

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

**Here’s what you need to know:**

The pastors of Capshaw Baptist Church are available to provide premarital counseling. You may inquire about counseling by calling the church office 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** – Premarital counseling for members of Capshaw Baptist will take precedence over non-member counseling (Gal. 6:10).

**(2) Our Framework** – Premarital counseling at Capshaw is based on scriptural principles, not those of secular psychology or psychiatry. Our pastors are not trained or licensed as psychotherapists, mental health professionals, or even as professional marriage counselors, nor should they be expected to follow the methods of such secular specialists.

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 pastor may choose to have one to two people assisting him in a counseling session.

**(3) Our Focus** – Our purpose is to help you prepare for marriage 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 situations or problems between persons that the Bible fails to address either in general or specific principles. Our pastors do not pretend to know all there is to know about biblical teaching and its application to life, however 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 will be happy to cooperate with such advisors and help you to consider counsel in the light of relevant scriptural principles.

**(4) Our Foundation** – Premarital counseling will be conducted in accordance with the pastor’s understanding of the Scriptures. In all cases Scripture will be the final authority. If you are not sure that you will be interested in biblically-based counseling, you will be given the option of attending one or two sessions to discover what biblical premarital counseling is like. If you are unwilling to use the Bible as the final authority or are unwilling to apply biblical principles, sessions may be terminated.

**(5) Non-Members** – Because we respect the shepherding responsibility of pastors and church leaders over their own congregations, we generally prefer to see members of other churches seek counseling at their own church. If you do not want to seek premarital counseling at your own church, come talk to us about your situation. 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** – Any time during the counseling, for reason(s) sufficient to him/them, the pastor/couple in counseling, shall have the option to terminate counseling.

**(7) Confidentiality** – Premarital 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 sessions shall be confidential and privileged. All communications, verbal or written, made by and/or received by lay counselors (if a lay counselor is involved) 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** – Premarital counseling is done free of charge as a ministry of Capshaw Baptist Church. Part of the weekly homework assignments may require the purchase of materials that correspond to the counseling.

**(9) Mediation** – On *very rare* occasions a conflict may develop between a pastor and the couple in premarital counseling. 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 pastor or with this church as a result of counseling will be mediated by another member of the Pastoral staff and/or by lay counselors or deacons of Capshaw Baptist, as appropriate.

Having clarified the principles and policies of our premarital counseling, 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 marriage and usefulness in His body. If you have any questions about these guidelines please talk with the Senior Pastor. If these guidelines are acceptable to you, please sign below.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name (man’s):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signed (man):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed by Man

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name (woman’s):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signed (woman):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed by Woman