



CCEFNOW

Restoring Christ to Counseling & Counseling to the Church

2012

**SHAME
INTERRUPTED**

An Interview
with Ed Welch

BODY IMAGE

Julie Lowe

WHEN HOPE HURTS

Winston Smith

**COUNSEL
TRUE TO YOUR
CONVICTIONS**

David Powlison

Welcome

Welcome to our second issue of CCEF NOW! One of our main goals as a ministry is to equip people in local churches to be wise disciplers and counselors. This issue, in addition to providing great content, will highlight the various ways that you and others in your church community can be equipped to fulfill your ministry calling.



The School of Biblical Counseling: Did you know that there are people from over 40 countries that have taken our courses? Since 2006, over 4500 students have registered for CCEF courses at our Online and Philadelphia campuses.

National Conference: Did you know that we are moving our conference around the country on an annual basis? This year we will be in Chattanooga, TN, October 25-28, 2012 where we will tackle the tough issue of Guilt and Shame.

The Journal of Biblical Counseling: Did you know that we just relaunched the *JBC*, and each current issue is available for free on our website? In every issue, we seek to provide biblical wisdom as we address both common and more acute struggles. Please consider sending a donation in the envelope included in this magazine to support this important ministry and help us to continue to make the *JBC* free.

I hope you will find this issue of CCEF Now helpful as you seek to grow in your character and skill as a wise person who can offer help and hope to those around you.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Lane".

Dr. Timothy Lane
President
CCEF

TESTIMONY

"The CCEF external site program in our local church has been a great partnership in gospel ministry. What is preached and taught in the church is reinforced when our intern counselors meet with their counselees. The partnership between the interns and our session fuels a shared interest in seeing God's redemption ministered in the midst of brokenness. All in all, the program is a win-win situation for everyone involved."

Robert Kim
Pastor of Grace Point Church

To find out how your church can partner with CCEF visit www.ccef.org/supporting-church-program.

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JOURNAL OF BIBLICAL
COUNSELING

SOCIAL MEDIA

At CCEF we want our social media presence to connect you not only to news, but also to content throughout the day, every day. Our media staff reads our blogs, books and *JBC* articles, watches our videos and listens to our podcasts in order to distribute great content to you.

We also notify you when new resources are released. We keep you informed on the latest news about our events and conferences, the School of Biblical Counseling, and the Journal of Biblical Counseling.

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CCEF NOW

Restoring Christ to Counseling & Counseling to the Church

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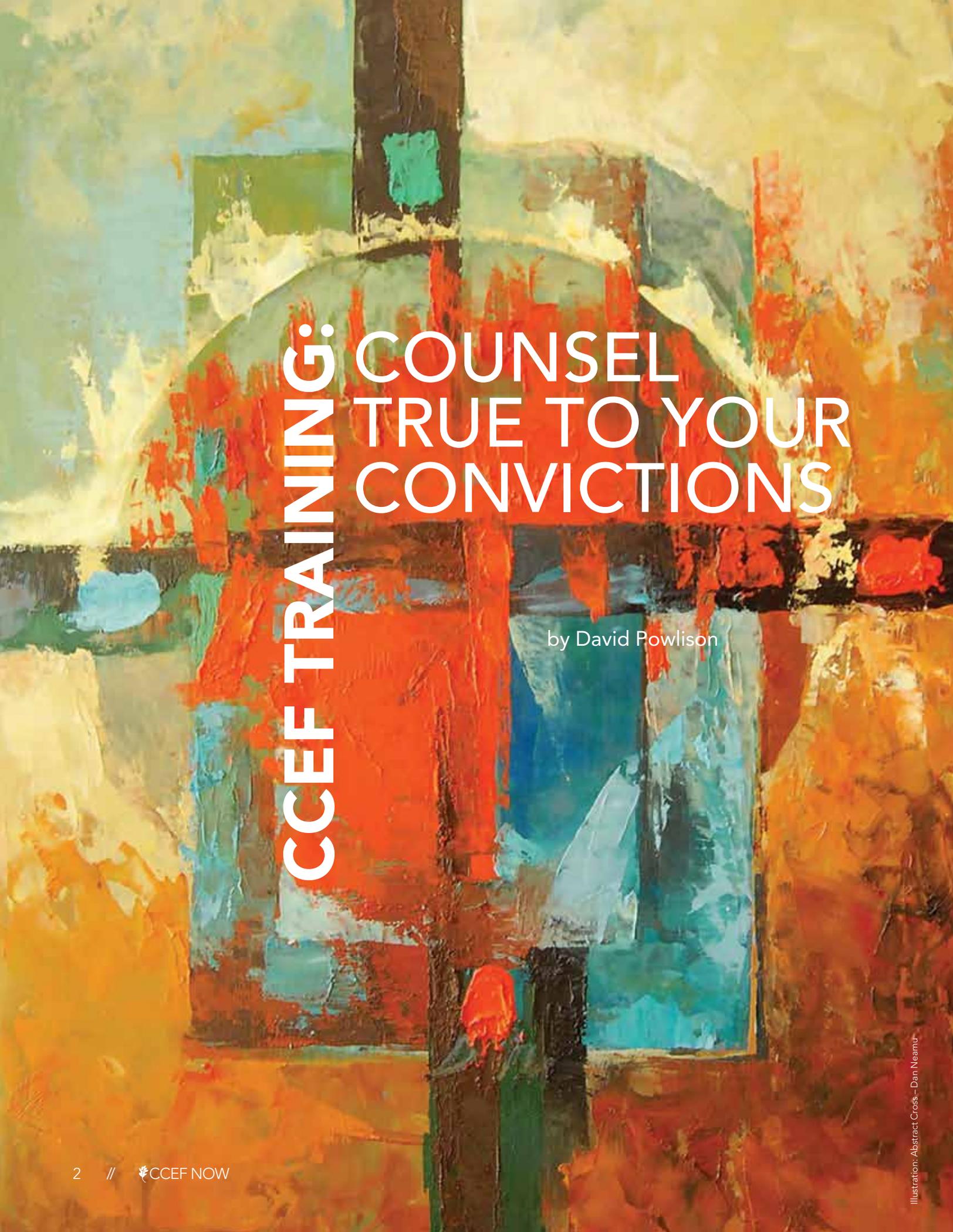
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CCEF TRAINING: COUNSEL TRUE TO YOUR CONVICTIONS

by David Powlison

Counseling is a theological matter.

