



## *Christian Counseling*

### WHAT IS CHRISTIAN COUNSELING?

Have you and your spouse become that couple that you promised yourself you would never become before you were married and became one? That couple that's always bickering. That couple that no matter what they do, they just cannot seem to find peace. The kind where it's completely apparent that they're always frustrated with one another. The flame is out and the spark that was once there is gone.

It's unfortunate, but this type of relationship is more common than we'd like to admit. As Christians, our divorce rate is above 50% which is the same or higher than that of non-Christians. For the first time in the history of our country we have more single parent families than families where there is both a mother and a father in the home.

So what's really wrong?

Why are we still facing an epidemic of divorce in the Christian church when there are all these books, sermons, programs and who knows what else, all promising to teach you how to make your marriage succeed? Let us become the ones to make a difference in our society and work towards putting an end to this vicious cycle. Christian Counseling through *Belief Therapy* can be the answer to the challenges you are currently facing in your marriage.

To fully understand Christian Counseling we must first understand that God is our counselor, Jesus is the wonderful counselor and the Holy Spirit is our counselor. Mature Christians are exhorted to encourage others, warn the idle and help the weak. (1 Thess. 5:11;14). Most Christians who counsel believe that God is the author of all truth and that the Bible is the authoritative guide in the counseling process. Sound psychology is used to promote change and wholeness in the counseling relationship when it supports scripture, such as holding people responsible for their behavior and helping people change their thinking and behavior to coincide with truth. Christian counseling evaluates and considers the mental, physical and spiritual needs of people using a process in which the Bible is the authoritative guide.

As Christian counselors we recognize our work as redemptive and restorative in character. We bring the entire counseling enterprise under the lordship of Christ. The core issues addressed in helping your marriage are:

- exploring personal problems, purpose, significance and longings
- establishing meaningful relationship with Jesus Christ and with others
- developing biblical self-worth, thinking, choices and behavior experiencing a wholesome emotional state.

### **Christian Counseling - The Differences**

As a general rule, both Christian counseling and secular counseling share the same desire to help people overcome their problems, find meaning and joy in life, and become healthy and well-adjusted individuals, both mentally and emotionally. Most counselors have graduate degrees and have spent years learning their craft.

The word "counseling" can have multiple meanings, including offering advice and encouragement, sharing wisdom and skills, setting goals, resolving conflict, etc. Counselors usually probe the past (whether the problem happened a week ago or during childhood) in an attempt to repair the present. Sometimes they explore possible affects of physical and chemical imbalances that can cause physiological problems. A major part of counseling is resolving and restoring conflicts between people.

### **The C.A.R.E. Technique of Counseling**

There are as many various techniques of counseling as there are counseling theories. Each technique emphasizes whatever a counselor theory is trying to achieve with a client. In the case of Belief Therapy the emphasis is on what one believes and doesn't believe. As Certified Belief Therapists we find the C.A.R.E. technique to be most effective. It's fundamental objective is to assist a client to change what they are believing that is keeping them from finding the "peace of God, which passes all understanding" (Phil 4:7), believing the LIE. to believing the TRUTH that sets them free (John 8:32) from the bondage of the LIE. All problems in life become bondage to a person as long as that person believes the lies of Satan concerning themselves, others and God. Therefore, Belief Therapy assists a client to learn and



appropriate the TRUTH found only in Jesus Christ. C.A.R.E. is the implementation of this process. People do what they do because they believe what they believe.

- **Clarification**
- **Assessment**
- **Resolution**
- **Experience**

### **Christian Counseling - The Foundation**

Christian counseling is distinct from secular counseling. Christian counseling rises to another dimension. "In contrast to psychologically-integrated systems, Biblical counseling seeks to carefully discover those areas in which a Christian may be disobedient to the principles and commands of Scripture and to help him learn how to lovingly submit to God's will," reports the International Association of Biblical Counselors.

Christian counselors are able to do that because they have an absolute standard by which to measure their objectives and evaluate their counselee's lifestyle. They see the Bible as the source of all truth. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." The secular counselor has no such standard, but instead, they use the latest psychological findings or societal norm, both of which change with the winds of time. Therefore, a secular counselor has no absolutes with which to judge morals and the choices people make. Christian counselors understand that the Bible has a lot of practical wisdom about human nature, marriage and family, human suffering, and so much more. By using biblical concepts in counseling, they can instruct people in the way they should go and also hold them accountable. Psalm 119:24 says, "Your statutes are my delight; they are my counselors."

Although Christian counselors often use skills from the field of secular psychology and counseling, they recognize that the Bible, not psychology, is the final authority. "His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness (2 Peter 1:3). A Christian counselor's major strategy is to help their clients substitute biblical truth for error as they go about their day-to-day lives. They know that the truth, when known, believed, and obeyed, sets people free. When people are set free, they are fulfilling their true calling. "Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:32).



## *Marriage Coaching*

### WHAT IS MARRIAGE COACHING?

We believe that most marriages have a good foundation! After all, you did fall in love with each other! You married your spouse because you were in love and knew that nothing would ever separate you. Many times it is not so much about going back to discover what it was like when you first met but just fine tuning the basic core principles of relationships. Marriage Coaching helps you rediscover each other and what drew you to each other in the first place. It also helps you to learn, or perfect, the skills you need to keep the love you have for each other alive and growing!

Marriage Coaching is a professional client-focused service where the couple is assumed to be healthy, powerful, and able to achieve relationship goals with effective support, information and guidance. As Marriage Coaches, we don't give advice! We come along side of you in a purposeful manner, which helps you to see difficulties in a different light. We provide the support, encouragement, and accountability to help you accomplish the goals you set for your marriage!

Our coaching process is a faith-centered approach that helps you to live God's plan for a joy-filled marriage while developing practical skills to keep your marriage relationship strong. You and your spouse will be coached as a couple. We help you to identify, set and achieve your personal goals for your marriage. We come to you with an Apostolic approach helping to set things in order. Our plan is to lead your marriage to the final victory. We will even share practical insights from our marriage when beneficial. You should expect to receive the following from us:

- Structure: Goals, actions, covenant, clear expectation
- Relationship: Change comes through people not programs
- Peer: Not an authority relationship but a friendship
- Coaching Approach: Drawing out of you instead of telling you or giving advice
- Growth: A strategic relationship with a purpose to grow

We will help you to:

- Obtain a Christian vision about marriage
- Learn practical tools to build and strengthen your marriage
- View problems as opportunities to serve your spouse
- Communicate effectively and manage conflict
- Negotiate hurdles that keep you stuck
- Build or restore trust
- Renew appreciation and affection
- Release and heal old baggage
- Learn to forgive as God forgives
- Build a strong foundation for your marriage

We know marriage is supposed to be full of love through better or worse, richer and poorer and till death do us part. However, most of us don't know how to live this through the realities of everyday life. We are here to help you develop a marriage that will fulfill you for the rest of your life! In a simple and relaxed setting, you are able to focus on how to move ahead rather than dwell on the past. You are able to develop a plan to keep growing personally and together as a couple through honoring, supporting and loving one another.



## COMMON QUESTIONS

### **What is the difference between coaching and counseling?**

Marriage coaching can revolutionize the way you do growth-centered relationships, because the coaching approach offers some unique dynamics that are missing from the way we usually walk with each other. For example, a counselor can take the things in your life that needs to change and tell you how to change them. Instead of depending on advice-giving, the coaching approach uses intuitive listening and powerful questions to draw others into a dialog with God. In the world of sports a coach is constantly pushing you to maximize your potential by drawing out of you what is already inside of you. When you decide something in your life needs to change, a coach pushes you to take responsibility for your situation, look to God for insight, and take action. Marriage Coaching assumes that you want to train to be the best at understanding yourself, your mate and the keys to a great marriage. Coaches are not counselors, but someone who will find out what your current skill level is and help you to develop those skills to a championship level.

Therapy focuses on the past and unresolved issues. Coaching, on the other hand, begins with the present and assists clients in setting very clear and specific goals that they want to achieve in the future. While the past may be discussed on occasion, it is addressed only in the context of discovering what is blocking the client from moving forward. The focus is always on movement and taking action, not on insight or understanding.

### **What does the marriage coaching process consist of?**

We ask that a couple meet with us bi-weekly for 8 weeks and we re-evaluate the status of their marriage at that time. While some issues can be resolved quickly, others may take more time and effort. Each session lasts about an hour.

### **Do both spouses have to meet?**

We believe that both mates will eventually have to change but we also believe that if just one of the couple will begin to work on his or her role and perspectives, the marriage can be radically changed! Both spouses must be willing to work on the marriage. We often receive calls where only one is interested in wanting to work on the marriage, and unfortunately there is not much we can do for you - other than to pray.

### **What if I we are just dating and seriously considering marriage?**

Research shows that "a couple who spends at least 12 hours in a premarital-education program decreases their chance of divorce five years out by 50 percent." And, "the best marriage-education programs focus on essential marriage skills, like communication and conflict resolution".

You are planning the wedding . . . but have you done anything to plan for the marriage? Pre-Marital Coaching takes a look into marriage and relationships. We will guide you through the transition from the wedding to married life. We have found that most of the problems occur in a marriage because the couple has never defined expectations prior to marriage. We provide a half day seminar to help prepare the couple for their new covenant relationship. After the seminar they are assigned a mentor to guide them and given a workbook to work through. The workbook has 9 chapters. The pre-marital couple will answer the questions separately, discusses their answers together, and then reviews key points with the mentors. It is desirable to begin the coaching 6-12 months prior to the wedding, but it can be done closer to the wedding date. Topics addressed include:

- Expectations
- Building Oneness
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Communication
- Extended Family Issues
- Blended Family Issues
- Sexuality
- Financial Issues



➤ Readiness for Marriage

**How much does marriage coaching cost?**

We work on a sliding fee scale based upon your combined annual household income and the number of people in your family. When you receive your intake packet, it will include a list of options for you to choose from. Keep in mind that we rarely let finances be an issue. There is a flat fee of \$150 for pre-marital coaching.

**What if the marriage has some big issues?**

There are ways to change and restore the most broken of marriages. Through love, understanding and respect, God will heal, maximize and wonderfully restore the shakiest of marriages. Coaching has brought couples back from the brink of divorce with new hope and renewed commitments. Issues are addressed in a confidential, non-judgmental manner that focuses on resolving difficulties through improved understanding and mutual problem solving. Participation is entirely voluntary and a couple can decide to leave at any time. The coaching is supplemented with applied exercises in effective assertiveness, listening, causes of marriage problems, problem solving, understanding anger, bitterness, forgiveness, intimacy, and growth. This process takes 2-3 months to complete. Coaching is not recommended for couples who have drug or alcohol problems or on-going affairs.



Welcome!

We are excited and optimistic concerning the future of your lives and your marriage! In order for us to get a solid start, we would like for you both to take some time completing the following form. Please fill out separate forms. Remember that this questionnaire is essential in helping us get a great start! In addition, it will be instrumental in helping us to progress much more swiftly during the coaching or counseling process, therefore getting the most out of your investment.

We are sure that some of the questions will be easy to answer...while others will cause you to pause and reflect. From our experience as Certified Belief Therapists, we have often found that answering these questions is a great starting point to determine where you are and where you would like to go in this great adventure called Marriage. Set aside some quality time to complete the questions and fax the form back to us at least one day before our scheduled appointment. This document will be kept completely confidential, and it will help us to better plan for more targeted and productive sessions.

