

Philosophy of Counseling

Purpose:

We desire to glorify God by seeking to win non-believers to faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and by edifying believers to live in obedience to God's word.

Premise:

We believe the Bible is a complete revelation from God in written form, without error, and completely sufficient for all matters of life, faith, and practice.

Note: The only counseling provided is Biblical Exhortation and Encouragement. We do not recommend secular theories, therapies, or any professional counselors who are not Christians and do not hold to our premise (Psalm 1:1-3).

People:

Our counseling is provided by committed Christians who are members of our church, in total agreement with our Statement of Doctrine, and have received training in how to provide Biblical Exhortation and Encouragement. We do not profess expertise in other sciences or fields of learning and skill. Our desire is to listen, discover the problem, and give biblical counsel as to the solution.

Policies and Procedures:

1. We do not counsel any person who has not read our Philosophy of Counseling statement and given written consent to our policies and procedures.
2. We begin and end each session with prayer. Our dependency is upon the Lord for both the counselor and the person seeking counsel. (Proverbs 3:5,6)
3. We require men to mentor men and women to mentor women as the Bible urges us to do (Titus 2:1-10). We have no desire to develop emotional dependency or create an environment that might lead to moral indiscretion (1 Timothy 5:1,2).

Exceptions: When more than one person is seeking counseling (as with a married couple), when more than one person is providing the Biblical Counsel, or when the work takes place in public view.

4. We do not charge a fee for our ministry of counseling.
5. We do not guarantee or make promises of success that are not clearly taught in the Bible.
6. We believe that a spiritual gift of exhortation and encouragement (counseling) (Romans 12:8) has been given to believers in the church, and it is our desire to use them in our ministry, provided they are committed to a godly lifestyle and competent in their knowledge of the Bible and in mentoring others (Romans 15:14).

7. We provide and require pre-marital counseling for those desiring to be married through our ministry.
8. We preserve confidentiality except in cases where criminal law codes or church discipline procedures countermand it.

Principles:

1. We believe that all people are born with a sinful nature, and that we experience the consequences of choices we have made and for which we are responsible. We believe that sin involves missing God's plan and design. It involves disobedience to His divine decrees. This does not mean that we are horrible, rotten and worthless. It does mean that without Jesus Christ we stand under judgment. (Psalm 51:5; Mark 2:13-17; John 3:16; Romans 3:19,20,23; 14:12; 2 Corinthians 5:10)
2. We do not believe that other people (such as parents, children, relatives, friends, etc.), cultural backgrounds, physical environments, or social and family pressures are the sole reasons for our bad choices and sinful actions. (Ezekiel 18:20; James 1:13-15)
3. We believe that the greatest human need is a personal relationship and commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior from sin, death, and hell. We believe that people become Christians by personal faith in Jesus Christ—by believing and accepting Him and His work of coming to earth, living perfectly, dying on the cross, atoning for our sin, rising from the dead, ascending to heaven, and advocating on our behalf. People do not become Christians by personal merit, family heritage, or human performance. (John 1:12,13; Acts 16:31; Romans 10:9,10; Ephesians 2:8-10)
4. We believe that prayer, obedience to the teaching of the Bible, and the work of the Holy Spirit are essentials for personal growth, happiness, and deliverance. It is the goal of our counseling to lead and encourage all those seeking our help to depend upon God and to trust Him for victory and success. (Psalm 119:9,11; Matthew 26:41; Galatians 5:16)
5. While we recognize the influence of demonic activity (evil spirits), we do not believe that true believers can be indwelt and controlled by an evil spirit (demon). (Ephesians 6:10-18; James 4:7; 1 John 4:4; 5:18-20)
6. We believe that confession of sin and repentance (turning from sin to God and obedience to His word) are essential in dealing with sinful acts and behavior. (Proverbs 28:9,13; Luke 17:3,4; 2 Corinthians 7:9-11)
7. We believe that heterosexual marriage is the only relationship in which sexual relationships should occur. We do not condone or approve pre-marital sex, homosexuality, adultery, incest, or any other sexual immorality. We treat these matters as sin against God's laws and damaging activities to the physical and emotional health of those involved. We believe that God wants to forgive and restore where these have occurred (1 Corinthians 6:12-7:2; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 2:11; 2 Peter 2:6-10)
8. We believe that divorce should be avoided as a solution to marital difficulties. We believe that the Bible allows for divorce on the basis of two situations:
 - A. Sexual immorality (Matthew 5:31,32; 19:3-9).
 - B. Willing departure of an unbelieving spouse (1 Corinthians 7:12-15).

