

**CORNERSTONE CHURCH BIBLICAL COUNSELING
POLICIES AND PROCEDURS/
CONSENT TO COUNSELING**

Our Goal: The mission of Cornerstone Church Biblical Counseling is to equip you to meet the challenges of life by the transforming power of Jesus Christ for the glory of God. We offer counseling free of charge as a ministry of Cornerstone Church. Counselees may donate to the ministry, 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 you receive through Cornerstone Church.

Biblical Basis: Cornerstone Church counseling is strictly **religious** in nature, **conducted under the authority and leadership 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 (II Timothy 3:16-17; II 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. Cornerstone Church counselors are not trained or licensed as psychotherapists or mental health professionals, and under Wyoming law (W.S. 33-38-103) no such licensing is required. They 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 renounce a particular sin, it may become necessary to seek the assistance of others in the church to encourage repentance and reconciliation (Proverbs 15:22, 24:11; Matthew 18:15-20). In such cases, we will reveal only such information as is necessary for such purposes, and only to those biblically required to be involved. Where a counselee is a member of another church, it will most likely be necessary to contact the pastor and/or elder(s) of such church.

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2. Where a counselor is uncertain as to how to address a particular counseling issue, he may seek advice from a pastor or another counselor.

3. Where a counselee threatens harm to another person, it may be necessary to intervene in order to prevent such harm.

4. The law 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.

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 biblically faithful manner, we require all of our counsees to agree that any dispute with a counselor or with this church will be settled by mediation and, if necessary, legally binding arbitration conducted in accordance with *Rules of Procedure* of the Institute for Christian Conciliation (A copy is available on request). The arbiters will be the elders of Cornerstone Church in accordance to Cornerstone Church By-Law XI (A copy is available upon request). If one or more elders of the church is a party to the dispute, then three arbiters will be selected from the elders of like minded churches, with each party to the dispute choosing one arbiter, and the two arbiters then selecting the third. 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. By signing this consent, you agree that you will not attempt to subpoena or require any counselor to appear in any legal proceeding related to any matters discussed during counseling; nor will you attempt to subpoena any notes or records related to this counseling.

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Having clarified the principles and policies of our counseling ministry, we welcome the opportunity to minister to you in the name of 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 _____

Signed _____ Dated _____