Why is this so? Because *everything* about people is actually happening in reference to God. The troubles of life. Health or financial problems. Inner struggles. The conscious, willful sins. The unconscious “lights-out” experiences of forgetfulness, drift and unbelief. Life and death. The meaning of it all. Counseling *always* expresses theological commitments.

Hold onto this core principle. Your integrity as a Christian who counsels hangs on grasping this. Counseling programs may or may not arise from or live up to this core principle. You have to keep your head no matter where you train. God is *always* involved when you counsel. Consider several key questions.

First, what is counseling? Broadly speaking, from God’s point of view, counseling is as broad as every word that proceeds from every mouth. Words communicate values, attitudes and intentions that intrinsically influence or seek to influence others. “The mouth speaks out of what fills the heart,” whether it be for good or evil, right or wrong. At the deepest level, all human interactions are essentially counseling interactions. Counseling, then, is either wise or foolish. Some words are rotten, destructive, misleading, un nourishing (Eph 4:29); other words are constructive, timely, true, loving, grace-giving (Eph 4:15, 29). No words are neutral.

More narrowly, counseling is any conversation intended to influence, guide, or help another person solve a problem in living. A lawyer, a financial advisor, a counselor in high school, a friend to whom you pour out your heart, a pastor, and a psychotherapist may each offer counsel (the explicit or implicit content) and do counseling (the relational and change processes). You who are thinking of studying counseling are likely most interested in the

and sweetness, anger and approbation, loss and blessing, hurt and happiness, guilt and relief, relationships in conflict and at peace, regrets and achievements, out-of-control habits and small or large victories, confusion and clarity. They hear of good and evil, both what you do and what happens to you.

In other words, counselors deal with your *story*. In fact, they become players in that story. By word and deed, even by their line of questioning, they inevitably offer some form of editing or rescripting, some reinterpretation of your story. They deal with who *you* are and how *you* live and what *you* face, not with the legal phrasing of your will, the pros and cons of your mutual fund choices, or which college might admit you. Whether as a peer or by profession, such counselors profess to help you by changing something about you as a person.

Now let’s get even more specific. What sort of sense should would-be counselors make of the life problems they encounter and address? That is the third foundational question. What’s really happening in lives? What ought to change? What ought to be encouraged? What’s the True story? This question recognizes that all counseling is value-laden. Systems differ. Counseling is inescapably a moral and theological matter. To pretend otherwise is to be naïve, deceived, or duplicitous. Whether implicit or explicit, theologies differ. Since all counseling uncovers and edits personal stories, what is the true “metanarrative” playing in the theater of human lives? Stories differ. All counseling must and does deal with questions of true and false, good and evil, right and wrong, value and stigma, glory and shame, justification and guilt. The answers differ. All counseling explicitly or implicitly deals with questions of redemption, faith, identity, and meaning. The redemptions offered differ.

All counseling explicitly or implicitly deals with questions of redemption, faith, identity, and meaning.

kinds of things that those last three counselors—the “peer,” the “religious professional,” and the “mental health professional”—tackle, do, and say.

Second, what particular life problems do counselors attempt to address? That question focuses matters a bit. Counselors inevitably interact with the whole person: behaviors, feelings, thoughts, circumstances, relationships, desires, choices, beliefs, memories, anticipations, values, motives. Counselors profess to care, to be interested. Their stated purpose is to help you, not to get your money, take advantage of you, win your admiration, or prove themselves powerful, successful, or superior. They are in principle curious about your life and desirous of your candor. Whether their counsel proves wise or foolish, they will inevitably listen to your hopes and fears, discouragement and joy, life’s hardship

Counseling is altogether a theological matter. Always, whether or not a given counselor recognizes that fact. All counselors deal with the same human problems to which the Bible speaks. By implication, they are either faithful or false. I am speaking in principle, of course. Because of sin and the varieties of grace, counselors and systems are more or less faithful, more or less false. Often common grace brightens up secular models and practitioners (though sometimes they are utterly false and wicked). Inevitably remnant sin dims biblical models and practitioners (though by the grace of God his children sometimes shine very brightly). Only Jesus was and is utterly faithful, rich and simple. You should aim to become a counselor who is more faithful and less false, who is full of riches and less impoverished, who is simpler and not simplistic or complicated. Seek the same from your education and training. Aim to learn and to offer counsel that expresses Christ’s gaze and

intentions, rather than any other framework for making sense of life.

You want your education to make you wiser. You want your training to help you express Christ's gaze and intentions more faithfully.

Every counselor brings a "message": an interpretation of problems, a theory that weighs causalities and context, a proposal for cure, a goal that defines thriving humanness. How does the message of biblical counseling compare with their messages? Simply consider what our culture's other counselors do *not* say.

- They never mention the God who has a name: YHWH, Father, Jesus, Spirit, Almighty, Savior, Comforter.
- They never mention that God searches every heart, that every human being will bow to give final account for each thought, word, deed, choice, emotion, belief and attitude.
- They never mention sinfulness and sin, that humankind obsessively and compulsively transgress against God.
- They never mention that suffering is meaningful within God's purposes of mercy and judgment.
- They never mention Jesus Christ. He is a standing insult to self-esteem and self-confidence, to self-reliance, to self-salvation schemes, to self-righteousness, to believing in myself.
- They never mention that God really does forgive sins.
- They never mention that the Lord is our refuge, that it is possible to walk through the valley of the shadow of death and fear no evil.
- They never mention that biological factors and personal history experiences exist within the providence and purposes of the living God, that nature and nurture locate moral responsibility but do not trump responsible intentionality.
- They never mention our propensity to return evil for evil, how hardships tempt us to worry, despair, bitterness, inferiority, grumbling and escapism.
- They never mention our propensity to return evil for good, how felicities tempt us to self-trust, ingratitude, self-confidence, entitlement, presumption, superiority and greed.
- They never mention that human beings are meant to become

You want your education to make you wiser.
You want your training to help you express
Christ's gaze and intentions more faithfully.

conscious worshipers, bowing down in deep sense of personal need, lifting up hands to receive the gifts of the body and blood of Christ, lifting voices in heartfelt song.

- They never mention that human beings are meant to obey God's will, not our own wishes.
- They never mention that human beings are meant to live missionally, using God-given gifts to further God's kingdom and glory.
- They never mention that the power to change does not lie within us.

In other words, other messengers always counsel true to their core convictions. They counsel the same message that they live.

Christians can't help but mention these things, and long to live within these realities. Even more, a Christian is never content merely to mention such realities to another, as if a troubled person simply needs the bare bones of didactic instruction. Like a skilled musician, you develop a trained ear. In every detail of every person's story, you learn to hear the music of these often unmentioned realities. You help others hear what is actually playing. A relevant, honest pastoral conversation teaches another person how to listen, and then how to join the song. Need I say more? No one else is listening to what you hear. No one else is saying what you have to say. No one else is singing what you believe. No one else is giving to others what you have been given that you might freely give. Every person who "needs counseling" actually needs Christ's unique message.

May God make all our words (and the thoughts within our silences) ring true to our convictions. Do get training that helps your convictions come to life. Whether you are a pastor or a mom, a friend or a teacher, a small group leader or someone with "counselor" in your job title, CCEF training can help you. CCEF exists to come alongside you in hands-on ministry, to equip you to help people through the struggles of life.

David Powlison, A.B., M.Div., Ph.D. has taught CCEF's most popular course, Dynamics of Biblical Change, for over 30 years. He has been an eye-witness to the transformative work of God in the lives of countless students. He serves as the editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Biblical Counseling* at CCEF and has written extensively on the relationship between faith and psychology. His books include *Speaking Truth in Love*, *Seeing with New Eyes*, and *The Biblical Counseling Movement: History and Context*.



Announcing the new online platform for CCEF courses



Video preview and registration details at ccef.org/courses

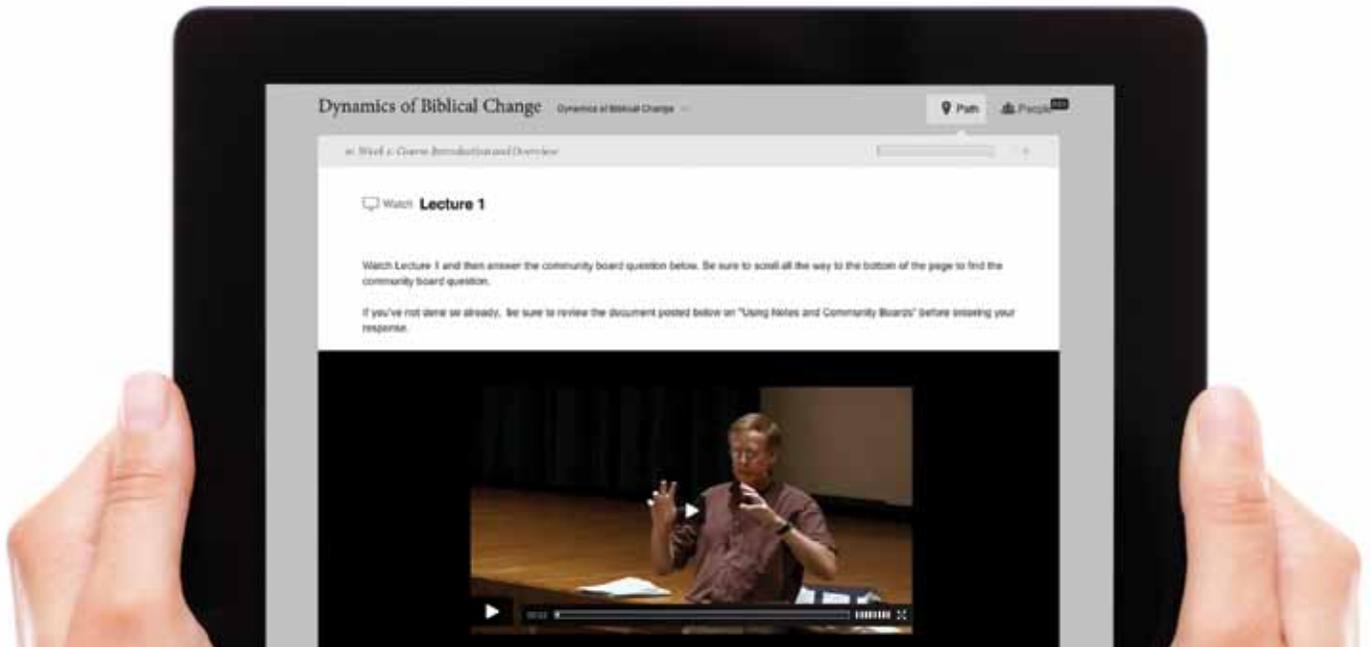
TESTIMONY

“Four years ago I didn’t know anything much about CCEF or their counseling. Though I had been a Christian for 25 years when I started Dynamics of Biblical Change, I was challenged in just about everything—the way I read the Bible, the way I prayed, and even the way I evangelized. What intrigued me about the class was the feeling that I was discovering distinctly new concepts that were also entirely familiar. It was the same gospel I had always believed and taught. Yet it was being applied to my heart in a radically new way. I was taught to examine my motives and my affections. I was challenged on issues of godliness that I had previously decided to quietly tolerate. This helped me love Christ more and preach him more fully. The CCEF courses enabled me to counsel myself and others with greater wisdom and with greater effect.”

Steve Midgley, SBC Student, United Kingdom

THE SCHOOL OF BIBLICAL COUNSELING

and the new Online Campus An Interview with David Powlison



Dynamics of Biblical Change now in video.

CCEF has been training students in biblical counseling for more than forty years. Can you share with us the unique ways that CCEF spearheaded the movement and has continued to help shape and sharpen biblical counseling ever since?

CCEF was founded in the late 1960's. As our organization has gotten "old," age has brought a certain kind of flourishing and maturity. Psalm 92 describes an individual who still bears fruit in old age and is full of sap; a person who is green and fruitful in the courts of God. That can be true of institutions as well. As I reflect back on 40 years of CCEF's history, I see that CCEF has continued to flourish. This testifies to the corporate work of the Holy Spirit. Rather than becoming rigid or slack over the years, we have maintained a cutting edge. We have always been firm about core convictions, yet, at the same time, have remained teachable and willing to grow.

