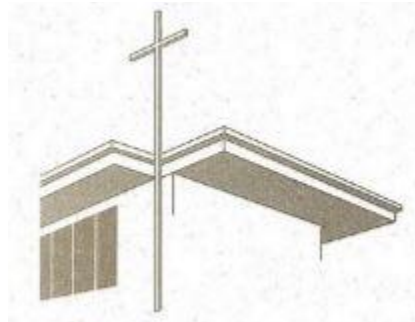


**First Christian Reformed Church
Biblical Counselor Training
Application Packet
Fall 2016**



Changed People Changing Lives with
Christ's Changeless Truth

Competent to counsel
(Romans 15:14)

Speaking the truth in love
(Ephesians 4:15)

Encourage one another daily
(Hebrews 3:13)

Our Philosophy of Biblical Counseling: *What Makes Biblical Counseling Truly Biblical*

The various approaches to biblical/Christian counseling are numerous and diverse. Below, you will find a definition of biblical counseling as we see it, and a description of our convictions about what makes biblical counseling truly biblical. If your philosophy and theology of counseling differs noticeably from what you are about to read, then we likely will not be a good ministry training match.

Our Summary Working Definition of Biblical Counseling

Christ-centered, church-based, comprehensive, compassionate, biblical counseling depends upon the Holy Spirit to relate God's Word to suffering and sin by speaking and living God's truth in love to equip people to love God and one another (Matt. 22:35–40). It cultivates conformity to Christ and communion with Christ and the body of Christ, leading to a community of one-another disciple-makers (Matt. 28:18–20).

Biblical Counseling Is Scriptural

Biblical counseling clings tenaciously to the authority, sufficiency, inerrancy, and profundity (depth of wisdom) of the Scriptures. God has provided us with all that we need for godly living (2 Peter 1:3). The Scriptures, rightly interpreted and carefully applied, offer us all-encompassing insight for living.

The Bible provides us with the content for making sense of life from God's perspective. By building our counseling approach on Christ's gospel of grace, we obtain wisdom for bringing people hope, the stimulus for change (God's glory), and the understanding of human motivation that energizes God-honoring changes (2 Tim. 3:15–16).

Biblical Counseling Is Theological

Biblical counseling unites creation, fall, and redemption. In studying a biblical theology of creation, biblical counseling examines **people**—God's original design for the soul. In probing the fall, biblical counseling examines **problems**—how sin brought personal depravity and suffering. In investigating the Bible's teaching on **redemption**, biblical counseling examines **solutions/cures**—the gospel of Christ's grace, which offers eternal salvation and provides us with daily victory in our ongoing battle against the world, the flesh, and the devil (Matt. 4:1–11).

Biblical Counseling Is Historical

The church has always helped hurting and hardened people. Biblical counseling respects that “great cloud of witnesses” (Heb. 12:1–3) who have gone before us. Biblical counselors appreciate the legacy of Christian soul care and spiritual direction, seeking to apply for today that ancient legacy and consensual wisdom for living found in the writings of the great historic Christian soul physicians.

Biblical Counseling Is Positive

Biblical counseling is “Berean counseling” (Acts 17:11). Biblical counselors have a *critical mind minus a critical spirit*. Biblical counselors seek to focus positively on rightly understanding the Word (2 Tim. 2:15) and on graciously interacting with those with whom they disagree.

Biblical Counseling Is Relational

Because the God of the Bible is the eternal Community of intimate Oneness (John 1 and 17), biblical counselors discard aloofness in favor of “real and raw counseling.” While techniques, skills, and tools of competent counseling are not ignored, soul-to-soul relating is emphasized (1 Thess. 2:8). Biblical counseling highlights neither directive nor non-directive counseling. Rather, it practices ***collaborative counseling*** where the counselor, the counselee, and the Divine Counselor form a three-way relationship shaped by God’s Word and led by God’s Spirit.

Biblical Counseling Is Relevant

It is not enough to promote the sufficiency of the Word if we do not also minister in such a way that demonstrates the relevancy of God’s Word. Problems in living are seen by biblical counselors as *spiritual, relational, and volitional issues* addressed in the Book of Life by the Author of Life so that we can live to glorify the Creator of Life.

Biblical Counseling Is Transformative

Biblical Counseling applies the principles of *progressive sanctification* to the daily lives of believers (2 Cor. 3:16–18). It does so *through spiritual formation*, which cultivates *communion with Christ* and *conformity to Christ*.

