

Counsel the Word

The Institute of Soteric Counseling

Submit, for Power

Editorial: by Lynda Allison Doty

In submission lies the deep secret of power. Do you want that power? Do you find yourself needing it more and more in these perilous times? The first step is that we obey God, that we walk in obedience to Him and His Word. His Word is His voice to us. We may not all hear audible voices, or have God speak to us in dreams and visions, but we can always count on hearing His voice in the Scriptures. "But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries" (Exodus 23:22). We are surrounded by enemies ("We wrestle not against flesh and blood..."). It seems like every time we turn around, the enemy of our soul dispatches his minions to try to distract and hinder us.

The apostle Paul exhorts us in I Corinthians 10:3-4: "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds)." Where are these strongholds that are to be pulled down? We've heard it said many times over, "The battle is in the mind." That is where we fight, for that is where the strongholds reside.

We begin to construct a stronghold with the first act of willful disobedience. We all have sinned and come short, but if we can just learn to repent, right then, at the first sign of rebellion in our hearts—we can live a whole and beautiful life unto the Lord. As we move through a life of disobedience, however, we continually add to the stronghold, like a bird building her nest. Each sin—of omission as well as commission—strengthens the last one we committed and prepares the way for next.

We are called to live submitted lives, and we are to be submitted to one another.

The topic of submission extends far beyond the marital relationship, although that seems to hold most people's focus. Each life has authority in it. Children's authorities are parents and teachers and other responsible adults in their lives. Teachers submit to the principal. The principal submits to the Board of Education, and so on. Saints submit themselves to their authority, the pastor.

But far beyond that is the submission God calls us to, to one another. Paul wrote in I Corinthians 16:16: "That ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth." In I Peter 5:5 we are told: "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble."

The Bible tells us, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). We had better not try to do anything for God until we have given Him our will, or we may get ourselves into a lot of trouble. We also need to watch our attitudes when submitting. Are we doing it begrudgingly, with gritted teeth? God loves a cheerful giver—even of our submission!

Jesus said in Acts 1:8 that we would receive power after we are filled with the Holy Spirit. That power is vast, and includes the simple power of making good choices. We can choose to do right! We can choose to do the best thing for a person! And we can choose to submit! We learn early on that often we must go against our feelings and simply obey the Lord. Simple obedience implies a measure of faith, and faith and submission together equal power. One who is walking in the

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Spirit just keeps on walking!

There are times when we pray and pray, and it seems that God has not answered. Perhaps we lost a job, when we prayed so hard to excel in that job. It is tempting to question God, while all along we should consider the possibility that He is only moving us to another place in His will for our lives. If we walk in trust through times like these, we will come out on the other side much stronger Christians. Job ended up, not only stronger, but with twice as much as he lost!

The key to submission to any authority in our life is our submission first to God. Without that, we cannot have godly submission to others. The book of James says for us to submit ourselves unto *God*. We must understand that submission from the heart is obedience, and will bring healing and deliverance to our lives. When we walk in humble submission, our lives will shine with God's blessings. When we are submitted to God, we are able to pray that awesome prayer that Jesus prayed: "Not my will but thine by done."

In this issue we have some testimonies from real people about what God has done for them through His Word, apart from psychology of any kind. As we read these words from people who once felt they had no hope, let us be encouraged.

Personal from J.R. Ensey

"And the word of the Lord was precious in those days" (1 Samuel 3:1).

Last week I preached in a church where I had preached over 47 years ago. I had not been back during those years. It evoked a tsunami of memories.

Not having been raised in church, when I came to the Lord there wasn't much of a biblical foundation there to build on. I started to preach not long after my conversion but realized my lack of Bible knowledge. I had heard of Sodom and Gomorrah but had no idea what or who they were—man and wife? I had a long way to go...in a hurry!

I can recall many times in those early years of just lying on my back and placing the open Bible on my face in hopes that some of it would seep into my brain. I used it for a pillow or clutched it to my breast. I prayed for understanding. I hungered for knowledge. I begged for wisdom. I knew the secrets of the Lord were in there—help, healing, assurance, and just raw truth. Somehow they had to be excavated out of there and transferred into my mind. God was patient with me, as were my hearers and my peers.

