



## Welcome Form And Disclosure Statement

Are you interested in biblical counseling at Abounding Grace Church (AGC)? If so, please read the following statement and sign at the designated place at the end of this document.

The counselors at AGC are available to take a limited number of counseling cases (with priority given first to members and then attendees of AGC). Our counselors (by design) are not certified by the state of California, nor are we psychologically or medically trained therapists. We are not a licensed counseling agency. We have had extensive training and experience and continue to be trained and equipped in biblical counseling. All of the primary counselors have been certified or are in the process of being certified by a nationally accredited biblical counseling organization.

If you seek counseling from AGC, we want you to know that **all counseling will be conducted in accordance with the counselor's understanding of the Scriptures.** Your counseling will be **biblical** in scope, meaning that the Scriptures will be the authority in all cases rather than the principles of psychology or psychiatry. Our counselors are not infallible, nor do they profess to know all there is to know about biblical teaching and its life applications, but they are well-equipped and competent to help people change. They will make a point to differentiate between God's commands and their suggestions. Counselors will also honestly tell you if they are hindered and will seek help. **Please note that we do not give medical or legal advice.** If you are not sure that you will be interested in biblically-based counseling, you may first attend one or two sessions to discover what biblical counseling is like. AGC has the right to terminate your sessions if you are unwilling to use the Bible as the final authority and are reluctant to do the homework assigned.

Confidentiality is essential to the biblical counseling relationship, and we will carefully guard the information you entrust to us. All communications between you and our biblical counseling ministry offices will be held in strict confidence unless you (or a parent in the case of a minor) authorize to release the information. However, absolute confidentiality is not always possible, nor is it scriptural. In certain circumstances, the Bible requires that facts be disclosed to selected others (Matthew 18:15ff). If your church leadership should inquire, we will disclose to them only that information that we believe is necessary for them to effectively and biblically fulfill their responsibility to shepherd you. Other exceptions are (1) if a person expresses intent to harm themselves or someone else; (2) if there is evidence or reasonable suspicion of abuse against a minor child, elderly person, or dependent adult; (3) if a subpoena or other court order is received directing the disclosure of information; (4) when your biblical counselor consults with their supervisor or (5) if a person persistently refuses to renounce a particular sin, and it becomes necessary to seek the assistance of others in the church to encourage repentance, restoration, and reconciliation. Our counselors strongly prefer not to disclose personal information to others, and they will make every effort to help you find ways to resolve a problem as privately as possible. If you have a problem with this procedure, please discuss your concerns and reasons with your counselor.

At any time during the counseling and for sufficient reasons, the counselor and the counselee shall have the option of terminating the counseling.

AGC does not charge a specific fee for counseling. However, counselees may want to express their gratitude tangibly through a donation. All donations should be made to Abounding Grace Church, not the counselor. Also, non-members and non-attenders of AGC will be expected to pay for (reimburse) any purchased materials related to the weekly counseling sessions or homework assignments.

Because the biblical counseling ministry at AGC is also a training ministry, those being trained (trainees) in biblical counseling may also be present in the counseling sessions (required for non-members, with permission from AGC members). Trainees will abide by strict confidentiality rules. Primary counselors will use wisdom and discretion in assigning trainees to cases.

We will need your prompt and consistent participation in your scheduled meetings. Please contact your counselor 24 hours in advance if you must cancel an appointment. Of course, in emergencies, exceptions will be made.

If a conflict should arise between the counselee and the counselor, both parties must agree to resolve the dispute outside the secular court system. No lawsuit will be initiated, and neither party can file a claim in any state or federal civil court. Instead, the parties agree to submit any dispute or claim to the pastors and elders of AGC for Christian resolution. According to biblical principles, all decisions and judgments will be made fairly and justly and are final and non-appealable.

The undersigned counselee, having sought biblical counseling as adhered to by AGC, hereby acknowledges their understanding of the above-stated conditions and thereby releases from liability Abounding Grace Church and any/all pastors, deacons, or employees from claim or litigation whatsoever arising from the undersigned's participation in the above mentioned biblical counseling ministry. All counsel given is in accordance with the biblical principles and faith and practice of AGC and is not provided in adherence with any local, state, or national psychological or psychiatric association.

**The counselee is held fully responsible for implementing the counsel they receive.**

I have read the conditions for counseling outlined in these two pages and agree to enter into counseling in full accordance with them.

COUNSELEE SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

COUNSELEE PRINTED NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

AGC BIBLICAL COUNSELING MINISTRY

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRINTED NAME

\_\_\_\_\_  
TITLE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE