

## **Are you interested in receiving Discipleship Counseling at Capshaw Baptist Church?**

### **Here's what you need to know:**

The pastors of Capshaw Baptist Church and other trained, supervised discipleship counselors are available to take a limited number of counseling cases. Obtain initial information at our website (<http://www.capshaw.org/>), go to Ministries—Discipleship Counseling) or call the church at (256) 232-7763.

The following outlines *several conditions* upon which counseling cases will be initiated. While this is not meant to be exhaustive in scope, it does represent our philosophy of biblical counseling, a vital aspect of the total shepherding ministry of Capshaw Baptist Church.

**(1) Our Priority** – Discipleship counseling of members of Capshaw Baptist takes precedence over counseling for non-members (Gal. 6:10).

**(2) Our Framework** – The discipleship counseling received here is based on scriptural principles rather than those of secular psychology or psychiatry. Neither the pastors nor the lay counselors of this church are trained or licensed as psychotherapists or mental health professionals, nor should they be expected to follow the methods of such specialists. Biblical counseling will be provided by one of the pastors or trained counselors supervised by a pastor. We require same-gender counseling.

Some of the counseling conducted at Capshaw Baptist is provided as part of a discipleship counseling training program. To facilitate both counseling and training, the counselor may have one to two people assisting him/her in each counseling session.

**(3) Our Focus** – Our purpose is to help with every situation according to biblical principles. We are confident that the Bible contains all necessary information for life and godliness (II Peter 1:3). 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 should have significant legal, financial, medical, or other technical questions, you should seek advice from an appropriate independent professional. Our pastoral staff and lay discipleship counselors will be happy to cooperate with such advisors and help you to consider counsel in the light of relevant scriptural principles.

**(4) Our Foundation** – All discipleship counseling will be conducted in accordance with the counselor's understanding of the Scriptures. Your counseling will be biblical counseling in which the Scriptures are, in all cases, the final authority. If you are not sure that you will be interested in biblically-based counseling, you may attend one or two sessions to discover what biblical counseling is like. If you are unwilling to use the Bible as the final authority in counseling or are unwilling to apply

the biblical principles assigned, sessions may be terminated.

**(5) Non-Members** – Because we respect the shepherding responsibility of pastors over their own congregations (Heb 13:17), we prefer for members of other churches to seek counseling at their own church. If you do not want to seek counseling at your own church, come talk to us. If you are not attending a church, we will expect you to attend worship at Capshaw Baptist every week while you are in counseling.

**(6) Our (and Your) Prerogative** – At any time during the counseling, for reason(s) sufficient to him/her, the discipleship counselor, or counselee, shall have the option of terminating counseling.

**(7) Confidentiality** – Counseling sessions administered by a pastor are done in his professional capacity as clergy. All communications, verbal or written, made by and/or received by a pastor during said counseling session shall be confidential and privileged. All communications, verbal or written, made by and/or received by lay counselors who work under the direct authority of the pastor shall also be confidential and privileged. Both the pastor/lay counselor and the counselee shall have the privilege to refuse to disclose said communications and to prevent another from disclosing same to a third party to the extent that said refusal is not contrary to Scripture (Mt. 18:15ff) or law (criminal reporting mandates, etc.).

**(8) Our Fee** – All discipleship counseling is done free of charge as a ministry of Capshaw Baptist Church. Part of the weekly homework assignments may require the purchase of supporting materials.

**(9) Mediation** – On *rare* occasions a conflict may develop between a discipleship counselor and a counselee. In order to make sure that any such conflicts will be resolved in a biblically faithful manner, we require all of our counselees to agree that any dispute that arises with a counselor or with this church as a result of counseling will be mediated by the Pastoral staff and/or deacons of Capshaw Baptist.

Having clarified the principles and policies of our counseling ministry, we 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, please talk to a counselor. If these guidelines are acceptable to you, please sign below.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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