We start out by identifying the goals and intentions of the coaching or counseling process right from the start. We help the two of you come to a compromise on your gridlocked issues. Many times couples do not always have the same aspirations, hopes or goals yet they need to come to some sort of resolution. We do our best to honor both individual's hopes and dreams, we see our goal as facilitating couples in accessing new strengths, learning new skills and gaining new insights, which then moves them in the direction that they want their relationship to go.

We are really looking forward to working with you, and will be praying that God would guide us and reveal His heart for your life and for your marriage.

Sincerely,

Allen and Angela Blackston  
Certified Belief Therapists  
Co-Founders  
*Victorious Marriage*



**VICTORIOUS MARRIAGE ENHANCEMENT  
CONFIDENTIAL PERSONAL INVENTORY**

**Couple Information**

Your First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Company \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Extension \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ 2nd Email \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_ Referred By \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday \_\_\_\_\_ Religious affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse Name \_\_\_\_\_ Wedding Anniversary \_\_\_\_\_ Number of years married \_\_\_\_\_

Children's Names and Ages?

1) \_\_\_\_\_

5) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

6) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

7) \_\_\_\_\_

4) \_\_\_\_\_

8) \_\_\_\_\_

**Your Goals:**

What are the two biggest changes you want to make in your life in the next 3 months?

1.

2.

On a scale of 1-5 how ready do you feel to make those changes, with 1 being not at all and 5 being 100% ready now?

Less True - 1\_\_\_ 2\_\_\_ 3\_\_\_ 4\_\_\_ 5\_\_\_ - More True



What are the two biggest changes you want to make in your life over the next 3 years?

- 1.
- 2.

What are you wanting to achieve the most? And do you feel ready for it?

**Your History:**

What would you say have been your 3 greatest accomplishments to date?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What is the hardest thing in your life that you have had to overcome?

Who are or have been your major role models?

In one sentence, word or phrase, describe your relationship with your:

1. Mother
  - a. (Past) Childhood Relationship:
  - b. (Present) Relationship
2. Father
  - a. (Past) Childhood Relationship:
  - b. (Present) Relationship

**Your Life:**

Who are the key people in your life and what do they provide for you?

What is your favorite part of your typical day?

What is your least favorite part of your typical day?

On a scale of 1 to 10, 10 high, rate the amount of stress in your life right now.

What are your primary stressors?

**Yourself:**

Are you presently taking any prescription medication? If so, please explain.

Are you presently experiencing any type of addiction? If so, please explain.

List two adjectives that describe you at your best.

- 1.
- 2.



List two adjectives that describe you at your worst.

- 1.
- 2.

What are your 2 major concerns/fears about yourself?

- 1.
- 2.

What are your 2 major concerns/fears about life?

- 1.
- 2.

What motivates you? (One Word or Phrase if possible)

Here are ways coaching clients work with me. Which appeal to you?

- Brainstorming strategies together
- Support, encouragement and validation
- Insight into who you are and you're potential
- Painting a vision of what you can become or accomplish
- Exploring and removing blocks and obstacles to your success
- Accountability; checking up on goals
- Working through self-improvement programs together
- Suggesting or designing action steps

**Your Marriage**

1. What do you see as the biggest Challenge in your marriage?
2. What do you see as the most positive aspect of your marriage?
3. Circle each of the following you have been to for counseling:

Pastor	Counselor	Psychologist	Psychiatrist
Who? _____		Where? _____	
When? _____		How many time? _____	

Describe your experience in one or two sentences \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

HOW DID YOU FIND Victorious Marriage?

**Waiver of Liability**

I \_\_\_\_\_ (applicant) hereby authorize Victorious Marriage to provide the Marriage Coaching or Christian Counseling desired. Victorious Marriages' biblically based sessions are conducted by Certified, trained Lay Coaches, who are not licensed Health Care Professionals, therapists, psychiatrists, or psychologists. The aforementioned Coaches/Christian Counselors are not licensed by any government approved agency or institution. We understand that the treatment and recovery services through Victorious Marriage are exclusively religious in nature and are not subject to licensure or regulation by the Texas Commission. That the program at the Victorious Marriage Christian Counseling Center offers only nonmedical treatment and recovery methods such as prayer, moral guidance, spiritual counseling and scriptural study.