Another unique thing our students deeply appreciate about CCEF is our teaching does not simply represent the personality or emphasis of one particular person. There's no one person whose influence dominates. CCEF has a faculty of eight different people

who contribute to the overall team. That means the same core convictions come focused through different personalities, different life experiences, different focuses of ministry. We have everything from one faculty member who has core expertise in the human body, to another faculty member with core expertise in ministry to small children and people who have been abused. Other faculty members have the theological expertise that frames our training program. Some are really interested in counseling method and others in content. The maturity of vision and the diversity of focus within common core commitments is a real strength for leading students toward understanding biblical counseling and pastoral theology. It is one of the ways CCEF continues to shape and sharpen the biblical counseling movement.

When you began teaching 30 years ago, did you ever consider that you would be teaching in this new platform? What are your thoughts on our online program?

My view on CCEF's online campus can be captured in one short sentence. "I am delighted." It is a joy that CCEF can communicate to students all over the world. Before our online campus came into

GLOBAL PARTNERS

existence in 2006, students had to move to Glenside, PA and invest two years or more of time. This was a limiting factor for many. But now people can get the same CCEF content from wherever they live and remain in their life, work, ministry and family setting.

Online education does some very important things extremely well. It is terrific for the communication of information, knowledge, understanding—the ingredients of wisdom in biblical ministry. It is terrific for orienting people to that task. It is excellent for providing illustration, application, showing how it works, giving a feel for what counseling looks like. It is wonderful for putting students to work. Students are challenged to invest themselves in the response papers and in all the things that make the education relevant, real, personal, and applicable. Our aim is for students to take things from the classroom and make it their own, relevant to their ministry context. CCEF's online campus allows that to happen worldwide.

In your course, Dynamics of Biblical Change, how are students challenged to invest themselves?

The two self-counseling projects are at the very center of the Dynamics of Biblical Change course. For the 'Suffering and Refuge' project, students use a difficult circumstance in their lives as the doorway into understanding how it is that God moves into a life. For the other project, 'Sin and Grace,' students choose a particular failing, shortcoming, or struggle and use it as a door to knowing how the God of mercies starts to rewrite the script.

I have had the privilege of working with about two thousand self-counseling projects and seeing the particular ways that God invades lives. Whether he comes in through the door of our troubles, sorrow and heartaches or through the door of our struggles, failings and sins, it is the same Christ who meets us in exactly the places that we need to be met.

The transformation of our online School of Biblical Counseling is underway. We are excited to announce that all of our courses will be available in the new platform this fall, many already in video format.

Because students from more than 40 countries have already participated in our training, we hope this program will make it even easier for students all over the world to gain access to our courses.

Right now our classes are being translated into French. This past year the French version of Dynamics of Biblical Change was offered for the first time at SEMBEQ Seminary in Quebec.

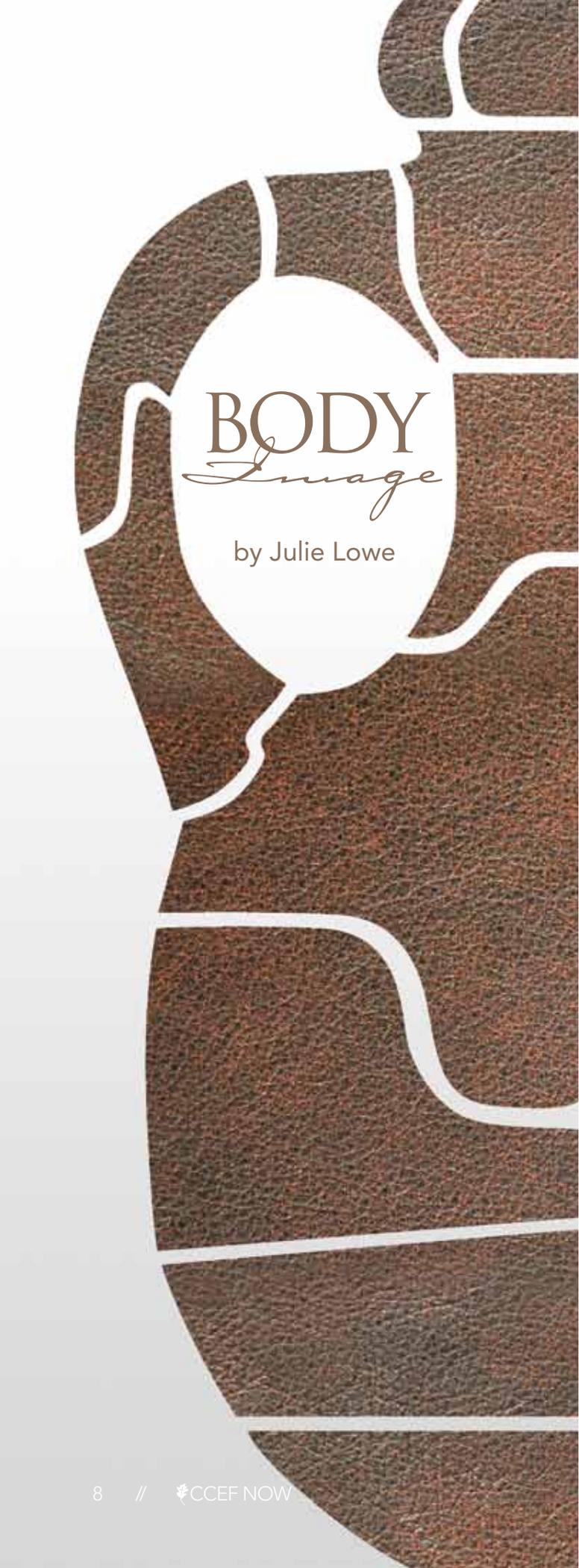
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BODY *Image*

by Julie Lowe

AS a parent, do you tend to be reactive in your childrearing approach? I have seen that in myself and in other parents I have counseled over the years. Far too often we wait until a child displays bad behavior before talking to them about the dangers and temptations of such behavior. Or we wait for kids to struggle with issues like sex, drugs, or peer pressure and *then* warn against the disastrous effects. A simple rule for parents: it is better to be proactive than reactive.

A specific way parents can be proactive is by seeking to understand the lies and temptations of the surrounding culture, with the goal of exposing the lies to our children and offering a better way. One pervasive lie in Western culture is that a person's value lies in physical appearance. We want to protect our child from buying into this lie. This is a difficult task because the media, advertisements, and corporations actively pursue youth in order to persuade them that without the latest technology, coolest shoes, newest makeup products, or thinnest body they cannot possibly live a fulfilling life. Not only that, but a biologically unattainable ideal is set forth in our culture. The diet industry promises to deliver it, and plastic surgery promotes the path to perfection. And to add to the confusion, the standards are arbitrary and in constant flux. Why? Because the media's goal is to convince you that you are incomplete without the product or procedure it is trying to sell to you. Perfection is just out of reach, so you must strive (and pay!) for what they have to offer.