I haven't arrived yet. The struggle is still on, and the Word is still leaching little by little into my mind. But today it is more precious than ever. It has never failed me. It is worthy of trust. That is why I can so unreservedly recommend it.

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Colossians 3:16).

A Prescription for the Mind

By J.R. Ensey

She represented a classic case of "must have counseling."

She was 16 years old when she was raped by an authority figure in her life. What could be more devastating and mentally crippling? The matter came to light and the man was ruined in the community. Both of them had to ultimately leave town (but not together).

Who would have failed to recommend counseling for her, knowing that her future would be filled with flashbacks, fears and self-image problems? That was nearly thirty years ago, however, and every pastor or minister didn't view himself as a "counselor" or self-styled psychologist. There weren't hundreds of thousands of professional counselors as there are today sitting like vultures beside life's highway waiting for road kill on which to ply their greedy trade. The antidepressant craze had not yet alighted upon our society so people instinctively knew that to throw pills at someone at the first sign of anxiety or trouble was probably not necessary.

Fortunately, she moved to a city where there was a caring pastor's wife who took her under her wing. They went for long walks and talked about her situation. That pastor's wife just "poured the Word of God into my soul," the woman told me. She wasn't the extrovert one might expect a pastor's wife to be—just a common, down-to-earth woman with a keen knowledge of the Word.

"That is why I am saved today," the woman told me. "If I had been sent to a psychiatrist as everyone today is, there is no telling what might have become of me. The Word of God made the difference. I am whole in mind today because of its healing virtue."

It is nice to hear testimonies like that since we hear so many that turn out to be horror stories. Drugs usually take a person in the other direction—away from God. Chemical-driven mood changes often hinder the work of the Spirit in our lives and devalue the worth of the Word. Those who are into professional therapy or psychotropic medication also undervalue pastoral counsel.

Are you worried? Feeling depressed? Anxious? Hurt? Give the Word a chance to work in your life. It is a tonic for the mind. Let Jesus help you forgive and turn loose of those things which have you burdened. His Word will help you think right about your circumstances. Set your alarm clock 15 minutes earlier tonight and spend that extra fifteen minutes with the Word. A week of that and if you don't feel better about yourself and your condition, call me and I will chalk up the first case of "it didn't work." I didn't say that all of your problems would be reversed in a week, but that you will feel better and have a brighter outlook. If you can think right, you can make wise choices. A motto I taught our Bible college students: "A chapter a day will keep the devil away!"

"Take my yoke upon you," Jesus said. "My yoke is easy and my burden is light." You can handle the easy yoke and light burden of the Lord, but the burdens that the world, the

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flesh, and the devil will put on you are heavy indeed. “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil. This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones” (Proverbs 4:5-8 NIV).

That is a prescription that is guaranteed to work!

Quit Smoking (or Any Other Habit) with The Word

By Lynda Allison Doty

I know a young woman who is having serious heart problems. The doctor has said, **NO MORE SMOKING!** She’s tried patches and shots and pills...and has had allergic reactions to them all. She is so desperate, but oh! if she would only see there **IS** an answer for her!

When I received the Holy Ghost, God immediately delivered me from alcohol—never a desire to drink in almost thirty years. But He did not remove my nicotine cravings. Four packs a day of those things! And I began to yearn to quit. I tried everything and nothing worked. I even smoked cigarettes made out of lettuce!

Then one day the Lord instructed me to get one of those composition notebooks and my Bible and sit down. Begin to read the Word and, whenever a scripture caught my attention, write it out in the book. I did that for a few days and the notebook was about half-full when He spoke to me again. “I’m not going to ask you not to smoke,” God said, “but whenever you want to, I am asking you to stop first and read these scriptures you have written out. Just read them through.”

The first day I rushed like mad through the verses, “dying” for a cigarette. The second day, I began to slow down and really ingest what I was reading. I still had the freedom to smoke afterwards. The third day—well, on the third day, God removed **ALL** desire to smoke! And I have not had a desire to smoke since for almost thirty years.