Victorious Marriage shall maintain the confidentiality of all communications during the course of the Marriage Coaching or Christian Counseling Sessions subject to the following exceptions: (1) mandatory disclosure is required for compliance with laws that require disclosure of confidential information, (2) disclosure of confidential information to Law Enforcement Agencies is required where there is a reasonable belief that a Participant may present an imminent danger to self or others. (3) A signed and notarized release authorizing Victorious Marriage to release confidential information to designated recipient(s). The client is assured the sessions are held with the utmost confidentiality and only to be shared if and only



when your session(s) need to be directed toward those whom your marriage coach trusts in position of responsibility, and that would directly benefit your overall resolution to your coaching needs.

Since the individuals providing the Marriage Coaching sessions are not licensed mental health professionals, you cannot expect them to provide professional mental health counseling services. Please note that Victorious Marriage may terminate the Marriage Coaching relationship at any time for any reason and without notice. It is further understood that the Participant will take full responsibility for attending all scheduled coaching or Christian sessions. I hereby release and discharge the belief therapists from all claims out of the provision of such information.

RELEASE AND WAIVER, DISCHARGE AND COVENANT NOT TO SUE

Victorious Marriage, their affiliated organizations and respective officers, directors, Lay Coaches, agents, employees, heirs, successors and assigns, and releases, waives and/or discharges all of the aforementioned from any and all liability to its assigns, insurers, heirs, executors, administrators, spouses and next of kin for any and all losses, claims, or damages, whether caused by negligence, or otherwise, while participating in the Marriage Coaching Sessions.

Participant Name (Printed ) \_\_\_\_\_

Participant Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



## Victorious Marriage Christian Counseling Sliding Scale Application

Couple's Information			Today's Date:     /     /	
First Name:	Middle:	Last:	Spouse's Name:	
Home Address:		City:	State:	Zip:
Mailing Address:		City:	State:	Zip:
Home Phone #: (     )     -		Home Phone #: (     )     -		
Date of Birth:     /     /	Social Security #     -     -	Number of Years Married:		
Marital Status:	Single	In a relationship	Married	Divorced
			Separated	Widowed

NOTE: To comply with federal regulations, it is necessary for us to ask some personal questions. Your answers will be kept on file and in strict confidence.

Household Size		
Name	Date of Birth	Social Security Number
	/ /	- -
	/ /	- -
	/ /	- -
	/ /	- -

Household Income			
Name	Amount	Frequency (Circle one)	Employer:
You	\$	Weekly Monthly Yearly	
Spouse	\$	Weekly Monthly Yearly	
Children	\$	Weekly Monthly Yearly	
Other	\$	Weekly Monthly Yearly	
	\$	Weekly Monthly Yearly	
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$	Weekly Monthly Yearly	

I do hereby affirm that the information provided on this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. I agree that any misleading or falsified information, and/or omissions may disqualify me from further consideration for the sliding fee program and will subject me to penalties under Federal Laws which may include fines and imprisonment. I further agree to inform Victorious Marriage if there is a significant change in my income. If acceptance to the sliding fee program is obtained under this application, I will comply with all rules and regulations of Victorious Marriage. I hereby acknowledge that I read the foregoing disclosure and understand it.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_

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



### SLIDING SCALE FEES

Victorious Marriage is a 501 (c) 3 Non-profit Marriage Restoration Ministry and we believe money should never stand in the way of your marriage. We also believe that our clients are adults and are well aware of what they can afford to pay. So we never request proof of income. We simply ask you complete the Sliding Scale application and glance at the chart below. These are our suggestions for what you might pay depending on family income and size. When we meet for our free initial consultation, we trust you will suggest a fee that you and I can both work with.