Do you constantly scrutinize your own appearance? Somehow do you always fall short of the standard? Is it as though you walk around with a mirror held out in front of you reminding you what is lacking? In reality, that mirror reflects a distorted perception; much like a carnival mirror that distorts reality. It not only prevents you from seeing yourself accurately, but it creates a self-focused absorption. You become consumed with self as you seek admiration and acceptance from others. This becomes more important to you than truly being known as a person. In the end, the mirror creates a wall that isolates you from others. You become enslaved to the pursuit of an ideal image and to caring too much about what others think.

The results of this enslavement might be an obsession with appearance, eating disorders, extreme dieting, self-worship, preoccupation with perfection, materialism, self-hatred, despair, or the sacrifice of personal convictions. The list could go on. This is not to say we shouldn't care about our appearance. Rather, the concern is the degree to which we allow it to dictate our worth. The time, money, effort, hope, and anxiety we place on our appearance reveals what has captured our heart.

Young people are particularly susceptible to valuing what those around them value. And they are susceptible to finding value in

the opinions of others. This can easily become an identity struggle for a child. What if the opinion that a friend has about your child is a negative one? How might your child interpret that? Parents have the important job of teaching kids how to interpret life—not according to experience or the opinion of others, but through the eyes of God. We want our children to find identity not in an ideal the world values, or in others' opinions, but in a Person, Jesus Christ.

Jesus defines your child accurately. God says we are his beloved children (1 John 3:2). We are a chosen people (1 Peter 2:9). We are his delight (Zephaniah 3:17). These descriptions are much richer and truer than how the world could ever see or define us. We don't need to convince young people that they are all "equally attractive." We aren't forced to avoid the reality that great and small does exist. On the human spectrum, there are those who are considered less attractive, academic, successful, gifted, etc. However, we can

(1 Peter 3:3). That external adorning cannot be sustained (Ecclesiastes 3:11)...and as a result any time we find a crack or hole we desperately grab for something to try and hide our weakness and shortcomings.

God knows your child by name, sees them accurately, is aware of their strengths and weaknesses, and calls them his own. As you talk to your child, put the focus where it should rightly be—on the Creator. A young person doesn't need to find value or identity in themselves. It has been given to them by God. Help them know that in their weakness Christ is strong. In Christ they are given freedom to be broken, to be imperfect, to have failings. 2 Corinthians 4:17, 18 goes on to say, "*For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, what is unseen is eternal.*"

As a broken vessel allow Christ's light to shine brightly through you as you seek to be your child's wise counselor.

evaluate those things according to the standards and measure of value that God places on them. We aim to adopt his value system, not the culture's or our own.

God's word teaches us how to have an accurate view of self. Think about 2 Corinthians 4:7, "*But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.*" This passage identifies us as "jars of clay" with a treasure of great value inside of us. As inconspicuous clay pots we "show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us." When speaking with your child regarding these struggles, use the imagery of a beautifully painted oriental vase:

Imagine the vase sits perched on a shelf. Its main purpose is to look attractive. You too want to look attractive. You want people to be drawn to your external appearance. You want the world to look at you and say, '*Look how successful, beautiful, and smart you are!*' But the Bible paints a different picture. Instead of being a beautiful vase, we are dirty clay pots with cracks and holes. We have struggles and weaknesses and imperfections. And in fact, these imperfections allow the treasure within us to shine all the more brightly. Christ brings value and meaning to us, yet we so often want it the other way around. Any time someone tries to be perfect or be the most attractive, the external adorning gets in the way of the gospel

Another essential piece of this conversation is for parents to approach our children as fellow strugglers. We all try to hide our cracks and polish our imperfections, not just struggling adolescents and teens. I can't speak into my child's life while not believing or modeling these truths in my own life. I must live in a way that demonstrates what I am calling my children to believe.

It would be easy to conclude that young people need to care less about the external and more about the internal. There is merit to that. However, I'd emphasize that we are called to live for the *eternal*. A call to the eternal reminds me that life is not about me at all, but about our Creator. Live for eternity in a way that shapes how you live today. Woo your children to set their eyes on eternity. Build a picture of a better kingdom and future than what they are living for now. As the old, familiar song says, "*Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in His wonderful face, and the things of earth will grow strangely dim, in the light of His glory and grace.*"

The Lord has entrusted us with the task of building and shaping our children's view of God, self, and others. As you move toward your children proactively, know that the Lord is with you. Start the conversation with your own confession and remember that your presentation of these truths will not be perfect. As a broken vessel allow Christ's light to shine brightly through you as you seek to be your child's wise counselor.

Julie Smith Lowe, L.P.C., M.A. is an associate faculty member and counselor at CCEF. She is a Licensed Professional Counselor, and a Certified Christian Conciliator through Peacemakers Ministries. Julie has extensive experience with foster and adoptive families. She speaks at events on topics surrounding women's issues, children, and conflict resolution. Julie is a mother of 5 children.



TRAINING INTERNS

by Mike Emlet & Cecelia Bernhardt



What is our vision for our educational and training efforts at CCEF? It is to raise up Christ-like and competent biblical counselors who will practice the highest quality biblical counseling to strengthen the church, and who will serve as the next generation of leaders in the biblical counseling movement at CCEF and beyond. How does that happen? It happens through classroom instruction and the supervised practice of counseling, all under the tutelage of the Spirit. The CCEF internship is a critical piece of that training.

This year we have had the privilege of having twelve interns, an increase from six the year before. The majority of these interns are either current or former students in the M.A. or M.Div. programs in Counseling at Westminster Theological Seminary. Two interns this year are students in CCEF’s online Certificate program, having moved to Philadelphia particularly for the internship.

The internship is an opportunity for students to put into practice what they have been learning in the classroom and in other aspects of their lives. Wisdom gained by supervised experience is critical in the formation of a biblical counselor. While the learning curve never stops with regard to developing one’s counseling competence, a season of more intensive training is invaluable to develop and refine a counselor’s care of people. The internship is the place at CCEF where the School of Biblical Counseling and Counseling Services intersect. We want to see continuity between what is taught in the classroom, how interns are trained, and how staff counselors grow and are evaluated.

