



Ecclesia Christian Counseling News

Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

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Sexual Temptation

“Sexual purity is clearly something only God can bring about in your life and mine. God’s standard of *not even a hint* (of sexual impropriety) quickly brings me to the end of my own ability and effort. It reminds me that God’s standard is so much higher than the standards I place for myself, that only the victory of Christ’s death and resurrection can provide the right power and the right motive needed to change me.

Willpower won’t work. Only the power of the cross can break the power of sin that keeps us on its treadmill. Despair or pride that I can change won’t work either. Only the motive of grace-trust in the undeserved favor of God-can inspire us to pursue holiness free from fear and shame.”

Sex is Not the Problem (lust is), Joshua Harris



Anorexia Nervosa:

An Approach

Many patients with eating disorders believe they have so disappointed God that He has withdrawn his grace, love, and help from them. Feeling as though one has been forsaken by one’s Maker is a crushing, even terrifying, experience. Many patients with this belief are desperately trying to get God’s love back; some, in anger and disappointment, have given up the quest. But all who struggle with this profound spiritual devastation ultimately believe that in order to receive God’s love again, they must earn it back. They believe that until and unless they change their behavior, God will not show his love to them. Enter the focus on performance. So often women and girls with eating disorders have come to believe, through a series of life events, that their performance determines how much love they receive, if any at all. They must outperform everyone to feel lovable and receive love.

According to the Christian Scriptures, this approach cannot succeed. It is, in fact, completely antithetical to Christianity. If there is one thing that distinguishes Christianity

10 Tips to Stress-Less Parenting

1. Take **time for yourself**—reading, journaling, a short walk
2. **Ask for help!** Create a support list of family and friends; perhaps you will be able to return the favor!
3. **Have a sense of humor.** Life is unexpected and full of opportunities to learn!
4. Accept that children (and parents!) make mistakes. **Teach and practice forgiveness.**
5. **Count to 10 before reacting in anger** and teach with love and grace.
6. Remember the importance of **touch**—hugs, hold hands, high fives, and pats on the back are comforting and demonstrate love to children of all ages!
7. **Listen** to your child. Show that you value their conversations thoughts, ideas and opinions (after all, we like to be heard).
8. Schedule **fun and fitness** as family activities. A great way to get physical activity to reduce stress and create moments where the family can laugh together. Bowling, hiking, sledding, or soccer/baseball at the park.
9. Talk with your spouse, family, and friends of the **joys of being a parent.** Reflecting on good times will help you have a more positive outlook on parenting.
10. Have **realistic expectations.** We all have different strengths and abilities.

from other religious perspectives—one thing that so many Christians stumble over and struggle with—it is the belief that God’s love, forgiveness, and spiritual restoration come not by our own efforts but from God’s free, unmerited grace.

How do we assist patients to make this fundamental shift in thinking, to absorb this counter-intuitive understanding? We begin by sharing this most basic, yet essential truth: God is love (1 John 4:16). It is not necessary to do anything to earn his love, it is a free gift. There is nothing we can do to make God love us any more, or any less. He already loves us completely and this will not change based on our behavior. Hence, patients do not need to remain on the performance treadmill. It’s time to turn off the machine.

(Spiritual Dimensions of Eating Disorders, The Remuda Review, Winter 2005, Remuda Ranch)

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