The fees suggested below are based on hourly Coaching Sessions and are payable prior to sessions.

(All figures are in U.S. dollars.)

### SUGGESTED INDIVIDUAL FEE SCALE Household Size: Adults & Dependents

<u>Household Income</u>	<u>1-2</u>	<u>3-4</u>	<u>5+</u>
< \$25,000	\$30	\$30	\$30
\$25,000	\$30	\$30	\$30
\$26,000	\$31	\$30	\$30
\$27,000	\$32	\$30	\$30
\$28,000	\$34	\$30	\$30
\$29,000	\$35	\$30	\$30
\$30,000	\$36	\$30	\$30
\$31,000	\$37	\$31	\$30
\$32,000	\$38	\$32	\$30
\$33,000	\$40	\$33	\$30
\$34,000	\$41	\$34	\$30
\$35,000	\$42	\$35	\$30
\$36,000	\$43	\$36	\$30
\$37,000	\$44	\$37	\$30
\$38,000	\$46	\$38	\$31
\$39,000	\$47	\$39	\$31
\$40,000	\$48	\$40	\$32
\$41,000	\$49	\$40	\$33
\$42,000	\$50	\$42	\$33
\$43,000	\$52	\$43	\$35
\$44,000	\$53	\$44	\$35



				<b><u>Household Income</u></b>	<b><u>1-2</u></b>	<b><u>3-4</u></b>	<b><u>5+</u></b>
\$45,000	\$54	\$45	\$36				
\$46,000	\$55	\$36	\$37	\$65,000	\$78	\$65	\$52
\$47,000	\$56	\$47	\$38	\$66,000	\$79	\$66	\$53
\$48,000	\$58	\$48	\$39	\$67,000	\$80	\$67	\$54
\$49,000	\$59	\$49	\$39	\$68,000	\$82	\$68	\$55
\$50,000	\$60	\$50	\$40	\$69,000	\$83	\$69	\$55
\$51,000	\$61	\$51	\$41	\$70,000	\$84	\$70	\$56
\$52,000	\$62	\$53	\$42	\$71,000	\$85	\$71	\$57
\$53,000	\$64	\$53	\$43	\$72,000		\$72	\$58
\$54,000	\$65	\$54	\$43	\$73,000		\$73	\$59
\$55,000	\$66	\$55	\$44	\$74,000		\$74	\$59
\$56,000	\$67	\$56	\$45	\$75,000		\$75	\$60
\$57,000	\$68	\$49	\$40	\$76,000		\$76	\$61
\$58,000	\$70	\$58	\$47	\$77,000		\$77	\$62
\$59,000	\$71	\$59	\$47	\$78,000		\$78	\$63
\$60,000	\$72	\$60	\$48	\$79,000		\$79	\$64
\$61,000	\$73	\$61	\$49	\$80,000		\$80	\$64
\$62,000	\$74	\$62	\$50	\$81,000		\$81	\$65
\$63,000	\$76	\$63	\$51	\$82,000		\$82	\$66
\$64,000	\$77	\$64	\$51	\$83,000		\$83	\$67
				\$84,000		\$84	\$68
				\$85,000		\$85	\$68
				\$86,000			\$69
				\$87,000			\$70
				\$88,000			\$71
				\$89,000			\$72
				\$90,000			\$72
				\$91,000			\$73
				\$92,000			\$74
				\$93,000			\$75
				\$94,000			\$76
				\$95,000			\$76
				\$96,000			\$77
				\$97,000			\$78



<b><u>Household Income</u></b>	<b><u>1-2</u></b>	<b><u>3-4</u></b>	<b><u>5+</u></b>
\$98,000			\$79
\$99,000			\$80
\$100,000			\$80
\$101,000			\$81
\$102,000			\$82
\$103,000			\$83
\$104,000			\$84
\$105,000			\$84
>\$106,000			\$85