Transformative biblical counseling highlights the inner life through its emphasis on forming the character of Christ in us—*our inner life increasingly mirroring the inner life of Christ*. It focuses on the *body of Christ* by encouraging the corporate spiritual disciplines and by equipping believers in the individual spiritual disciplines.

Biblical Counseling Is Comprehensive in Theory

Biblical counseling focuses on the full range of humanity created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26–28). A comprehensive biblical understanding sees human beings as *relational beings* who desire (spiritual and social capacities), *rational beings* who think, *volitional beings* who choose and *physical beings* who act.

Biblical Counseling Is Comprehensive in Methodology

Biblical counseling treats both *suffering* and *sin* by recognizing that God's Word is profitable for dealing with the *evils we have suffered* as well as with the *sins we have committed* (2 Cor. 1:3–11; 2:5–11). Biblical counselors offer *comfort for the hurting* as well as *confrontation for the hardened*. They provide hope for those battered by life as well as reconciling and guiding for those ensnared by Satan.

Biblical Counseling Is Comprehensive in Equipping

Biblical counseling training unites equipping in biblical content, Christ-like character, counseling competence, and Christian community (Rom. 15:14). Scriptural insight is learned in the context of close Christian community and applied to the spiritual character development of the counselor-in-training. It results in the relational competency to interact soul-to-soul and to impact others deeply for Christ (Eph. 4:11–16).

Biblical Counseling Is Universal

The apostle Paul insists that all mature, equipped believers are competent to counsel (Rom. 15:14). Therefore, biblical counseling is universal—it is what God's people do informally as spiritual friends and formally as biblical counselors, and what pastors do as soul physicians.

Biblical Counseling Is Culturally Informed

The fact that biblical counseling is universal in no way excludes the truth that biblical counseling should be culturally informed. It blends into its worldview the unique biblical perspectives of both *genders* and *all ethnicities* (Rev. 7:9–10).

Personal Cost and Commitment Inventory

Jesus taught us to “count the cost” (Luke 14:25–35) to determine if we have what it takes to complete the commitments we are about to make. Becoming a Lay Counselor involves a high cost on your part (and promises many benefits). Please prayerfully weigh these costs.

Training Time Commitment

In-Class Time

- BC Training for Lay Counselors is a two-year training commitment.
- BC Training will meet 17 times per year for three hours from TBD (October to August) (averaging one meeting every 3 weeks).
- Consistent attendance is vital—it will be necessary for you to be in attendance at least 90 percent of the time that we meet.

Out-of-Class Time

- Approximately 30 pages per week reading
- Approximately one hour per week homework assignments:
 - Reading Report
 - Bible Study Sheet

Ministry Time Commitment

Lay Counselor

If you choose to be trained as a Lay Counselor, you would be asked:

- To serve in the Biblical Counseling Ministry at First Church for two years following completion of training and certification (and counsel up to 2 counselees per week).
- Meet with your mentor 1 to 2 times per month.

Curriculum to Purchase

- *Psychobabble* (PSY), by Richard Ganz *
- *Christian Counselor's Manual* (CCM) by Jay Adams
- *Idols of the Heart* (IOTH) by Elyse Fitzpatrick
- *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands*, (IRH) by Paul Tripp
- *The Exemplary Husband* (TEH) by Stuart Scott (men only)
- *The Excellent Wife* (TEW) by Martha Peace (women only)
- *The Peacemaker* (PM) by Ken Sande (selected chapters)

* Psychobabble is to be read prior to the first class meeting so start as soon as possible

Post Training ACBC Supervision

Each Lay Counselor who chooses to pursue ACBC certification after completing our BC Training may need to pay a ACBC Fellow \$500.00 for supervising their ACBC required 50 hours of supervised counseling. First Church will pay 50% (\$250) of the supervision fee. Application can be made to First Church for further financial help with the remaining \$250 supervision fee.

Personal Commitment Form

As you ponder whether you can commit to becoming a Lay Counselor, we would ask you to evaluate yourself carefully, prayerfully and honestly. We would also encourage you to gain feedback from others who know you. If you are married, please have your spouse read your Lay Counselor information, as he or she will need to weigh the costs and benefits.

