

Letter from the Editor

 by KIMBERLY MONROE

Dear *JBC* readers,

I was raised on Disney movies. These movies always ended well. There were uncertain moments of course: Will the prince overcome the evil witch and rescue his sleeping beauty? Will Cinderella escape from a locked room in time to prove that only *her* dainty foot fits into the glass slipper? You get the idea. Happily ever after is in peril but then, of course, good wins over evil. Every time. These movies are entertaining, but they subtly reinforce the idea that this is how the world works. That evil is overcome in *this* lifetime; we don't have to wait for Jesus to do it.

I was reminded of these movies when I looked over the problems addressed in this issue. I felt sad. I wish our world was easier to live in, like Disney depicts it. Unlike the entertainment industry, however, Scripture tells us the truth. It is true that we live in an evil and dark age, in a place that is not our home. It is also true that heaven has broken in, and through the Holy Spirit, we can persevere through suffering with hope for the future. A complete and perfect fix *will* come—just later. This issue of the *JBC* addresses problems encountered by people in this present age: chaotic emotions, disabilities, OCD, feeling estranged, and shame. Using the godly wisdom we have been blessed with, we can offer real help, which is the firstfruits of what is promised to come.

We begin this issue with an article from Todd Stryd titled “Bringing Order to Chaotic Emotions.” People experiencing this problem have their daily lives disrupted by feeling the wrong *emotion*, feeling the wrong

amount of emotion, and feeling it for the wrong *length of time*. Using the biblical pattern of chaos, order, and rest, Stryd helps us understand and care for people who suffer with this difficulty. He illustrates his recommendations using a case study.

Our second offering is from Matthew McCraney, who observes that only a fraction of families impacted by disability attend church. Based on his own family's experience, he believes this is not due to a lack of accessibility or programming, but due to people's unrecognized and flawed heart beliefs about disabilities. McCraney offers insights into these beliefs and suggests ways that churches can become more welcoming. This is essential reading for pastors.

Next, Mike Emler describes six common patterns of thinking shared by people who struggle with OCD, including inflated responsibility, overestimation of threat, and perfectionism. These patterns can create debilitating anxiety, but Emler offers a note of hope for Christians. Below the surface of these patterns, he says, are flawed beliefs about God, ourselves, and the world. He describes how Scripture speaks to these beliefs and how counseling can stimulate a growing trust in God, who is greater than all our fears.

Next, we have two articles in our Counselor's Toolbox.

First, Lauren Whitman describes the biblical metaphor of exile and how to use it in counseling with people who feel rejected and ostracized. She describes various Old Testament experiences of exile, building to how the metaphor captures Jesus's story. Her primary goal is to show how exile offers a way for counselees to find words for their experiences and see that what they are facing is not outside the Bible's purview. She uses a case example to illustrate this.

Our second toolbox article is about shame. Esther Liu notes that most people do not list shame as a presenting issue when they enter counseling, but it is often there, hiding under struggles such as depression and anxiety. Liu describes three areas of inquiry that uncover shame in those you counsel so you can help them identify and address it.

Finally, we have the sixth volume of Michael Gembola's "Book Notes." He reviews six books that cover topics such as singleness, chronic pain, family discipleship, single parenting, and ministry to families in crisis.

I can't resist a final Disney reference. When Snow White sings "Someday My Prince Will Come," she is referring to a young man whom she loves and expects will return to her so they can live . . . well, you know. As for us, we can say the same—only the story is even better. Our Prince will return and when he does, he will put *everything* in his kingdom to rights, and we will truly live happily ever after with him. We do have to wait, but we know with certainty that he is coming.

On behalf of the *JBC* editorial team,

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