



IBCD

NEWSLETTER
Spring 2015

INSIDE

3

Protecting Your Marriage:
Notes from the Spring Seminar

6

An Interview with
Dr. George Scipione

11

Care & Discipleship
in Papua New Guinea



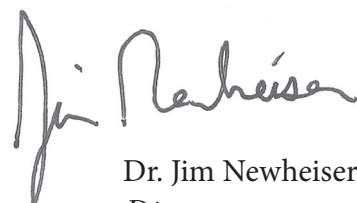
Director's Take

When I was a new Christian in high school our youth group would have weekend retreats full of wonderful teaching and incredible fellowship. It was like a taste of heaven. Then we would come down from the mountaintop (both literally and figuratively) to face real life at home and at school. Sometimes it was hard to transition back to the real world. Even now, as a pastor, I find that I have this same experience. One of the privileges of my job is to be able to attend conferences where I enjoy incredible mountaintop experiences. One of the best parts about these conferences is the fellowship with brothers and sisters who are committed to caring gospel-centered ministry. It is like a great reunion of very dear friends – a taste of heaven.

But following these days on the mountaintop is always the time to return home. Reality hits hard Monday mornings as I prepare for an evening full of counseling. There is the couple who have been married for years and yet live in constant conflict. Unresolved issues plague their marriage. So far there has been no breakthrough. In what new and fresh way can I proclaim the gospel to them? I also have a young couple who already wonder if they made a mistake by getting married. When they fail, each struggles with doubts about the authenticity of their faith. It is emotionally exhausting to wrestle through these issues with them. Finally, I think about the couple who have been separated due to infidelity. By God's grace both have agreed to work toward reconciliation, but there have been some serious bumps in the road recently and new issues keep emerging. I ask God, "How can I help move this dear couple forward?"

It was hard on Monday morning to contemplate the spiritual warfare in which I was about to engage. The last conference had been so delightful. Getting back into the trenches of counseling again seemed overwhelming. Who is sufficient for these things? As I prayed I was reminded that our sufficiency is in Christ, who told us, "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). All of our training, skill and effort will not change people. We can do nothing apart from Christ. But as we abide in Him, He enables us to bear much fruit.

It had been at least two weeks since I had seen my counselees. I was astonished and thankful to see how God had been working in their lives during my absence. In each case there had been spiritual growth and application of the gospel in their relationships. Hard hearts were being softened. Though I felt exhausted and insufficient, God helped me to open the Word in each hour and the Holy Spirit made my counselees receptive to God's truth. Biblical counseling is not ultimately our work. We seek to faithfully hold forth God's Word to needy fellow pilgrims, praying that the Spirit will work to do what we cannot. It is a great privilege to participate in this work of God and to see all that He does. This is the truth that keeps me going every Monday morning and I pray it encourages you to do the same.



Dr. Jim Newheiser
Director



Protecting Your Marriage

*Notes from the 2015
IBCD Spring Seminar*

by Jim Newheiser



What Must be Done to Protect a Marriage?

Almost every marriage begins with joy as newlyweds anticipate sharing life together. Sadly, not all couples live happily ever after. A large percentage of marriages end in divorce. Other couples remain married, but drift apart emotionally due to bitterness or mutual indifference. They share a name and a home, but not a life. What can a couple do to preserve the joyful loving intimacy of their marriage?

Do Not Take Each Other for Granted

Couples who are courting or engaged spend every spare minute together and can't bear to be apart for long. But often after they are married each gets so caught up in career, children, hobbies, sports and other activities that the marriage relationship is neglected. Very gradually the couple drifts apart. While there may not be much open conflict, the spark is missing. The wife may notice that something is wrong only to have her husband tell her that she is worried over nothing.

A new marriage, like a new car, needs regular maintenance. It may look and work great today, but if you don't maintain it, sooner or later it will break down. A husband and wife need to spend time growing closer to one another and enjoying one another. Work harder at romance after your marriage than before. Seeking to grow in intimacy year by year will protect your marriage from falling into disrepair.