Note: This does not mean that forgiveness and reconciliation are not the best solutions—they are (Matthew 18:21-35).

Note: This also does not mean that remarriage to another partner is necessarily the next or best option (1 Corinthians 7:15-40).

9. We believe that remarriage should occur only after one of the following things has taken place:
 - A. Death of a former spouse (Romans 7:1-3; 1 Corinthians 7:39).
 - B. Divorce based on one of the two above-stated situations (Matthew 5:31,32; 1 Corinthians 7:15).
 - C. Remarriage of former spouse to another person (Deuteronomy 24:1-4).
10. Our counsel will focus on what has taken place, rather than on why it occurred. (Jeremiah 17:9,10; 1 Corinthians 4:5)
11. We do not teach people to love themselves, but rather to accept the Bible's teaching that we already do love ourselves, and need to concentrate on loving and serving God and others. (Deuteronomy 10:20,21; Joshua 24:14,15; Matthew 22:34-40; Luke 9:23; Ephesians 5:29)
12. We believe that parents are responsible for the discipline and instruction of their children in the way of the Lord. We also urge children and young people to honor their parents and be obedient to them. (Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:1-4; Colossians 3:20,21)
13. We believe that corporal punishment of children should be done as the Bible teaches, in love, not anger; and applied to the child's bottom only. We do not condone physical abuse of children (hitting them in other places of the body besides the bottom), and are under compulsion to report such cases to the civil authorities if they are brought to our attention with evidence substantiating it. (Proverbs 13:24; 19:18,29; 22:15; 23:13,14; 26:3; 29:15,17; Ephesians 6:4)
14. We do not encourage or insist that an abused adult or child remain in the home where abuse occurs. It is our policy to confront the abuser. (Matthew 5:25; 18:15-17; Ephesians 6:4; 1 Timothy 3:4,12,14)
15. We do not recommend or condone abortion, suicide, euthanasia, or any method of taking human life. We believe that human life begins at conception and is sacred. (Genesis 1:26,27; Psalm 51:5; 139:13-16)
16. We believe that the use of pornographic material (films, videos, books, magazines and pictures) is sinful and should be avoided. (Matthew 5:28,29; Mark 4:24; Philippians 4:8; 1 Thessalonians 5:22)
17. We believe that alcohol and drug abuse is condemned in the Bible and causes physical and emotional damage to the individual who is addicted. We seek in our mentoring to warn—as to the dangers—and restore those involved in such substance abuse. (Proverbs 20:1; 23:29-35; 1 Corinthians 3:16,17; 6:19,20; Galatians 5:16-23; 6:1-5; Ephesians 5:18).
18. We believe the physical body of the believer is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and we encourage believers to avoid habits that are known to be harmful to the body (such as tobacco, alcohol, drugs, gluttony, etc.). (1 Corinthians 6:19,20)
19. We believe that a person's attitude toward money affects his emotional and spiritual health. (Luke 18:18-30; 1 Timothy 6:6-10)
20. We believe that fathers are responsible to provide for the needs of their families. (1 Timothy 5:8)

21. We believe the Bible urges believers to live without financial debt and to pay financial obligations when they are due. We believe that people are in debt when their liabilities exceed their assets and when their expenditures exceed their income. (Proverbs 22:7,26,27; Matthew 5:25,26)
22. We believe that a portion of a Christian's income should be given to God by supporting His work in this world. (Deuteronomy 14:22-29; Proverbs 3:9,10; Malachi 3:8-10; 1 Corinthians 16:1,2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-15)
23. We believe that interest should not be charged on monies loaned to other believers to help them in their time of need. (Exodus 22:25; Leviticus 25:35-38)

This statement on a Philosophy of Counseling has been adapted from
"The Philosophy of Counseling" belonging to Calvary Church of Santa Ana, California.

I (we) have read the above statement on a Philosophy of Counseling and heartily consent to its PURPOSE, PREMISE, PEOPLE, POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND PRINCIPLES.

Signed _____ Date _____

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