If, after careful cost counting, you decide that you want to be considered for our Lay Counselor equipping ministry, then the next steps in your process toward becoming a Lay Counselor will be to:

1. Sign and date this Personal Commitment Form.
2. Complete the First CRC Lay Counselor Application Form
3. Complete the Redeemed Personality Inventory.
 - Return these three documents to Dave Lee as soon as possible
4. Arrange a personal interview with Dave Lee by emailing him at counseling@riponfirstcrc.org , or texting him at 818-731-1673.
5. If accepted, pay the annual tuition fee of \$100/year

My Personal Commitment to the Biblical Counselor Training

I have carefully read all the Lay Counselor information. Having weighed the benefits and costs, I am willing to commit to fulfilling all Lay Counselor responsibilities. Therefore, I would ask you to prayerfully consider me for selection as a Lay Counselor trainee.

(Signature)

(Date)

I grant the Biblical Counseling Ministry my approval to perform a background check.

(Signature)

(Date)

First Christian Reformed Church Lay Counselor Application Form

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____

Email address: _____

Age: _____ Marital Status: _____

Church Membership (Where/How Long): _____

How Long You Have Been a Christian: _____

Application Questions:

In the space under each question, please share concise and candid responses. If you need more space, please use the back of each sheet.

1. How did you come to know Christ?

2. Who and what has contributed most to your growth in Christ over the years?

3. What ministries are you currently participating in and what is your role?

4. Considering your competency to counsel (Romans 15:14):

| | | | |
|---|---|-------|---------|
| Christ-like Character | <i>Full of Goodness</i> | Heart | Being |
| Biblical Content/ Conviction | <i>Filled with all Knowledge</i> | Head | Knowing |
| Counseling Competence | <i>Able to Admonish One Another</i> | Hands | Doing |
| Christian Community | <i>Brethren/One Another</i> | Home | Loving |

- a. What further growth do you need to experience in the area of ***Christ-like character***?

 - b. What ***biblical content*** do you think is most important for a biblical counselor to know and apply?

 - c. In terms of ***counseling skills/competence***, how would you rate yourself at this point in your life?

 - d. What are examples in your life that demonstrate how highly you value ***Christian community***—connecting deeply with others in Christ?
5. What are the primary reasons you are interested in being a part of Lay Counseling ministry?

6. Describe how comfortable you are with the openness and vulnerability required (being “real and raw” and “intense and intimate” and speaking the truth in love to each other).

7. How have you demonstrated in the recent past that you are *teachable*: open to change based upon God’s Word/counsel of others?

8. Comment on the encouragement that you have received from family members, church leaders, and significant friends concerning your giftedness for a ministry in biblical counseling and discipleship.

9. **References:** Please list the names and contact information of two people you give us permission to talk to about your preparation for being a Lay Counselor at First Church.

A.

B.

Redeemed Personality Inventory

Name: _____

This inventory is based upon your candid assessment of where you currently are in your process toward mature Christlikeness.

Evaluate your progress toward growth into the image of Christ using:

Anywhere from **10** for "*Most like Christ*" to a **1** for "*Least like Christ*."

- ___ Like Jesus, I increasingly exalt, enjoy, love, and find satisfaction in God more than any other.
- ___ I increasingly cling to God, running home to Him as my Father, like a faithful son or daughter.
- ___ I increasingly enjoy Christ more than any other joy in life.
- ___ I increasingly depend upon the Holy Spirit to sanctify me, make me holy, beautify me, empower and equip me.
- ___ I increasingly love others deeply and sacrificially from the heart with grace.
- ___ I increasingly rest confidently in who I am in and to Christ.
- ___ Like Jesus, I increasingly view life from the Father's eternal, gracious, and good perspective.
- ___ I increasingly, together with all the saints, grasp the holy love of God.
- ___ I increasingly allow God's eternal story to invade my earthly story.
- ___ I increasingly renew my mind and stir up wholesome thinking.
- ___ Like Jesus, I increasingly die to self and live for God and others.
- ___ I increasingly trust Christ courageously and take risks to minister to others.
- ___ I increasingly find my life by dying to myself, taking up my cross, and following Christ.
- ___ I increasingly live to shepherd and minister to others.
- ___ I increasingly serve Christ and others out of a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith.
- ___ I increasingly develop emotional self-awareness: understanding my moods.
- ___ I increasingly develop emotional self-mastery: soothing my soul in my Savior.
- ___ I increasingly develop emotional maturity: managing my moods with a ministry focus.
- ___ I increasingly develop emotional empathy: recognizing emotions in others.
- ___ I increasingly develop emotional savvy: handling my relationships well.