

# **Counseling Agreement for Parker Reardon**

## **Before Beginning Biblical Counseling**

In order to make our first session as profitable as possible I would ask you to read the following information carefully and thoroughly. If you have any questions concerning this information, please don't hesitate to contact me!

## **About Biblical Counseling**

As a biblical counselor, I am trained in the meaning and use of the Bible and biblical principles for counseling. I seek to understand the issues of life and minister the Bible to those situations, knowing that Scripture alone provides the only authoritative guide for what we believe and how we are to behave. I am committed to not basing my counseling knowledge on my own opinions (which are flawed), experience, or concepts of behavior, but will seek to apply the full range of biblical truth into focus on the counselee's need.

I deal with a wide range of problems, from broken marriages, parent-child relationships, fear, anger, sexual sins, depression, alcohol and drug abuse, tension, anxiety, worry and other problems resulting mental and physical immobility. Confidentiality is respected and held within appropriate limitations. A case may be discussed with counselors or other professionals, but only to the degree necessary to find further biblical solutions to the problem. All such consultation is conducted in accord with the highest standards of biblical ethics.

I believe in the total health needs of my counsees, who have been created in the image of God (Gen 1:26-27) with both body and soul dynamics. Therefore, I may recommend that you have a full or specified medical examination. If medical assistance is required, counseling will continue whenever possible.

I will seek to use all of my skill in applying biblical principles to help you in whatever problem deprives you of the peace and joy that God makes available in His Word and through His indwelling Holy Spirit. I will concentrate on three basic foundations from God's Word:

**GOSPEL HOPE**—The Gospel is the only good news to peace with God, eternity with Him, and the experience of abundant living today. In Jesus Christ we have a great High Priest who has been tempted in all things, yet without sin. Thus, because of Him, even though every sin common to man may be tempting you, God has promised that He will not let you be tempted beyond your endurance, but will provide for you the way to escape from sin so that you can endure it (1 Cor 10:13; Heb 4:14-16).

**GOSPEL CHANGE**—The Gospel offers the only power over sinful enslavements and fleshly desires. 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, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in good works and increasing in the knowledge of God (Eph 4:20-24; Col 1:10).

**GOSPEL PRACTICE**—The Gospel...We need to learn each day to put on the Lord Jesus in attitude and action and prove ourselves doers of God's Word, lest we be merely hearers, forgetting and deluding ourselves. Only in consistent practice of the Scriptures shall we be blessed in what we do, and only then will we please the Lord (Rom 13:14; Jas 1:22-25).

Normally, weekly counseling sessions will be scheduled for roughly one and a half hours. Typically it takes several weeks (8-12) to get folks on the right track, as they learn to walk in consistent faith and obedience to the Lord.

Your first appointment will take place after I receive and review your counseling form (PDI).

In order to receive lasting victory over the problems of life, it is vital that each person becomes established in a consistent Christian walk. The Lord has graciously provided the local church to come alongside and help in this process of sanctification and growth (Heb 10:24-25). Therefore, it is important that counseling sessions be accompanied by church attendance and involvement that encourage discipleship, fellowship, and grateful service. For this reason, I may reach out to your church and request their assistance. It is my commitment to do what will best bring about the victory you can experience over your problems.

You will need a journal and your Bible at all sessions, including the 1<sup>st</sup>. Be sure to bring them each time. Come with high expectations, that God will open your eyes to behold wonderful truths from His law (Ps 119:18)! You will find hope & encouragement even during your first session. From then on, with your active cooperation, I am confident that you will find the true, good and acceptable answer to the difficulty that prompted you to reach out to me.

## **Consent and Commitment to Biblical Counseling**

**My Goal**—My goal in providing biblical counseling is to help you meet the challenges of life in a way that will please and honor the Lord Jesus Christ and allow you to enjoy fully His love and plans for your life, to His glory.

**Biblical Basis**—I believe that the Bible provides guidance and instruction for faith and life. Therefore, my counseling is based on scriptural principles rather than those of secular clinical psychology or psychiatry (Col 2:8). I am neither licensed as a psychotherapist or mental health professional. It should be understood that biblical

counseling consists of the giving of scriptural counsel and the practical application of the Bible to each individual. Said differently, my doctorate is not in medicine, but in biblical theology. Yet, the counselee is held fully responsible for how he/she implements that counsel.

