



Grace* Biblical Counseling Ministry

(A Discipleship/Counseling Ministry)
(Hebrews 4:16**)

Welcome Letter

Dear Potential Counselee:

- 1. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to Grace Biblical Counseling Ministry which is a Discipleship/Biblical counseling ministry of Waters Edge Bible Church. The purpose of this ministry is to help you meet the challenges of life in a way that will please and honor the Lord Jesus Christ. We are confident that the Bible has all of the information necessary for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3) and that there are no problems which the Bible fails to address either in general or in specific principles. Therefore, your counseling will be Biblical in which the Scriptures are the final authority in all cases (2 Timothy 3:16-17). In other words, there will be NO secular or psychological influences in our counseling. However, you are fully responsible for how you implement that advice.**
- 2. Even though there is no mandatory charge for this ministry, we do ask for a \$40 administrative fee (to be paid during the first session) to cover the cost of reading materials and supplies that may be provided to you for your benefit. The counselor may also recommend that you purchase additional books to aid in your Christian growth. If you are unable to pay the \$40, it will be waived in good faith. Although this Biblical counseling service is provided without charge, Waters Edge Bible Church accepts freewill offerings which will be used to continue to provide excellent Biblical counseling and to expand this ministry.**
- 3. We recognize and respect the authority and discipline of the local church. Therefore, it is important that Biblical counseling sessions be accompanied by church activities that encourage discipleship and fellowship (Hebrews 10:24-25). If you are a member of another church family, the assistance of your church's leadership may be requested. Your pastor, elder, or deacon may even become a part of your counseling team. If you are not a member of a church, we will expect you to attend Waters Edge Bible Church during the period of counseling.**
- 4. Our Biblical Counselor's time is limited and is in high demand by those requesting Biblical counseling. If you must cancel or reschedule a counseling session, please notify your Biblical Counselor directly at least 24 hours prior to your scheduled counseling session. Of course, in emergencies, exceptions are made. For scheduling purposes, please be advised that the counseling period lasts an average of between 8 to 12 sessions. Please allow at least 2 hours for the first session, and 1 hour for all subsequent sessions.**

5. Since the Bible says that every believer needs to continually examine himself (1 Corinthians 11:28) and be an effectual doer of the Word (James 1:22-25), homework will be assigned during each session to assist you in implementing the Biblical principles learned during the counseling. It is important, therefore, that you bring writing paper, pen, and your Bible to ALL sessions. If you are unwilling to use the Bible as the final authority in counseling or unwilling to do the homework assigned, sessions will be terminated.

6. If you are interested in pursuing Biblical counseling through Grace Biblical Counseling Ministry, kindly fill out the attached Request for Biblical Counseling Form and email it to GraceMinistriesCounseling@gmail.com. Each person requesting counseling must fill out a form, so please feel free to copy the form as necessary. We ask that you complete the Request for Biblical Counseling form and submit it to us at least a week ahead of your scheduled first appointment. During the first session, you will be asked to sign a Grace Biblical Counseling Ministry Informed Consent to Biblical Counseling and Discipleship Form which further explains our Biblical counseling ministry.

7. We believe you will receive encouragement and hope from the Scriptures even during the first session (Romans 15:4). From then on, with your cooperation, we believe a trustworthy and Biblical answer to your difficulty will be found. In the meantime, I would like to leave you with this verse from Scripture, “And God is able to make all grace abound to you, that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed” (2 Corinthians 9:8). May God richly bless you!

**CARLOS SALAVERRIA
Lead Pastor
Waters Edge Bible Church**

**** Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need (Hebrews 4:16).**

GRACE* BIBLICAL COUNSELING MINISTRY

INFORMED CONSENT TO BIBLICAL COUNSELING & DISCIPLESHIP

Our Goal: The purpose of biblical counseling and discipleship is to help you meet the challenges of life in a way that will please and honor the Lord Jesus Christ. We offer counseling and discipleship free of charge, as a ministry of Waters Edge Bible Church. Counselees may choose to make a freewill offering 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 ministry you receive through Grace Biblical Counseling Ministry.

Biblical Basis: Grace Biblical Counseling Ministry 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 (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 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. Grace Biblical Counseling Ministry counselors are **not** trained or licensed as psychotherapists, or mental health professionals. They do not follow the methods, theories, or practices of such persons, and our policy is to not make referrals to them. Our counselors are engaged in a strictly religious practice under the supervision of ordained clergy, and accordingly, are not state-licensed. *See Fla. Stat. §§ 490.014(2)(f) [Exemptions – "Psychological Services"], 491.014(3), 4(b), 4(c), and 4(d) ["Exemptions – Clinical, Counseling, and Psychotherapy Services"]*.

