

# Letter from the Editor



by KIMBERLY MONROE

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Dear *JBC* readers,

I am often asked, “What is the theme for the *JBC*’s next issue?” To which I always reply, “We don’t have one.” Sometimes a theme develops organically, and it’s great when it does. But most times, as with this issue, it doesn’t. I like that just as well, though, because having a variety of articles enables more people to find something that speaks to them or their ministry. I hope that will be the case with the articles we offer in these pages. Aside from the fact that two of our authors use Psalm 31 as a key text, this issue is a variety pack of topics.

Here are the specifics.

Has it ever occurred to you that the best way to care for someone who is hurting might be to simply be *with* them? In our first article, “A Ministry of Presence: Someone Who Stays,” Darby Strickland lays out the biblical foundations of this way of caring. If we can become people who sit in the dark with others—not with answers, but with nearness—then we become a witness to Jesus, who draws near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit. Strickland addresses how to practice this ministry of presence in both local church settings and counseling contexts.

Next, Aaron Sironi explores God’s vision for couples to be equally yoked in marriage. Using Scripture, he argues that being equally yoked is more than choosing to marry a believing spouse. It has just as much to do with how a couple partners together *after* the wedding as it does with

the person one chooses *for* the wedding. The relationship between the young woman and the shepherd boy in Song of Songs illustrates this, as they care for each other in ways that are joyfully mutual and beautifully equal.

Our next subject is resilience. As a rule, we value and applaud people who bounce back after terrible experiences, and we want to know how to do so ourselves. But Andrew Collins points out that most approaches to resilience are secular and based on personal strength and self-efficacy, leaving God out. In “Resilience: Finding Strength in Weakness,” Collins examines Scripture to find that God calls us to be resilient, not in our own strength, but in his.

Do you know how to pray when you are anxious? It can be challenging to know how to ask God for help at such times. Alex Thermenos has firsthand experience with this and gives us a method for these prayers that is easy to remember. Using Philippians 4:6, he identifies three steps to follow as you pray: tell God what you want, tell him why you want it, and then thank him. This toolbox article fleshes out each of these and provides a worksheet for you to use or to give to someone you counsel.

Though Michael Gembola took a break from his “Book Notes” column for this issue, he offers a review of *Wayfaring: A Christian Approach to Mental Health Care* by Warren Kinghorn. In this insightful book, Dr. Kinghorn decries the body-as-machine metaphor that currently dominates the American psychiatric community. Instead, he embraces Thomas Aquinas’s image of humans as *wayfarers* or pilgrims on a journey needing companions to come alongside them and help them grow. Kinghorn argues this view treats people with dignity, which is not possible when they are seen as machines that need to be “fixed.”

I trust you will find something here that resonates with you personally or provides an idea of how to support someone else in your life. Enjoy!

On behalf of the *JBC* editorial team,

Kimberly Monroe

*The Journal of Biblical Counseling*

(ISSN: 1063-2166) is published by:

Christian Counseling & Educational Foundation

1803 East Willow Grove Avenue

Glenside, PA 19038

[www.ccef.org](http://www.ccef.org)

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