

Country Bible Church Counseling Ministry Consent to Counseling

Goal of Counseling: The purpose of biblical counseling is to help you meet the challenges of life in a way that will please and honor the Lord Jesus Christ. We offer counseling free of charge, as a ministry of Country Bible Church. Counselees may donate to Country Bible Church, but this is not expected or required as a condition of counseling. You have no express or implied obligation to pay fees for the counseling that you receive from the Country Bible Church Counseling Ministry.

Biblical Basis: Country Bible Church Counseling Ministry counseling is strictly religious and biblical in nature, conducted under the authority and leadership of the elders of the church. We believe that God, through His revelation in the Old and New Testaments of the Bible, has provided His people with thorough guidance and instruction for faith and life (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3-4). Our counseling is based solely on scriptural principles. We reject the teachings and methods of modern psychology or psychiatry, whether expressly secular or an attempted integration with biblical principles. Our counselors are not trained or licensed as psychotherapists or mental health professionals, and under Wisconsin law no such licensing is required. Our counselors do not follow the methods of such persons, and our policy is to not make referrals to them.

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Other Professional Advice: If you have significant medical, legal, financial, or other technical questions, you should seek advice from a competent independent professional. Our counselors will cooperate with such advisors and help you to consider their counsel in the light of scriptural principles.

More specifically, we urge our counselees to properly care for their physical bodies and to seek proper medical treatment for all physiological problems. Our counselors will assist you in responding to such problems in a godly manner, but our counsel is not intended to replace the services of a qualified physician where organic problems are present or where medication has been prescribed.

Confidentiality: Confidentiality is an important aspect of the counseling process. We will carefully guard the information you entrust to us to the fullest extent possible. There are times, however, when it may be necessary for us to share certain information with others. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Where a person refuses to repent and forsake a particular sin, it may become necessary to seek the assistance of others in the church (or the pastor or spiritual leaders of the counselee's church if he is not in fellowship at Country Bible Church) to encourage repentance and reconciliation (Proverbs 15:22; 24:11; Matthew 18:15-20).

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2. Where a counselor is uncertain as to how to address a particular counseling issue, he may seek advice from another counselor, counseling center, elder, or pastor.
3. Where a counselee threatens harm to another person, it may be necessary to intervene in order to prevent such harm.
4. The laws of this state may require a counselor to reveal spousal, or child abuse, or some other crime, to the appropriate authorities.
5. Observers may sit in on counseling sessions, either to assist in the process or for training purposes.
6. Because this counseling ministry is under the authority of the elders of Country Bible Church, from time to time they may be given general information regarding the counselees presently in counseling and very general information concerning the nature of the counseling.

Conflict Resolution—Arbitration: On rare occasions, a conflict may develop between a counselor and counselee. First Corinthians 6:1-8 forbids Christians from bringing lawsuits against one another in secular courts of law. In order to ensure that such conflicts are resolved in a manner faithful to the Scriptures, we require all of our counselees to agree that any dispute with a counselor or with this church will be settled according to Procedures for Arbitration which is part of the Statement of Faith and Practice of Country Bible Church. (A copy is available on request.) It is expressly understood that, by consenting in advance to such arbitration, the counselee is waiving his right to a trial in the civil courts.

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Commitment to Finish Counseling: When a counselee ceases counseling before the counselor feels he is ready, it often results in a waste of time on the part of both parties. As stated earlier, there are no fees for the Country Bible Church Counseling Ministry. But in an effort to encourage counselees to complete the process, the counselee will be asked pay a fee of \$25 to Country Bible Church. At the time that there is mutual agreement between the counselor and counselee that counseling is completed, this fee will be refunded. Failure to complete counseling will result in forfeiture of this fee.

Having clarified the principles and policies of our counseling ministry, we welcome the opportunity to minister to you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and to be used by Him as He helps you grow in spiritual maturity and prepares you for usefulness in His body. If you have any questions about these guidelines, please speak with your counselor. Your signature below indicates your informed consent to these guidelines.

Signed _____ Dated _____