As a Christian religious ministry founded on biblical truth, Grace Biblical Counseling Ministry recognizes marriage only as the union of one man and one woman, as God ordained in Genesis 2:24-25. Grace Biblical Counseling Ministry counselors offer compassionate ministry to persons desiring to leave a sinful lifestyle but will not affirm any other arrangement as a valid marriage, regardless of any contrary definition that has been or in the future may be adopted by the civil authorities.

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,

Grace Biblical Counseling Ministry Informed Consent to Biblical Counseling & Discipleship (Con't)

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 may be necessary to contact the pastor and/or elder(s) of such church.

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 themselves or 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 to assist or for training purposes.

Conflict Resolution - Arbitration: On rare occasions, a conflict may develop between a counselor and counselee. 1 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 counselees 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 the *Rules of Procedure* of the Institute for Christian Conciliation (a copy is available upon request). The arbiters will be the Elders of Waters Edge Bible Church. 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.

Release of Records: It is our policy not to release Grace Biblical Counseling Ministry records for a particular counselee without that person's written consent, or, in case of counseling a married couple or other counseling involving multiple members of the same family, the written consent of each person involved. If a counselee is under age 18, that counselee's parent or legal guardian must sign. If a subpoena or other legal demand requires Grace Biblical Counseling Ministry to release counseling records, Grace Biblical Counseling Ministry will notify the person(s) whose records must be released.

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.

Printed Name

Signed*

Dated _____

*If the person is a minor, the parent or guardian must sign this document for them.

BIBLICAL COUNSELING COMMITMENT AGREEMENT FOR COUNSELEES

Colossians 1:10 says, "so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God." In accordance with this verse, our goal as Christians is to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord. Therefore, during the period of counseling, we ask you to make the following commitments to assist you in accomplishing this goal. We believe that by making these commitments, this will enable the Holy Spirit to work through and in you to make the heart changes in your life that are necessary to change you from the inside out in order to glorify God in your daily walk with Him. Please keep in mind that the counseling might take 8 or more sessions for lasting change to occur.

I Agree To Be Committed To:	Based On:
Regular Bible study	"This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success." (Joshua 1:8)
Memorizing Scripture	"Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You." (Psalm 119:11)
Being a doer of the Word. This means I am making a strong commitment to: a. Implementing the Biblical principles I learn from the Biblical counseling session and the homework assigned to me both during the counseling session itself as well as outside the counseling room. This will require you to pay very close attention during the counseling session in order to take extensive notes. b. Be faithful in attending all scheduled counseling sessions. If you are not able to attend a session, we ask you to call, email, or text 2-3 days in advance to let us know why you cannot attend and when you will be available to resume sessions. c. Complete all the homework correctly and on time before the next counseling session begins. Please keep in mind that the homework assigned will be reviewed during the next counseling session.	"But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does." (James 1:22-25) "But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil." (Hebrews 5:14).

Biblical Counseling Commitment Agreement for Counselees (Cont)

I Agree To Be Committed To:	Based On:
Biblical communication and behavior. This includes being honest (speaking the truth lovingly in voice, tone, and facial expression); speaking edifying words; not blame shifting; and not reacting in anger. I also agree to attack the problem rather than the person. This means I will strive to act kind, tenderhearted, and forgiving rather than with bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, slander, or malice. If there are any of these issues during any session, I will stop, clarify, correct, and move on.	<p>"but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ." (Ephesians 4:15)</p> <p>"Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear." (Ephesians 4:29)</p> <p>"You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye." (Matthew 7:5)</p> <p>"for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God." (James 1:20)</p> <p>"Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you." (Ephesians 4:31-32)</p>
Prayer	<p>"The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much." (James 5:16b)</p> <p>"pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17)</p>

By signing this document you are agreeing to abide by these commitments during the period of counseling. If you have any questions, please clarify them with your counselor prior to signing this agreement.

Counselee's Name

Date

Counselee's Name

Date

GRACE* BIBLICAL COUNSELING MINISTRY

REQUEST FOR BIBLICAL COUNSELING

(A discipleship/counseling ministry of Waters Edge Bible Church)

Instructions: Please print clearly. If necessary, please continue answer on a separate sheet of paper and attach to this form. Each counselee must complete one of these forms. Please bring your Bible, writing paper, and pen to all sessions.

A. IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION			
Name:		Date:	
Address:			
Phone:	Birthdate:	Age:	Gender:
Email:			
Occupation:		Business Phone:	
Education:	Last Grade Completed (prior to college):		
	Other Education:		

B. FAMILY INFORMATION					
Marital Status:		Single ____	Married ____	Divorced ____	Widowed ____
Spouse's Info	Name:		Phone:		
	Birthdate:		Age:		
	Occupation:		Business Phone:		
	Education:	Last Grade Completed (prior to college):			
		Other Education:			
Date of Marriage:		Your Ages When Married: Husband: ____ Wife: ____			
How long did you know your spouse before marriage?		Length of Dating With Spouse:			
		Length of Engagement:			
Is your spouse willing to come for counseling?		Yes ____	No ____	Uncertain ____	
Have either of you been married before?			Yes ____	No ____	
Have you ever been separated or filed for divorce?			Yes ____	No ____	
Do you currently have a restraining order against your spouse?			Yes ____	No ____	
Have you ever struggled with same sex attraction?			Yes ____	No ____	
Have you ever been arrested?			Yes ____	No ____	
If you answered yes to any of the above 5 questions, please explain on a separate piece of paper.					
Children	Names	Age	Gender	Living (Yes/No)	From PM* (Yes/No)

*PM = Previous Marriage

Form Revised 10 August 2024

*God's Riches At Christ's Expense

Grace Biblical Counseling Ministry Request for Biblical Counseling (Con't)

C. RELIGIOUS INFORMATION					
Current Church Info	Church I currently attend:				
	Address:				
	Pastor's Name:				
	Pastor's Phone:	Are you a member?	Yes ____	No ____	
	May we contact your Pastor for information/help?				
	Yes ____ No ____ Uncertain ____				
Church Attendance Per Month (Circle One): 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10+					
Religious Background	Church Attended in Childhood:				
	Have You Been Baptized? No ____ Yes ____				
	(If yes, when _____)				
Denominational Preference:					
Religious Beliefs	Do you consider yourself a religious person?				
	Yes ____ No ____ Uncertain ____				
	Do you believe in God? Yes ____ No ____ Uncertain ____				
	Have you received Jesus Christ as your personal Savior?				
	Yes ____ No ____ Don't Know ____				
	(If you answered yes, please answer the following):				
How do you know that Jesus is your Savior?					
What changes took place in your life when you became saved?					
Have you come to the place in your spiritual life where you know for certain that if you die tonight you would go to heaven? Yes ____ No ____ Uncertain ____ (What is your basis for answering this question as you did)?					
Spiritual Life	I read the Bible: Daily ____ Often ____ Occasionally ____ Never ____				
	I pray to God: Daily ____ Often ____ Occasionally ____ Never ____				
	I have family devotions: Daily ____ Often ____ Occasionally ____ Never ____				
	Explain your personal and/or family devotions:				
	Explain any recent changes in your spiritual life:				
	Do you believe Satan exists?		Yes ____	No ____	Uncertain ____
	Have you ever dabbled with the "Occult" (e.g., séances, devil worship, witchcraft, etc.)?		Yes ____	No ____	Uncertain ____
Spouse's Religious Background		Church Name:			
Frequency of Attendance Per Month:					

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D. HEALTH INFORMATION										
Current Health Information	My Health Is (Circle One):			Very Good	Good	Average	Declining			
	Height:		Weight: ____ lbs. (Explain any recent weight changes):							
	Date of Last Medical Exam:				Physician's Name & Phone:					
	Results of Last Medical Exam:									
	Each night, when do you:									
	Go to bed?			Fall asleep?		Wake up?		Get out of bed?		
	Describe any recent changes in sleep habits:									
	Do you drink alcoholic beverages?						Yes	No		
	If yes, when:					How much?				
	Are you presently taking any medications?									
Yes		No		If yes, list medication(s) and dosages:						
Are you/have you used drugs for other than medical purposes?							Yes	No		
If yes, list drugs used and when:										
Medical History	List major present/past illnesses, injuries or handicaps:									
	Have you recently suffered the loss of someone who was close to you? If yes, please explain.									
	Have you had any psychotherapy/counseling before? (If yes, complete the following)							Yes	No	
	Counselors Name		Dates (From/To)		Medication Prescribed		Outcome/ Diagnosis			
Are you willing to sign a release of information form so that we may obtain social, psychiatric, or medical reports?							Yes	No		

Grace Biblical Counseling Ministry Request for Biblical Counseling (Con't)

E. BASIC PROBLEM INFORMATION	
What is the major problem you are dealing with (what brings you here)?	
In what ways have you contributed to the problem?	
What actions have you taken to deal with the problem?	
How do you think this counseling will help you?	
How did you hear about us?	

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY		
\$40 Administrative Fee (Cash Only Please)	Received _____	Waived _____
Counselor's Approval		Date: