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# FACTS ABOUT BIBLICAL COUNSELING

Evangelical Free Church of Conejo Valley

**The Concept of Biblical Counseling:** Biblical counseling is committed to the position that Scripture provides the only authoritative guide for what we are to believe and how we are to live (2 Timothy 3:16,17). The Biblical Counselor is trained in the use of Scripture and the principles of biblical counseling. He does not base his counsel on man's wisdom, opinions, experience, or concepts of behavior, (Isaiah 55:8-11) but seeks to bring the full range of Biblical truth to focus on the counselee's need (Hebrews 4:12).

**The Scope of Biblical Counseling:** Biblical counseling deals with the entire range of problems confronting mankind including: broken marriages, parent child relationships, fear, depression, alcohol and drug abuse, tension, anxiety, worry and any other problems that may result in mental and/or physical immobility. In short the Biblical Counselor is equipped to deal with any problem dealing with ourselves, our relationship to God or our fellow man (2 Peter 1:3).

**Team Counseling:** Counseling is done in teams. Normally sessions are conducted with a lead counselor and one or two assistant counselors in attendance (Proverbs 11:14; 15:22; 18:17; 20:18; 24:6; Matthew 18:16).

**Medical Needs:** Biblical counselors believe in the total health needs of the counselee. Your counselor may recommend that you have a full or specified medical examination. If medical assistance is required, counseling will continue in conjunction with medical advice.

**Elements of Biblical Counseling:** Your counselor will use all of his skill in applying Biblical principles to enable you to glorify God in your life and to enable you to gain victory over the problems that are depriving you of the peace and joy that God has promised to you in His Word. Your counselor will concentrate in three areas that are necessary for Biblical change to take place.

- **HOPE** – In Jesus Christ we have a great High Priest who has suffered and been tempted in all things, yet He never sinned. Because of Christ, even though you may be facing every sin common to man, you can have victory. God has promised that He will not let you be tempted beyond your endurance and that He will provide a way for you to have victory in the midst of your temptation. (1 Cor. 10:13; Heb. 4:14-16).
- **CHANGE** – In Christ we 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 Jesus Christ. We can learn to please God in every area of our lives. We can learn to live a godly life and to live in such a way that we will be increasing in our knowledge of God and our ability to relate to others. Biblical counseling will enable you to make practical changes. (Eph. 4:20-24; Col. 1:10).
- **PRACTICE** – We need to prove ourselves to be doers of God's Word and not merely hearers of the Word. Only in the actual practice of the Scriptures shall we be blessed in what we do, and only then will we please the Lord (James 1:22-25; Proverbs 28:13).

**Length of Counseling:** Normally, counseling sessions will last one hour per week and will continue for eight to twelve sessions. If you respond quickly to Biblical counsel, the number of counseling sessions may be lessened. However, if the counselor does not observe definite change in the first few weeks, he will seek to identify the cause of the failure, discuss it with you in order to help you to correct it.

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**Appointments:** Your appointments will be scheduled with your counseling team. If you are unable to attend a counseling session, please notify the counseling office at least 24 hours before the session.

**Waiting Period:** If a counseling team is not immediately available, you will be counseled as soon as possible on a one-time basis. During this session, the counselor will provide a plan for you to follow while you are waiting for the regularly scheduled sessions. You may be asked to listen to audiocassettes or to read a book or other materials related to your problems. This way you can begin to work on solutions to your problems immediately.

**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 as the discipleship center (Hebrews 10:24, 25). Therefore, it is important that counseling sessions be accompanied by church attendance, participation in a group Bible study and other discipleship activities in your local church. The counseling team may contact your church and request their assistance in involving you in these activities. One of your 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 bring about victory over your problems.

**Materials Needed and Expectations:** You will need a notebook and your Bible at all sessions, including the first session. Be sure to bring them each time. Come with high expectations. You will find hope and encouragement even during your first session. We are absolutely confident that the Word of God has solutions to all of life's problems (2 Timothy 3:16; 17; 2 Peter 1:3) and that includes an answer to the difficulty that prompted you to come.

**Cost:** Counseling is a ministry of the body of Christ and by God's grace there is no cost to you.

**Canceling Your Appointment:** The office appreciates a minimum 24 hour cancellation notice.

**Consent to Counsel:** We ask all individuals to read and sign our Consent to Counsel form. This form must be returned before you begin your counseling sessions. This form enables the counselee to affirm that he understands that all of our counseling is entirely based on the Word of God.