I think of that poor young lady struggling so hard and pray that soon she will see: Her answer lies in the Word of God. I’ve seen it happen over and over again.

Good News!

If you have taken the course, Christian Counseling From Scripture, and would like Bible college credit, contact Texas Bible College. Send them a copy of your completion certificate and ask them for the next step in acquiring the credits for that course. Since it is being taught there in the regular curriculum, they will offer credit for it as though you had taken it by correspondence. The phone number for TBC is 936-633-7799.

Another perk for those who have chosen the spiritual way over the psychological way!

Deliverance from Deception

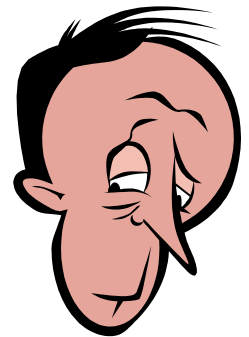
The Word of God liberated me from the many lies of Satan. At first, it was hard for me to distinguish the lies from the truth. So, I got a notebook and wrote down a negative thought or feeling at the top of each page. Then I began to search the Word of God for scriptures to dispute each one. For example, I wrote at the top of one page, “I feel hopeless.” Underneath it, I wrote, “But I will hope continually, and will yet praise thee more and more. Psalm 71:14.” Then I wrote, “Thou art my hiding place and my shield: I hope in thy word. Psalm 119:114.” I always had at least 2-3 scriptures to dispute each lie. When the swirling lies of the enemy attacked me, I picked up the notebook, flipped to the appropriate page, and began reading aloud the scriptures recorded there. It was so powerful and it liberated me!!

Sometimes, I wonder why it took me so long to get emotional healing when I had the Word of God at my disposal. Then again, I think God allowed me to go through the experiences to understand the difference between the world’s way and His way of healing. The world’s way brings temporary relief. God’s Word brings permanent and everlasting healing.

Dr. Almy on Depression

Dr. Gary Almy says, “Almost universally, people who complain of depression are at the same time very introspective and give an inordinate amount of attention to their thoughts and feelings. Sufferers of depression strive to ‘understand’ the causes of the depression, as do most of those who seek to help them out of the depressed state of mind. These common human efforts to understand the cause have produced, over the last century, a multitude of theories, books, and schools of counseling.”

Dr. Almy gives this practical advice: “Remind the depressed person from Scripture that thoughts of suicide, focusing on self, wallowing in ideas of hopelessness or worthlessness, blaming others, and sloth (laziness) are sinful decisions. Remind him that his focus needs to be on serving God that day rather than focusing on how he feels inside himself. Take it one day at a time (Matthew 6:34). Tell him that God expects him to get out of bed and get dressed regardless of how he may feel.”



He Sent His Word and Healed Me

By Cynthia Martin

“Please, God, just let me die!” I cried out in hopelessness and despair once again. I was only 21 years old, but I had repeatedly cried out many times throughout my life due to the loss and rejection I had experienced. I hated myself and my life was miserable. I simply wanted my life, with all of its loneliness and pain, to end.

Rejection began early in life. I was given up for adoption at birth. When I was nine years old, my adoptive father died of a heart attack. He died a few days before Halloween. By Christmas, my adoptive mother was a full-blown alcoholic. In a sense, I lost both parents. Along with the alcohol abuse came the physical and verbal abuse. My adopted mother did not beat me, but rather I would try to stop her from drinking and we would end up in arguments and physical fights. She made many empty promises to stop.

I was sexually abused. By the time I was eleven years old, I had been exposed to or had experienced many kinds of sexual perversion. I developed a distrust and hatred for men.

I went to Sunday school occasionally. One day, the teacher told us that we could talk to God and He would hear us. We could ask Him anything and He could do it. Immediately I thought, “God can make my mama stop drinking.” I asked, pleaded, and begged God. I tried to bargain with Him. “God, if I clean up my room, will you stop my mama from drinking?” My mama continued to drink. I began to curse God as a child, “I hate you God!” I held this hateful attitude toward God for many years.

