



Introduction to Biblical Counselling

Consent to Counsel & Authorization to Request/Release Information

Our Mission

Our Mission is to glorify God through the fulfillment of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) in the spirit of the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:37-39)

We counsel by the Word of God, in the Spirit of God, and through the Community of God. We seek for the counselling care you will receive to be Christ centred (Col 1:15-20), Biblically based with Truth and Grace (John 1:14), Spirit Led (John 6:63), Prayer Saturated (Col 4:2), Community Oriented (Heb 10:24-25). We desire to help you meet the challenges of life in a way that will please and honour the Lord Jesus Christ and allow you to enjoy fully His love for you and His plans for your life.

Biblical Basis

We believe that the Bible provides thorough guidance and instruction for a life that is pleasing to God. Therefore, our counselling is based on scriptural principles rather than those of secular psychology or psychiatry. Although some of the pastoral or lay counsellors of Mission City Bible Church may be trained or licensed in other fields, such as medicine or psychology, they will not practice in that capacity, but only as Biblical counsellors under the authority of the Elders of Mission City Bible Church.

Not Professional Advice

If you have significant legal, financial, medical or other technical questions, you should seek advice from an independent professional. Our ministry staff, leadership and advocates will be happy to cooperate with such advisors and help you to consider their counsel in the light of relevant scriptural principles. We are often asked about insurance as well. As we do not practice as licensed professionals, we do not make diagnoses nor do we submit insurance claims. There is no charge for corrective counselling so there is no need to be reimbursed or cover a charge.

Resolution of Conflicts

On rare occasions, a conflict may develop between a counsellor and a counsellee. In order to make sure that any such conflicts are resolved in a biblical manner, we require all of our counsellees to agree that any dispute that arises with a counsellor or with Mission City Bible Church staff as a result of counselling will be settled by mediation under the leadership of MCBC. We will make every effort to resolve conflict in a manner according to the principles of scripture.

Communication and Community

At Mission City Bible Church we desire to grow in caring for those in our church who are hurting. It is imperative to our mission and your long-term care that we stay in consistent and regular communication with the leadership of Mission City Bible Church (Small Group & Flock leaders and pastoral staff) and/or the person you have designated/chosen as your advocate. This form gives us permission to discuss the necessary information in regard to your situation with the appropriate and concerned parties in accordance with the confidentiality guidelines explained below. Please read the following information carefully.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an important aspect of the counselling process, and we will carefully guard the information you entrust to us. There are situations, however, when it may be necessary for us to share certain information with others beside your advocate or small group leader:

1. When there is a clear indication of harm to counsellee or someone else.
2. When there is evidence or reasonable suspicion of abuse against a minor child, elderly person, or dependent adult.
3. If we are subpoenaed or court ordered to disclose information.
4. In discussions with the pastoral staff or elders of MCBC, previous counsellor(s) and/or your advocate for the sole purpose of gaining information for the counsellee's care or to help in follow up and after care.
5. When a counsellor is uncertain of how to address a particular problem and needs to seek advice and wisdom from another Mission City Bible Church staff member, or elder.
6. When a counsellee persistently refuses to renounce a particular sin and it becomes necessary to seek the assistance of others in the church to encourage repentance and reconciliation (see Proverbs 15:22; 24:11, Matthew 18:15-20).

In all of these situations, we will make every effort to be sensitive to the counsellee's situation. Please be assured that our counsellors strongly prefer not to disclose any of this personal information to others. We will strive to help you resolve the difficult situations you are experiencing as discretely as possible.

As part of our mission to train and equip others for soul care, we may have counsellor(s)-in-training participate in the counselling with us. If that makes you uncomfortable, please let us know at the time you submit your application.

Having clarified the principles and policies of our counselling ministry, we welcome the opportunity to minister to you in the name of Christ. We desire to be used by God as He helps you to grow in spiritual maturity and prepares you for usefulness in His body. If these guidelines are acceptable to you, please sign below.

Advocacy

The next steps involve bringing in advocates to walk alongside of you during this time. Simply put, an advocate is someone who loves God, loves God's Word and loves and / or cares about you.

The addition of a trusted friend, small group member, or mentor has shown to increase the effectiveness of counselling significantly. They will walk alongside you through the counselling process and continue to help you after the counselling is over. Ideally the person is part of your day-to-day community and attends Mission City Bible Church and can receive an endorsement from leaders at Mission City.

Before proceeding with an advocate, please take some time to read through the following information to gain a better understanding of what we mean by advocacy.

The Vital Role of an Advocate

- It's a privilege to be an advocate and stand in the gap for your friend or loved one during their time of need (Pr 17:17)
- One doesn't need extensive counselling training or schooling to be an advocate (2 Cor 1:3-5)
- Mutual ministry encourages growth in everyone involved (Heb 3:12-13)
- It's God's design to counsel in community (Gal 6:1-2)

Responsibilities of an Advocate During Counselling

During the time as advocate, people will have a variety of opportunities to learn, grow and serve. Below are some specific ways in which we will ask the advocate to serve.

- Offer intercessory prayer (Romans 12:11-12, Jeremiah 33:3).
- Provides insights and perspective for the counsellor (Pr 18:17).
- Witness to what God is doing (Mark 2:1-12, 2 Tim 2:24-26).
- Help the counsellee apply what they are learning in-between sessions (Gal 6:1-2).
- Become a bridge for the counsellee to get connected back into community (Heb 3:12-13).
- Decreases loneliness and isolation of the counsellee (Pr 18:1, Heb 10:24-25).
- Stand as an ambassador for Biblical Soul Care (2 Cor 1:3-5 and 5:14-21).

