Pastor’s Counseling Policy

It is important before we begin our counseling process that you understand my policy and philosophy toward pastoral counseling. Please read the following; and if you have any questions concerning this policy, please discuss them with me.

1. I am not a licensed, professional counselor.
   I am a pastor who will use the Word of God as my text, the Holy Spirit as my guide, and Jesus Christ as my model. I assume that almost every conflict in our lives is the result of a spiritual problem. While this may not always be the case, that will be our starting point. Because this is not licensed counseling, I will not be held liable for what may be understood as professional malpractice.

2. There are no financial fees for pastoral counseling.
   However, it will cost you time, honesty, and hard work. There may be some financial costs for tests I administer, books I require you to read, or materials I distribute; but we will not let the lack of funds stand in the way of this counseling process.

3. It is not my practice or purpose to counsel individuals or couples over an extended period of time.
   If you need such counseling, I will refer you to a licensed professional counselor. I will continue to touch base with you and your licensed counselor if you choose and give written permission to do so.

4. It is my policy to counsel women alone only one time.
   After this one session, if there is a need for further counseling or discipleship, I will refer you to a woman in our church who will assist you further. If you then want to continue to talk with me, the three of us will do so together. If your husband is willing and available, I will also continue the counseling with you and him present.

5. It is also my policy to counsel children with their parents present, if at all possible.
   These sessions may include private talks combined with a time of talking with the parent in the room with us.

6. I will give homework assignments after each session, and I will not schedule a following session until the assignment is completed.
   When scheduling an appointment through my secretary, she may ask you if you have completed all assignments given. If the assignments have not been completed, she may not schedule you without first talking to me. Doing outside assignments is vital to your future spiritual and emotional health.

I have read the Pastor’s Counseling Policy and agree to adhere to it.

(Signature) (Date)

Note about this Pastor’s Counseling Policy: This previously published policy was developed by Pastor Joe McKinney. This form is provided as information only and is not intended nor should it be construed as legal advice. If your church chooses to adopt a counseling policy, have it reviewed and approved by your church’s attorney. Laws related to counseling vary from state to state.

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