

Our Philosophy of Counseling

We believe the claim of Scripture in its promises, precepts, principles, and wisdom to be an all-sufficient resource for matters of life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3-4). We believe that the means for change is through God's enabling grace mediated through the Scriptures, the ordinances, God's people, cultural resources, and creation and providence.

Please refer to the brochure entitled [Why Biblical Counseling?](#) by Dr. Craig R. Rowe for a discussion of what we mean by Biblical Counseling. If you did not receive a copy with this pamphlet, then please ask the counseling secretary for a copy.

The resource of God's people is vital to godly change. The Scriptures teach that a local body of believers has a responsibility to come along side those who are struggling with sinful issues in their lives (Gal. 6:15). No one is alone in their struggle with sin. God has equipped each body with those who have the gifts necessary to help those who are struggling, as well as given the directive to one-another each other. To deprive the body of the opportunity for ministry to each other will deprive the person struggling of a powerful resource for change in his life, as well as deprive those who have the ability to help of an opportunity to be used of God in the life of another.

Our Policy

All people seeking counseling at Clearcreek Chapel must have a leader from their local church attend all counseling sessions with them. This person should be a pastor, elder, deacon, or other church leader who is involved in their care in some meaningful way.

For those people who 1) are not a part of a local church; or 2) who do not have anyone from their local church who is willing to come with them; or 3) who do not want anyone from their local church to be involved, they will be required to attend every Sunday morning worship service at Clearcreek Chapel during the duration of their counseling unless they are providentially hindered. It is also strongly recommended (not required) that they attend the Sunday morning adult Bible study time, the Sunday evening worship service, and one of the weekly Tuesday evening Flock gatherings.

For women who are being counseled by a female counselor, the accountability partner should be another woman.

Exceptions

For pastors/elders seeking counsel, an accountability partner will not be required to attend the first session. At that first session, or sometime before the second session, a decision will be made by the Counselor and/or the Pastor of

Discipleship/Counseling as to the necessity of an accountability partner's attendance and who that person should be.

There also may be an occasional situation for those who are not pastors/elders where circumstances might warrant an exception. In those rare cases, those requesting counseling will need to talk with the Pastor of Discipleship/Counseling in order to obtain an exception to this policy.

If, during the course of counseling, there is a situation that comes up that is not covered by this policy, then the Pastor of Discipleship/Counseling, in conjunction with the Counselor involved, will have the final authority in granting exceptions or when special circumstances need to be considered. Any appeals can be addressed to the Board of Elders of Clearcreek Chapel.

Responsibilities of the Accountability Partner

Those who are willing to accept the privilege of being an accountability partner will have the following responsibilities:

1. To attend every counseling session with their partner(s).
2. To observe the counseling sessions in order to hold their partners accountable during the week for the homework assigned.
3. To come to the aid of their partner(s) in situations that arise during the week.
4. To give feedback to the Counselor whenever something has been taught in a session that is not in line with what is being taught at the particular local church of their partners. This will alert the Counselor to a potential conflict between the counsel given and the teaching of that local church.
5. To keep the local church's leadership (elders) updated on the progress of their partners.
6. To take over the routine discipleship of their partners when the Counselor believes that the crisis is past.
7. To be the liaison to that local church when church discipline is indicated.
8. To grow in their faith and trust in God and the sufficiency of His Word as they observe the counseling.
9. To gain understanding into the problems that people have so they will be able to help others with similar problems in the future.

Rationale for this Policy

1) Involvement in the ministry of a local church is vital to the growth of every believer as they seek to become more like Christ. Therefore, being a part of a local body of believers is very important to the counseling process. Regular

attendance and involvement at the services of that local church is critical to the growth of a believer and, therefore, will be required.

2) The leadership of a local church is accountable to God for those who are under their care (Hebrews 13:17). A leader must be involved in the lives of those who are under their care. It is not the responsibility of Clearcreek Chapel to usurp the leadership and their responsibilities toward the sheep in their care. Therefore, someone from that local church leadership team must be involved in the counseling of the people under their care.

Periodic Observation by Others

Clearcreek Chapel is a training facility recognized by the National Association of Nouthetic Counselors providing Biblical training to local church leaders in a wide geographic area. As part of their training, it is required that they observe actual counseling sessions. These classes are normally taught during the months of February, March, and April. There are also other times during the year when people from past classes need additional observation time.

These people must abide by the same Biblical standards of confidentiality that your Counselor does. They will be observing your sessions in a non-intrusive manner, out of your sight, and will not participate in the sessions at all. Their goal is to be “invisible”. They will only be observing. We ask that you be generous in your granting of permission for these future counselors to satisfy their requirements by observing your counseling sessions. As more Biblical counselors are equipped in our geographic area, then there will be more of God’s people that can be helped. Since you will be receiving help because of the generosity of past participants who allowed their sessions to be observed, we are asking that you be generous in this area for the benefit of future people who will be needing help.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What should I do when no one in leadership will come?

A. Perhaps your leadership does not understand what you are asking and why this is important. If you haven’t showed them this pamphlet, then that should be your first action. After that, if they still do not want to come, then they may have some suggestions for those that could be involved in their place. If there is no one willing to come, then you will be required to attend Clearcreek Chapel during the time that you are counseling.

Q. My problem is too personal and I don’t want an accountability partner from my church in the sessions with me. Can I still receive counseling?

A. Yes, as long as you attend Clearcreek Chapel. But, if you do not want to attend Clearcreek, then no, you cannot. Our belief in what the Scriptures teach about the involvement of local church leadership and other believers of that

church in the lives of each other as being a valuable resource for growth would mean that you would be depriving yourself of some of the most valuable resources God has provided toward your growth. That would not be in your best interest, or ours.

Q. What happens if our partner cannot come to a session?

A. It is understandable that God will, at times, providentially hinder someone from coming. In that case, then you should notify the Chapel secretary that your partner cannot come and plan on attending your session as usual. It is your responsibility to update your partner after the session.

However, it is not acceptable for that partner to miss multiple sessions. One of the responsibilities of your accountability partner is that they will attend every session with you. Repeated absences will need to be addressed and a satisfactory resolution reached in order to continue counseling.

Q. What happens if our accountability partner is no longer willing to come?

A. It will be your responsibility to find another accountability partner for your next session. You should not expect counseling to continue without a partner. You should also notify your Counselor that the partner will not be able to continue being your partner.

Q. Do I have to allow other observers into the counseling sessions?

A. No, that is not a requirement in order to receive counsel. You are free to ask that observers not be a part of your counseling sessions. However, we ask that you consider this decision in light of the potential good that can be done by allowing observers into your sessions. If you are having trouble with this item, then please ask your Counselor for further clarification.

If you have questions that have not been addressed, then please do not hesitate to contact Clearcreek Chapel and ask that someone help you with those questions.

I have read the above and understand my responsibilities as outlined and agree to abide by them.

Signature

I agree to allow the presence of observers in my counseling session as outlined.

Signature