asked for your consent** to team counseling if necessary, with one counselor responsible for leading the team and one or two others assisting. You, as a counselee, are also a vital member of the team as you seek to overcome the problems in your life and/or prepare for marriage. The most important member of the team, however, is the Lord Himself, in the Person of the Holy Spirit. It is He who will provide the hope, the enabling, and the wisdom (through God's Word) for you to face life (*John 14:26; Romans 5:3-5, 8:26-27; Ephesians 3:16*).
5. **DISCIPLESHIP AND MATURITY THROUGH BIBLICAL COUNSELING** – Biblical counselors are committed not only to help you overcome the current problem in your life but also to train you to live all your life in a manner that leads to increasing maturity in the Lord (*Psalms 119:165; Proverbs 2:6-12a; Galatians 6:1-5; I Timothy 4:7-8; I John 5:1-5*). Thus, in the scriptural sense, biblical counseling is a ministry of discipleship that teaches you to walk in God's way even in the midst of serious problems (*based on Matthew 28:19-20, I Timothy 1:5; II Timothy 2:2*).
6. **CONFIDENTIALITY** – A commitment to trustworthiness is an important quality of biblical counselors (*based on I Corinthians 4:2*). Thus, although your biblical counselor may talk with other counselors about a particular situation, you can be confident that the discussions will be restricted to whatever is necessary to help you overcome your problems (*based on Proverbs 10:18-21, 15:28, 18:8, 25:11*).
 - a. Please note however that there are some limitations to confidentiality, which include the following situations:

- i. **The counselor concludes that you are a danger to self: if you are exhibiting suicidal tendencies the counselor may be obligated to report this to save your life**
- ii. **The counselor concludes that you are a danger to others: if you are exhibiting violent tendencies the counselor may be obligated to report this to save others' lives**
- iii. **If an issue occurs that potentially puts a child under 18 or elder 65 or above at risk, or abuse is involved, the counselor may be required to report this**
- iv. **Again, if you exhibit characteristics exemplary of high suicide risk, the counselor may be required to report this**

7. MEDICAL NEEDS – Biblical counselors believe in considering your total health needs. Your counselor may recommend that you have a full or specified medical examination. If medical assistance is required, counseling will continue at the same time, whenever possible. The counselor may also request a copy of your medical records if needed to help identify potential issues and facilitate the counseling. If this is the case you will be notified.

8. ELEMENTS OF BIBLICAL COUNSELING – Biblical counselors will use all of their biblical counseling training and skill to help you overcome whatever problem is depriving you of the peace and joy that God has promised in His Word. Your counselors will concentrate on four essential elements:

Understanding your problem – There is the need to apply biblical principles to all of your difficulties, not just “fix your feelings” or change your circumstances. Your counselors, in a spirit of gentleness, will make biblical inquiry into the various levels of your problems and help you gain God’s perspective on your difficulties (*based on Proverbs 18:13; Isaiah 55:8-9; Mark 7:20-23; Romans 5:3-5, 8:28-29; Galatians 6:1-4; Hebrews 4:12; James 1:2-4, 19, 22-25; 4:17*).

Your Hope – In Jesus Christ you have a great High Priest who has been tempted in all things, yet without sin (*Hebrews 4:14-16*). Even though you may currently be going through a difficult test or even though every sin common to man may be tempting you, God has promised that He will not allow any trial in your life that is beyond your endurance. He has promised to provide a way of escape so that you may be able to endure it without sinning (*I Corinthians 10:13*), and He will use trials for your benefit as you respond to them in a biblical manner (*Romans 8:28-29; James 1:2-4*).

Your Change – In Christ, you can learn how to lay aside the old selfish ways of living and put on the new ways of living in a manner worthy of the Lord (*Romans 6:11-13; Ephesians 4:20-24*). In learning to change biblically, you will begin to please the Lord in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God (*Colossians 1:9-12*).

Your Practice – You need to prove yourself to be a doer of God’s Word and not merely a hearer, thus forgetting what kind of person you are and deluding yourself. Only in becoming an effectual doer of the Word will you be blessed in what you do, and only then will you please the Lord (*Hebrews 13:20-22; James 1:22-25; I John 3:22*).

9. WAITING PERIOD – If a counselor is not immediately available to begin extended counseling with you, you will be counseled as soon as possible on a one-time basis. During this session, your counselor will provide a plan for you to follow while you are waiting for the regularly scheduled sessions.

10. LENGTH OF COUNSELING – Normally, counseling sessions will last 50 minutes to 80 minutes each week or every other week. The length of counseling can vary greatly, depending on the problems being addressed and your response to the counseling. However, if the counselor does not observe definite

change in the first few weeks, he or she will seek to identify the cause of the failure, discuss it with you, and help you to correct it.

- 11. COUNSELING APPOINTMENTS** – Because effective counseling requires consistency and faithfulness in applying God’s principles, it is important that you reserve the designated counseling time for the entire counseling period, barring unforeseen circumstances (based on Luke 14:27-30; I Timothy 4:7). If you find that you are unable to come to a particular counseling session, please notify the counseling team at least 24 hours before the session.

- 12. LOCAL CHURCH INVOLVEMENT** – In order to achieve lasting victory over the problems of life, it is vital that each person become established in a consistent Christian walk. The Lord has provided the local church to help in this process (Hebrews 3:13, 10:24-25). Therefore, it is important that biblical counseling sessions be accompanied by church activities that encourage discipleship and fellowship. If you are part of a church family, the assistance of your church’s leadership may be requested so that you may more fully receive the benefit of all the spiritual resources given to you by God. *With your consent*, one of your pastors, elders, or deacons may even become part of the counseling team to provide the most effectual help for you. It is our commitment to do what will best help you walk in obedience to God’s Word and thus experience victory over your problems.

- 13. MATERIALS NEEDED AND EXPECTATIONS** – You will need a notebook and your Bible at all sessions, including the first. Be sure to bring them each time. Come with high expectations. You will find hope and encouragement even during your first session. From then on, with your cooperation, we are confident that you will find trustworthy and biblical answers for the difficulty that prompted you to contact us.

- 14. FEES** – Our fees are based on 50 or 80 minute sessions. Fifty minute sessions are normally \$70 per session and 80 minute sessions are normally \$90. While the per session fee is much lower than the average cost of counseling, we nonetheless realize that some are still not able to afford it. If you have special financial circumstances, please discuss this with the counselor before your first session. If you are a pastor or spouse of a pastor with an active congregation, your fee is further discounted to \$40 and \$60 for 50 minute and 80 minute sessions respectively.

If you find that you are unable to come to a particular counseling session, please notify the counselor at least 24 hours prior to the appointment. This gives others the opportunity to use the cancelled time slot. If no cancellation is made, or if less than 24 hours notice is received, except for absolute emergencies, then you will be charged \$30 for the missed appointment.

We thank you for your understanding of this policy.

I have reviewed the Facts about Biblical Counseling Awareness Form, including the policy on fees and consent to the nature and approach to counseling and other policies.

Printed Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____