The most important aspect of that training is—no surprise here—the actual face-to-face counseling that interns do. There is no substitute for that “hot seat.” Interacting with case studies, reading

counseling transcripts, even observing live counseling, as helpful as they are, pale in comparison to the actual experience of wrestling with how to bring the gospel to the person, the couple, or the family sitting with you. You have to decide what to say or not to say. You have to prayerfully consider the direction of the session.

Mentoring and supervision are critical to honing this actual experience. Mere practice is not enough! Practice needs supervision. So, an important aspect of training is having counseling supervised by someone who has more experience. This is essential. Counseling is inherently a “private” ministry and you can easily, by default or by design, fall into a “lone ranger” mentality. Counseling before the eyes of a supervisor reveals both strengths and weaknesses of the intern and fosters a plan for continued growth as a counselor.

What changes are we anticipating for next year? One requirement will be that interns themselves spend 6-8 hours in counseling over the length of the internship. Why? It’s in line with the understanding that we all, counselors included, need to be under the counsel of others. And it’s important to experience what it’s like to be in the primary role of counselee for a season. Those who know their own need of the transforming power of the gospel and have taken hard steps of change themselves are in a better position to offer that comfort to others (2 Cor. 1:3-4).

In his book *Outliers*, Malcolm Gladwell notes that it takes approximately 10,000 hours of experience to be truly good at what you do. That’s a lot of practice! We’re excited we have the opportunity through the CCEF internship to shape a group of men and women each year on the front end of those hours, thus strengthening Christ’s church for years to come.



Michael R. Emlet, M.Div., M.D., directs the School of Biblical Counseling and oversees the internship program at CCEF. He has authored *Cross Talk: Where Life & Scripture Meet* and the mini-books: *Asperger Syndrome; Help for the Caregiver; OCD; and Angry Children*.



Cecelia Bernhardt, M.Div., directs the Counseling Department at CCEF and oversees the supervision and training of all counselors. She specializes in women’s issues, singleness, young adults, depression, and sexual abuse.



Read everywhere.

THE JOURNAL
OF BIBLICAL
COUNSELING

The mission of the *Journal of Biblical Counseling (JBC)* is to develop clear thinking and effective practice in biblical counseling. We seek to do this through publishing articles that faithfully bring the God of truth, mercy and power to the issues that face pastoral ministries of counseling and discipleship.

The *JBC* began publication in 1977 and continued until 2007. The entire digital collection from those years—the *JBC* Library CD—can be purchased on our website (ccef.org/store). This collection can also be ordered from Logos Bible Software (logos.com), making it available and searchable on Logos apps everywhere.

Help us provide every current issue for free.

In February 2012, after a five-year hiatus, we published our first online edition of the *JBC* for free in order to have the widest distribution possible to fulfill our mission. Without gifts from donors this would not have been possible. Would you consider giving to support the mission of the *JBC*?

CCEF would like to continue to make each current issue available for free online. For that reason, we are working toward our year-end initiative to raise \$250,000 by August 31st. Would you help us reach this goal? In exchange for your donation, we will send you a copy or copies of the *JBC* for different levels of contributions. Please see the envelope in this magazine for details.

Please enjoy the current issue today by going to

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We hope that it proves to bless, edify and equip you.

Help us meet our goal to raise \$250,000 by August 31st.

\$100* includes a print issue of *JBC* 26:1

\$200* includes a print issue of *JBC* 26:1 and issue 26:2

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When Hope Falls

by Winston Smith

Marriage counseling is hard work and couples need tremendous amounts of hope to stay the course. Good news for biblical counselors, right? After all, the Bible is full of reasons for hope. But here's where the Bible's strength can become a potential weakness in a counseling situation. Of course, pointing couples to the love and power of Christ is the surest hope that we could ever offer, but we must be mindful of how it's done. It's possible to deliver even that wonderful hope in a clumsy way that actually does more harm than good.

Proverbs 25:20 warns potential hope-givers, "Like one who takes away a garment on a cold day, or like vinegar poured on soda, is one who sings songs to a heavy heart." Imagine you've been listening to a couple share their story of heartbreak and desperation for nearly an hour and suddenly, realizing that you've got to wrap up your time with them in five minutes, you shift gears - time to give them some hope. You share a verse and a few words of assurance about God's love and care for them, but you can see that your efforts fall flat. In fact, they seem a little irritated. The comfort they had received through the entire session from just being heard, from knowing that you understood, from hearing your compassion and concern has been snatched away like a garment removed on a cold day.

Suddenly they don't feel understood anymore. In fact, it seems like you're not taking their problems seriously after all. It's not that they don't believe God loves them, but your solution for their problems just came across as a pat answer, tagged onto the end of the session – and it was. You made it sound too simple. It felt like they had just shared how their lives are falling apart, and your response was to hum a few bars of "The Sun Will Come Out Tomorrow" as you walk them out the door. How do I know it can feel that way? Because I've done it and counselees have mercifully let me know how it affects them.

The lesson I've learned: Hope isn't something to be tagged onto the end of your counseling session – it needs to be highlighted throughout your conversations. As biblical counselors we don't just focus on the hope of what will be someday and force it into every desperate situation. Our security in life and in marriage also comes from the present hope of God's grace in the midst of our trials, teaching us how to have faith and how to love in difficult situations. When marriages are in trouble, hope also means learning to believe that God is bigger than our mistakes; that he actually works through our sin, folly, and weaknesses to make our lives and marriages more beautiful than ever.

Winston T. Smith, M.Div. is a counselor and faculty member at CCEF. Winston is the author of *Marriage Matters: Extraordinary Change Through Ordinary Moments*, as well as several mini-books, *Divorce Recovery*; *Help for Stepfamilies*; *Who Does the Dishes?*; and *It's All About Me*.



So how can you offer hope in a counseling situation? Any time you are listening carefully to a spouse who has felt unheard, you are giving hope. Any time you show sympathy and concern for a spouse who has felt neglected and ignored, you are giving hope. Any time you rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep, you are giving hope. To love well is to give hope. Counseling and marriage rely on grace, faith, and love for real change. A growing marriage needs faith that Jesus will help every step of the way, and it also needs to learn to take concrete action by learning to love. Learning to love in the details of your marriage doesn't lead to overnight results in either you or your spouse. Be patient and learn endurance. Learn how to stay on the path. Fortunately, God offers us encouragement and refreshment along the way.