Benefits to the Counsellee

- Hope and help as a friend who walks through the valley.

- Continuity of counselling and help to the counsellee throughout the weeks.
- Help communicating greater context, to bring to remembrance key issues and/or remind them of truth gained while in counselling.
- Freedom to be attentive without the need to capture every detail.

Benefits to the Advocate

- Deeper insight into the life of the person they love.
- Weekly direction for conversation and accountability.
- An opportunity to ask questions and receive insight.
- An opportunity to fulfill the law of Christ (Gal 6:1-2).
- A practical way to apply the “one another’s” of Scripture.
- An opportunity for further training / equipping.
- Personal growth in closing the gaps between knowing Scripture and living it.

Benefits to the Counsellor

- Another perspective into life of the counsellee.
- Built-in accountability for homework and application.
- Validation or clarification of heart issues.
- Help assimilating into the regular flow of discipleship at Mission City.

Benefits to the Local Church

- A person is trained to support a body member in a short period of time.
- Creates a support network for Pastors and ministry leaders.
- Built-in accountability for the church’s counselling ministry.
- A testimony of love and commitment to one another and a watching world.
- Creates a culture of obedience to the 40+ “one another’s” of Scripture.

Once you have read, understood and agree to proceed with counselling with an advocate please sign the BIBLICAL COUNSELLING AGREEMENT AND CONSENT FORM below.

BIBLICAL COUNSELLING AGREEMENT AND CONSENT FORM

TO: Mission City Bible Church ("Mission City") AND TO: Its Elders, Staff and Volunteers

1. **By the counsellee:**

I have read and fully understand the Introduction and this Agreement and Consent and I hereby confirm that:

- I have read the Introduction to Biblical Counselling (the "Introduction") and understand the scope, limitations, and process of biblical counselling as practiced at Mission City.
- I have had the opportunity and have clarified any areas of confusion respecting the Introduction or this Agreement before signing;
- I have voluntarily and without influence by either the counsellor or the advocate requested biblical counselling and agree to abide by the this Agreement and the Introduction;
- I agree to the terms under which I will be provided with biblical counselling are as set out in the Introduction and this Agreement, and that this includes my responsibility to be faithful, accountable, and teachable throughout the biblical counselling process, making my biblical counselling meetings a priority, being punctual and prepared to participate, and calling ahead if I will be late or absent;
- No guarantee or assurance has been made to me as to any outcomes or results that may be obtained from biblical counselling;
- I release and agree to hold harmless Mission City, the biblical counsellor, the advocate, the Elders, staff and volunteers of Mission City from any and all liability of any nature for any decisions or actions that I may or may not take as a result of the counselling I receive and/or the work of the counsellor and/or advocate;
- I understand my personal responsibility to maintain, and agree that I will maintain, confidentiality of everything discussed in my biblical counselling, both during and after the conclusion of my biblical counselling;
- I consent to the gathering and use of my personal information, and understand that it will be retained and used as set out in the Introduction and Mission City's privacy policy.

Counsellee Signature: _____ PrintName: _____

My advocate is: _____

Insert Name or leave blank if no advocate

2. **By the advocate:** I have read the Introduction to Biblical Counselling and understand the scope, limitations, and process of biblical counselling and acknowledge my role and responsibilities are as set out in the Introduction and the Advocate Manual and agree to act as an advocate.

Advocate Signature: _____ PrintName: _____



BIBLICAL COUNSELLING AGREEMENT AND CONSENT FORM

TO: Mission City Bible Church ("Mission City") AND TO: Its Elders, Staff and Volunteers

1. **By the legal guardian of the counsellee:**

I have read and fully understand the Introduction and this Agreement and Consent and I hereby confirm that:

- I have read the introduction to biblical counselling and understand the scope, limitations, and process of biblical counselling as practiced at Mission City;
- I understand that the counselling does not include psychological treatment or psychological diagnoses and is not diagnose or treat medical conditions;
- I have had the opportunity and have clarified any areas of confusion respecting the introduction or this agreement before signing;
- I have voluntarily and without influence by either the counsellor or the advocate requested biblical counselling for my son/daughter and agree to abide by this agreement and the introduction;
- I give my consent to the terms under which my son/daughter will be provided with biblical counselling as set out in the introduction and this agreement;
- I have been given no guarantee or assurance as to any outcomes or results that may be obtained from biblical counselling;
- I release and agree to hold harmless Mission City Bible Church, the biblical counsellor, the advocate the elders staff and volunteers of Mission City from any and all liability of any nature for any decisions or actions made concerning the counselling of my son/daughter;
- I give my consent to the biblical counsellor to discuss any and all of the information that my son/daughter discloses to be shared with supervisors, which may include the elders, staff and/or volunteers;
- I consent to the gathering and use of my sons/daughters and my personal information, and understand that it will be retained and used as set out in the introduction and Mission City's privacy policy.

Counsellee Signature: _____ PrintName: _____

Guardian Signature: _____ PrintName: _____

My advocate is: _____

Insert Name or leave blank if no advocate

4. **By the advocate:** I have read the Introduction to Biblical Counselling and understand the scope, limitations, and process of biblical counselling and acknowledge my role and responsibilities are as set out in the Introduction and the Advocate Manual and agree to act as an advocate.

Advocate Signature: _____ PrintName: _____

Mission City Bible Church Brantford

By _____