

Graham Church Counseling Agreement

Have you been having trouble? Don't know what to do or where to turn? The pastors & counselors of Graham Church of Laingsburg, MI want you to know that they are available to take a limited number of counseling cases from outside the congregation in addition to those they are conducting at any given time. You may apply for help by phoning 517.675.5401 or go to our website: www.grahamchurch.org

There are, however, several conditions upon which outside counseling cases will be initiated. They are as follows:

- 1) **Our Priority** – Counseling of members of Graham Church always takes precedence over all outside counseling.
- 2) **Our Counselors** -- Counseling will be done by a pastor or a trained Biblical counselor. The counseling will be based on the counselor's understanding of the Bible. Your counselor will do all he or she can to learn the particular truths and principles needed to help you. When necessary they will seek help, input or advice from mentors or colleagues. Another counselor may be asked to participate as part of the counseling team. Counselors in training may also sit in on the counseling.
- 3) **Biblical Counseling** -- All counseling will be based on Biblical principles. We believe the Scriptures are sufficient or able to deal with life's problems. Therefore, our counseling will not use secular psychology or psychiatry. If you are not sure that you would be interested in biblically-based counseling, you may attend one or two sessions to discover what Biblical counseling is like.
- 4) **Members of Other Churches** -- If you are a member of another church, it may be necessary for your pastor to be involved with the counseling to some extent. This is important since we want to recognize and respect the authority and the discipline of other congregations. And, in addition, this makes transfer back to the pastoral care of your church a lot easier.
- 5) **Confidentiality** -- Our counselors recognize the importance of confidentiality and exercise great care in guarding information you entrust to us. But if information is revealed in counseling which indicates a genuine potential for harm to a counselee or others, the counselor may be required by law or Biblical mandate to share that information with the appropriate authorities or family members. Absolute confidentiality is not Scriptural; matters of church discipline (cf. Mt. 18:15ff.), for instance, under certain circumstances, require one to disclose facts to others.
- 6) **Counselee Responsibilities** – It should be understood that biblical counseling consists of the giving of scriptural advice and the practical application of the same to each individual. Yet the counselee is held fully responsible for how he implements that advice. In order to grow and change, you, as the counselee, are expected to complete any homework assignments given by the counselor. If you can't make an appointment, we ask that you please contact the counselor in advance of your appointment.
We urge our counselees to properly care for their physical bodies and to seek 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 in the treatment of organic (physical) problems.
- 7) **Cost** – All counseling is done free of charge as a ministry of Graham Church. Sometimes, out of gratitude, one may wish to express his thanks in a tangible way. In such cases, checks should be made out to the church, not in a pastor's or counselor's name. You may also reimburse the church for the costs of materials like books, but it is not required.
- 8) **Terminating Counseling** – At any time during the counseling, for reasons sufficient to himself, the counselor - as well as the counselee - shall have the option of terminating counseling.

We are confident that the Bible has all of the information necessary for life and godliness. There are no problems between persons that the Bible fails to address either in general or specific principles. While our counselors do not pretend to know all there is to know about biblical teaching and its application to life, nevertheless, they do know much and will do their utmost to help you.

If you are interested in counseling, kindly sign below as indicated.

I have read the conditions for counseling set forth in this brochure and agree to enter into counseling in accordance with them:

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date _____