When marriages are in trouble, hope also means learning to believe that God is bigger than our mistakes; that he actually works through our sin, folly, and weaknesses to make our lives and marriages more beautiful than ever.



Marriage Matters

Winston Smith explores the heart of marriage in his book *Marriage Matters*. He shows how examining the everyday disappointments and irritations in your marriage will help you understand yourself, your spouse, and your need for God's love.

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SHAME INTERRUPTED

An Interview with ED WELCH

Ed Welch is well known for his teaching on the theme of shame in Scripture, both in the classroom and at conferences around the country. In recent years the buzz surrounding his much-anticipated book on shame has steadily grown. Thankfully, the wait is over. Shame Interrupted is now available for purchase.

We recently sat down with Ed to discuss his new book and the theme of shame in Scripture.

What prompted you to work on shame?

I started work on this when my concerns for victimized people collided with Scripture's beautiful words to the shamed. Over the last couple decades I have been recognizing the signs of shame more and more in people. But I was missing *how often* Scripture made this a top priority – both in identifying the universal human dilemma and in God's response to it through covering, adopting, and cleansing his people. Once I saw that Scripture highlighted the human struggle with shame – and from the beginning of the story to the end – I was hooked.

What do you mean when you say that Scripture highlights shame from the beginning of the story to the end?

The theme of shame is so evident in Scripture that you may feel left out if you *aren't* experiencing shame! Scripture has lots of themes, but this theme is so prominent and constant that it requires a much deeper look.

Shame is introduced in the Bible by a statement of its absence from human experience. None of us can miss Genesis 2:25, "And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed," but we can miss how this passage is a setup for the rest of Scripture. We need only look at the reaction of the man and woman to the knowledge of their nakedness in Genesis 3 to find that shame is inextricably tied to the human dilemma and expressed in feeling exposed, not belonging, and being unclean. Scripture's story, repeated time and again, relates how the pursuing God covers, cleanses, and removes the shame of his people.

If shame is such an important theme in Scripture and an important topic for people, why don't we talk about it more often?

I was surprised to discover that Scripture speaks about shame about ten times more often than it speaks about guilt. Other cultures talk about it a lot, but you're right, Western cultures don't. One reason is that we tend to talk about shame only in the context of guilt. We are a people of law, and the legal images of condemnation and justification are most familiar to us.

The problem with shame, unlike guilt, is that there might be nothing to confess, as in the case of sexual victimization. And when there is something to confess, even after the pronouncement of "not guilty," we can still feel like something is missing because some sins can be especially shameful. When we go into the courtroom, we know that Jesus took the judgment away from us, but then we leave the courtroom and still feel like worthless rejects because of lingering shame. That's when we need to hear what God says about shame, because for many people shame is mislabeled as guilt.

What biblical images come to your mind when you think about shame and helping others? Are there any specific passages that are helpful?

The most common images for shame are naked, outcast, and unclean. But since shame is such a prominent theme, there are really dozens of variations in Scripture, including both worthless and poor. These words are important because they help us identify the experience of shame. Once the experience of shame is identified it can be matched with images and experiences of 'victory and belonging,' which are also everywhere in Scripture: honor, glory, riches, power, "I am yours and you are mine," gifted, beautiful, radiant, holy, and priest.

1 Peter 2:9 brings these images together: "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light."

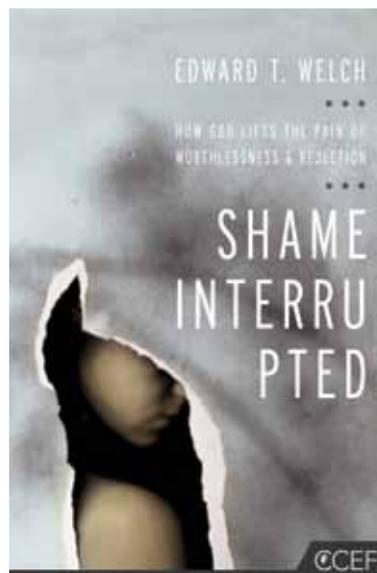
Has this work been helpful to you personally?

I was surprised by the effect that this work had on me. I am very familiar with embarrassment, but embarrassment isn't shame. Embarrassment fades over time, shame gets worse. I am, however, a good friend with the experience of worthlessness, feeling like I don't belong, and being unacceptable. When I watched Jesus through the lens of shame, I was startled by how the marginalized

and those deemed worthless were his favorites. His mission was to make them know that they were his people, which is one reason why the elite turned against him. As I understood Jesus' love for outcasts, I was more persuaded that his love even extended to me.

My counseling has been affected too. Everyone who uses Scripture in counseling does it because they are purveyors of good news, and I feel like I have even more good news to give. Also, when anyone questions the inclusive love of the Father for his children, I am prepared to go toe-to-toe with them. Well, not exactly toe-to-toe, but I am certainly more zealous to startle people with God's unique affection for those who experience shame.

Ed Welch is a featured speaker at this year's conference on Guilt and Shame.



Edward T. Welch, M.Div., Ph.D. is a counselor and faculty member at CCEF. Ed has been counseling for over 30 years and has written extensively on the topics of depression, fear, and addictions. His books include: *When People Are Big and God is Small*; *What Do You Think of Me? Why Do I Care?*; *Shame Interrupted*; *Addictions: A Banquet in the Grave*; *Blame it on the Brain*; *Depression—A Stubborn Darkness*; *Running Scared*; *Crossroads: A Step-by-Step Guide Away From Addiction*; and *When I Am Afraid: A Step-by-Step Guide Away from Fear and Anxiety*.

MEET the Counselor Todd Stryd



Todd Stryd has been working at CCEF for eight years. Todd is the counseling coordinator for all of CCEF's counselors. This past year, he has led the new supervision group of local church-based counselors.

Describe your own journey and development as a biblical counselor and what drew you to CCEF?

It didn't take long for me to be captured and enamored by the richness and thoughtfulness I found in the CCEF counseling classes. The CCEF courses expanded my understanding of the person, how the gospel interacts with the person, and the way the gospel speaks to all the elements of the person. This enlarged my perception of what pastoring and shepherding should look like. Interpersonal ministry does not have to be rigid. It can be unique and varied because individuals are unique and varied. Counseling is often just the process of helping people see differently who they are, who God is, and how the gospel maps onto their lives.