I am confident that the Bible has all of the information necessary for life and godliness (2 Pet 1:3). There are no problems that people experience in which the Bible fails to address them either in general or specific principles. I am certainly not infallible, as I'm a sinful creature, nor do I pretend to know all there is to know about biblical teaching and its applications to life, but I am well-equipped and competent to help people change.

**Professional Advice**—In the process of biblical counseling there are often times when there is a need for significant advice with regards to legal, medical, financial or other technical areas. In those cases you may be encouraged to seek independent professional advice. If this is necessary, I will cooperate with such advisors and help you to consider their advice in the light of relevant scriptural principles.

**Confidentiality**—Confidentiality is an important aspect of the counseling process and I will carefully guard the information you entrust to me. However, absolute confidentiality is not biblical; in certain circumstances the Bible requires that facts be disclosed to select others (Matt 18:15ff). If your church leadership should inquire, I will disclose to them only that information which I believe is necessary for them to effectively and biblically fulfill their responsibility to shepherd you.

There are 5 situations when it may be necessary for me to share certain information with others:

- When I am uncertain how to address a particular problem and need to seek advice from another pastor/counselor (Prov 11:14; 24:6) \_\_\_\_\_ (initial)
- When a counselee attends another church and it is necessary to talk with his/her pastor or elders \_\_\_\_\_ (initial)
- When there is a clear indication that someone may be harmed unless others intervene (Rom 13:1-7) \_\_\_\_\_ (initial)
- When a person persistently refuses to renounce a particular sin and it becomes necessary to seek assistance of others in the church to encourage repentance and reconciliation (Matt 18:15-20; Prov 15:22; 24:11) \_\_\_\_\_ (initial)
- When criminal activity has been committed and the counselee refuses to bring the matter to the attention of local authorities \_\_\_\_\_ (initial)

Please be assured that I strongly prefer not to disclose personal information to others, and will make every effort to help you find ways to resolve a problem as privately as possible. IF I AM ASKED TO TESTIFY AGAINST YOU IN A COURT OF LAW DUE TO YOUR CONTINUING SIN AND REFUSAL TO REPENT, BY SIGNING (EVEN ELECTRONICALLY) THIS PDI FORM YOU ARE WAIVING YOUR RIGHTS TO

CONFIDENTIALITY, ALLOWING ME TO DISCLOSE PERSONAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU TO A JUDGE OR LAWYER THAT I DEEM NECESSARY AS IT PERTAINS TO THE CASE.

**Resolution of Conflicts**—On extremely rare occasions a conflict may develop between the counselor and counselee. In order to make sure that any such conflicts will be resolved in a biblically faithful manner, I may request the involvement of another elder, besides myself.

**Termination of Counseling**—It is my desire that the counseling arrangement will conclude with a resumption of healthy participation into your local church and life contexts. However, at any time during the counseling process, you or I have the option to terminate the counseling arrangement.

**Expectations and Commitments**—As I invest in you, I will also have some expectations of you. First, it is important that you be honest and be willing to trust me. It will be very difficult to find help if you seek to hide, minimize, blame-shift, or deceive away from the hard truth of your situation. Second, I will regularly send you away from each meeting with homework assignments. As the hard work of change happens more outside of the counseling meeting, this homework will be purposeful and necessary to work toward genuine and lasting change. Last, I will be looking for a commitment of time. Problems and bad habits develop over long periods of time and often cannot be broken in a matter of days. For this reason, I will be looking for a commitment of 8-12 meetings, typically, held once a week. All meetings may not be necessary, but I will seek to make that determination.

Having clarified the principles and policies of my counseling ministry, I welcome the opportunity to minister to you in the name of Christ and to be used by Him as He helps you to grow in spiritual maturity and prepares you for usefulness in His body. If you have any questions about these guidelines, please don't hesitate to contact me.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have carefully read the conditions for counseling set forth in this document and agree to enter into counseling in accordance with them.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I am filling out this PDI from on behalf of the counselee:

My name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_