When I was sixteen, my adoptive mother developed cancer. I prayed for her healing. I told God, “If you will heal my mother, I will serve you for the rest of my life. But if you don’t, I will *never* serve you.” I held such manipulation and bitterness toward God.

My mother died when I was nineteen. I was not there when she died. The last time we were together, we had argued. For ten years, following my adopted mother’s death, I visited her grave alone. I always left the graveside feeling guilty, depressed and suicidal.

I was only 21 years old and had been in the hospital many times due to the suicide attempts. It was during one of those hospitalizations that a friend invited me to church. My response? “I’ve already tried God and He failed me. But, I’ll go one time for you.”

I visited the church and felt such warmth and love that I had never experienced before. After attending for several weeks, I began to weep uncontrollably as I felt the presence of God flow over me. I prayed and asked God to forgive me of my sins. Then God filled me with the Holy Ghost and I began to speak in tongues, another language. It was the most wonderful experience! Shortly thereafter, I was baptized by water in the name of Jesus Christ. Baptism removed my sins from me, never to be remembered again.

Since that day, God has performed many marvelous works in my life. He gave me a mother figure in a friend.

God mightily used this woman to influence my life. Her motherly touch, filled with compassion and love, healed many areas of my life. I understand what it’s like to have a mother because of her.

God healed me of the guilt surrounding my adoptive mother’s death. God healed me of the nightmares of the sexual abuse. Insignificant things could trigger days of torment for me mentally. One day, we had a lady missionary visit our church. She spoke about God calling people back to innocence after they had sinned. She also spoke about God calling people back to innocence after they have experienced abuse. The message deeply moved me.

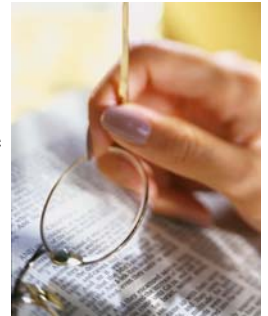
Afterwards, I asked her, “How can I be innocent after everything I’ve experienced as a child? What about the childhood memories of sexual abuse? I can’t undo those memories.”

She answered me with such words of compassion and wisdom. “No, you cannot undo the past. God will not remove the memories. But He can take away the torment of those memories. You will be able to remember events of the past without the torment. God can heal you and make your life such as if those things had never happened to you.” Then she prayed a simple prayer; I did not feel anything in particular. But several months later, I realized that God had removed the nightmares and the torment of the sexual abuse through that prayer. He had healed another area of my life!

As I look back over my life, I realize that God was there when I was a little girl trying to bargain with Him. He was there when I was a teenager vowing never to serve Him. He was there when I was trying to take my own life. And not only was He there, He loved me. God loved me, even when I told Him that I hated Him. That thought in itself is incomprehensible. Jesus Christ, who is God Almighty, *loved* me!

Within myself, I could not change the miserable, destructive and sinful lifestyle that I was living. Yet, when God filled me with the Holy Ghost, He changed my life and made it anew. He healed me of a painful past and gave me peace of mind. He delivered me from loneliness and rejection. He gave me hope and joy. He gave me a desire to live.

He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions. Psalm 107:20.



Training Conference!

It is not too early to begin your plans to attend this year’s conference. Mark the dates on your calendar now! October 27-28, 2005 in Houston, Texas. You will NOT want to miss this year’s meeting! Remember, spouses attend at reduced rates, and if you’ve already attended one conference, you get future ones at drastic savings.

The Institute of Soteric
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Congratulations!

Our distance education division is thriving, with many students currently enrolled in the “*Christian Counseling from Scripture*” course. Shelia Jones of West Monroe, LA is our most recent graduate. Congratulations, Shelia! Three students have completed the halfway point and are busily working on their midterm tests: Jeffrey Johnson, Betty Payne, and Ilene Dewar. (If you are an “older” graduate and wish to have your name included here, please send an email to counselor@soteric.org We have NOT forgotten about you, and believe in giving credit where credit is due.)

Don't Forget to Register!

The 4th Annual ISC Training Conference will be held

October 28, 29, 2005.

Contact Lynda Doty at
info@soteric.org or call

1-888-463-2873