Can you tell us about the local network of church based-counselors you supervise?

Because CCEF is committed to restoring Christ to counseling and counseling to the Church, it is incredibly strategic for us to work with those who are already plugged in and ministering in the local church. In the fall of 2011 this local network was formed. CCEF came alongside church-based counselors as a support: to help them through the challenges and difficulties encountered in their unique contexts, and to provide ways of maturing their development as counselors. Because of this group, CCEF's connection with the broader church community has developed and strengthened through our relationship with counselors who are on the front lines of interpersonal ministry. By providing training and supervision to these local church-based biblical counselors, CCEF is actively supporting and equipping those who are equipping and training others.

From your work with this group, what have you learned that might be helpful for other church-based counselors to know?

This supervision group has provided these counselors with consistent supervision and training, which is often lacking for church-based counselors. Counselors in our group have the

opportunity to process ideas and thoughts as a team. For those church-based counselors who don't have access to a similar group, I would advise them to collaborate in peer consultation. It is invaluablely helpful to process complex situations and to navigate the nuances of church life, ministry, and self-care in community with other counselors. This type of supervision and collaboration offers a context for church-based counselors to glean from one another.

Tell us about the focus of your dissertation.

I've long been intrigued by schizophrenia and its treatment. For just as long I've also been broken for these individuals who continually fight to make sense of their world. In my work at a hospital and psychiatric unit, I found that even though reality often fluctuated and was subjective for those with schizophrenia, their commitment to their faith was not. These individuals found comfort, stability, and certainty in their faith. This fact, coupled with my own commitment to the sufficiency of Scripture, led me to explore how biblical counseling can participate in the care of those who struggle with schizophrenia. My dissertation is an opportunity for me to consider how biblical counselors can think Christianly about their work with individuals with schizophrenia. My premise in the dissertation is that the biblical narrative of redemption in Scripture provides an organizing and stabilizing life structure for those whose inner worlds tend to be disorganized, disoriented, or barren.

How do you bring your training in biblical counseling to bear when counseling someone who struggles with schizophrenia?

The Bible tells us that in Christ and in his Kingdom we are given everything we need for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3). This truth also pertains to schizophrenia. Believing that God gives those suffering from schizophrenia "everything they need for life and godliness" does not mean that delusions, hallucinations, or disordered thinking will be "fixed." The goal and purpose of our

TESTIMONY

existence as Christians is more than alleviating unsavory symptoms, doing away with suffering, and getting our bodies to work properly. The biblical narrative offers a more transformative and realistic hope. This hope is found in an identity that remains stable and certain amidst the mind's instability and uncertainty. It is a sure hope because the One on whom it depends is stable, sure, and faithful.

The gospel unashamedly allows for the integration of seemingly disparate or paradoxical elements of one's identity: sinner and saint, sick and healed, unlovable and deeply loved. Consider the power of embracing a story that proclaims you have value, worth and purpose, even as you live with a persistent, disorienting, and life-altering affliction.

Interestingly, the concept of narrative and story is popular right now in secular psychology. There is an undercurrent of understanding people as story makers, meaning makers, and interpreters of experiences. Christians have long understood the importance and impact of narrative: we live in a world where God has given us stories of himself and who we are. The important difference though is that our story is brought into Christ and it no longer remains only self-referential. A Christian's story is connected to God and others. It is important to learn how to draw out a person's story well, and then creatively move that story toward the true story we have been given in the gospel. In saying that the biblical narrative can be helpful to someone with schizophrenia, I am not saying that it is all the care they require. Wisdom and humility show us that biblical counseling needs to be a part of a larger context of care, including: appropriate medication, systems of social, communal, and family support, and the structure and services offered by the mental health system.

What have you learned from counseling individuals who struggle with schizophrenia?

I have learned that as a person chooses to submit themselves to the authority of Scripture and the lordship of Christ, it makes all the difference; it becomes the stable and certain point of reference in a world of confusion and fear. For those who have trouble finding a mutually sharable reality with others, God's word and his calling to love and worship is a mutual topic of conversation and organization. Christians always have a mutual conversation available, a constant, agreed upon point of reference: Jesus Christ.

Schizophrenia, like all experiences of brokenness, turns us inward and persuades us to become concerned about ourselves. Paranoia, fear, regret, shame, and failure all drive us to protect ourselves and

"The local supervision group has been a powerful answer to prayer and I praise God to be able to be a part of it. I cannot emphasize enough how much it has enriched my counseling and helped me continue to grow spiritually and professionally. I commend CCEF for stepping out in faith to provide support to those who have gone through the program and are trying to bring biblical counseling to new and uncharted areas."

Karen Shannon

shrink our world. The good news of the gospel expands our reality. It drives us to consider others as we embrace the truth that God has taken care of all our troubles in Christ.

Scripture informs us that God does not expect his people to feel, perceive, and think everything alike. The curse and subsequent brokenness of the world keeps this from happening, and our experience reaffirms this. Rather, we are told that God is more interested in how we act and think Christianly. This is, of course, also true for the Christian with schizophrenia who experiences delusional thoughts. Delusions—a belief of exaggerated value that is sustained beyond reason or contradictory evidence—are a common feature of schizophrenia. A few examples of delusional thoughts are: a belief that the individual is being controlled or followed by the FBI, the belief that the individual's mind is being read, or the belief that the individual has special powers or abilities. A biblical counselor's goal is not to win an argument about the validity of the individual's perceptions, feelings, and opinions. Instead, the goal is to talk about how the character of God, union with Christ, and the calling to love one another impacts the experience of persecution, loss of control, or power.

Regardless of the content or nature of the delusion, Scripture has something to say. To the one who is suspicious of being controlled and followed by the FBI, the gospel encourages dependence upon a faithful savior who 'keeps our coming and our going,' along with the call to move toward others in love. Similarly, to the one who is tempted to arrogance and isolation because of special powers, the gospel encourages humility and participation in community, as well as love for those who are different, weak, or in need. In submitting to Christ and living under the authority of Scripture, those with schizophrenia are given a template for the proper handling of their experience, despite its unusual nature.

Todd Stryd, M.Div., holds a Master of Divinity degree from Westminster Theological Seminary with an emphasis in counseling. Todd is currently pursuing a Doctorate in Psychology at Immaculata University. He has experience as a hospital chaplain, psychiatric crisis worker and university counselor.





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