

## Premarital Counseling Application

The premarital counseling ministry of the Hope Center for Biblical Counseling is for couples who want premarital counseling that is Christ-centered. *“Why is this important? First, it’s important because God designed marriage. Marriage was his idea. He designed marriage to be one man and one woman who leave their parents and build a new life together. Therefore, all the blessings associated with this institution are based on his instructions. Second, it’s important because in Ephesians 5:31-32, Paul describes marriage as a reflection of the relationship between Christ and his church. This has tremendous implications for the way we should approach marriage”* (Green, R. *Tying the Knot*, 1.) Marriage was God’s idea and all His gifts are good! We’re excited to walk alongside you during this season of your lives! This form is helpful for us to start getting to know you, as well as to communicate these first important points which explain some of our perspectives and convictions which we believe are honoring to God and the best way we can truly be of help to you. We encourage you to be completely open and surrendered to the Lord’s wisdom and leading in your life.

Our goal in providing biblical counseling is to help you meet the challenges of life in a way that will please and honor the Lord Jesus Christ and allow you to enjoy fully His love for you and His plans for your life. We’re glad that you’re taking this important step to seek godly counsel. Our prayer is that we will be able to help you discern the Lord’s leading in your relationship with Him first of all, and then to clearly understand His leading in your relationship with each other.

There are five purposes for premarital counseling.

First, we want to help you build a solid, biblical foundation as you start your marriage. We will spend time in Scripture and thinking through biblically, the ideas applying to marriage.

Secondly, we want to help you begin a dialogue about your marriage. There are many topics (communication, finances, sex, parenting, etc.) that we think are important to consider before you get married. The good news is that the conversation we are beginning is a life-long process.

Thirdly, we will point out areas of concern in your relationship. We are all sinners. No relationship is perfect. Despite all of your premarital bliss, you are going to have problems, conflict, and struggles in your relationship. We want to help you address these difficulties sooner so you can better handle them later.

Fourthly, we want to preserve you from temptations. Lots of Christian couples do a good job of preserving themselves from premarital sex, but once they get engaged, they let down their guard and begin falling into sexual temptation. Men and women rationalize premarital sex with thoughts like, “We’re engaged, which means we are practically married already;” or, “We’ll be married soon, so what does it matter?”. Even worse, some guys feel a sense of entitlement to the woman’s body because they are now engaged. We (the Hope Center) want to help you fight temptation and stay pure until the wedding day!

Fifthly, we want to prepare you for the marriage, and not just the wedding day. We often find that couples get caught up in the frantic details of preparing for the wedding day, and don’t spend much time getting ready for the marriage. Premarital counseling is meant to slow you down and help you think about the relationship. The wedding day is the beginning of your life as one, but the marriage is the rest of your life as one.