Make Your Personal Walk with the Lord a Priority

Marriage takes grace. On our own we are selfish sinners. It is only as we are strengthened by God's Word through His Spirit that we can endure in love. We do not have the power to keep loving in our own strength. Jesus said that if we abide in him we will bear much fruit, but apart from Him we can do nothing (John 15:5). When couples with troubled marriages come to us I typically ask each of them about their prayer and devotional life. In almost every case I have found a correlation between the lack of a vibrant personal walk with the Lord and a failing marriage. We need Scripture's constant reminders of God's grace to us which, in turn, motivates us to show grace to others. As we walk in the Spirit we don't carry out the destructive deeds of the flesh, but instead bear the fruit of the Holy Spirit. (Gal. 5:16-23). If something is not right with your relationship with your spouse, start to address it by first making sure things are right between you and the Lord.

Remain Involved in a Strong Church

God blesses and strengthens His people through the ministry of the church, both through the public preaching of the Word and as the members of the body build one another up (Eph. 4:11-16). The neglect of gathering with the people of God is to the detriment of your soul and to your family (Heb. 10:25). It also is important for a couple to be in a strong church so that they can benefit from counsel and accountability if their relationship has trouble. I have heard families who have benefited

from this kind of faithful pastoral care say, “We don’t know what we would have done if this church hadn’t been here for us.” I also have seen many families who are in the midst of a crisis suffer because they didn’t have godly church leaders caring for their souls (Heb. 13:17).

Quickly and Completely Resolve Conflicts

Many couples will periodically engage in arguments in which each speaks in anger and says hurtful things. Over time they cool down and life goes on without ever properly resolving the disputes. As the years pass their marriage is affected by hurts and scars which never healed. Paul vividly warns the Ephesians of the danger lurking behind unresolved conflict. “Be angry and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity” (Eph. 4:26-27). To leave an issue unresolved and to remain angry is like letting the devil into your house to wreak his havoc. Marriages fraught with unresolved conflicts are more vulnerable not only to increasingly destructive conflicts, but also to extra-marital affairs. Believing couples must be determined to do whatever is necessary to be fully reconciled to one another.

Be Honest With Each Other

Nothing is more destructive to marriages than falsehood. More than once I have heard the victim of marital infidelity say, “I can forgive the sex, but I don’t know if I can forgive the lies or if I can ever trust her again.” Paul tells the Ephesians, “Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth each one of you with his neighbor, for we are members of one another” (Eph. 4:25). In a similar way a married couple becomes one body (Gen. 2:24). If the rest of the body can’t trust the eyes to see danger or the legs to run to safety, then entire body is at risk. We must be able to trust one another.

One aspect of having a truthful marriage is that each spouse must strive to make it safe for the other to honestly confess sins and failings. A wife may not want to tell her husband that she got a traffic ticket because she fears his angry reaction. A husband who has visited a strip club may fear a dramatic emotional outburst from his wife. Even if it is hard to hear the truth, we can give thanks to God for helping the other person

to be honest. As sinners who have received much grace from God we can have compassion on our fellow sinners by helping restore rather than condemn them.

Be Circumspect in Your Dealings with the Other Sex

Few Christians plan to have an affair. Yet many wind up in an inappropriate physical or emotional relationship which threatens their marriage and even their souls. In counseling such cases I have observed that they typically follow a certain pattern. A man and a woman are acquainted through work, the gym, children’s activities or even the church. They start talking and find that they enjoy one another’s company. Over time one or both of them begin to develop feelings for the other. They find that they look forward to the next time they see each other and start communicating through e-mail, social media or the phone. At some point a barrier is crossed. There is a touch, then an admission of attraction then a kiss. The slide into an affair continues, usually until they are caught, or sometimes when the conscience of one can’t stand the guilt. Many will be hurt. Marriages may end. Don’t think that it can’t happen to you. If a man as good as King David could fall into adultery, you too are vulnerable. You must be very careful in relationships with the opposite sex, not because you think you would do something wrong, but because you are determined not to.

Be Gracious to Each Other

Just as the Lord deals with us not according to what we deserve (Ps. 103:10), we are to treat our spouses better than they deserve. Their sins and failures provide opportunities for us to show grace which resembles the grace we have received from God. In an ideal marriage each party tries to outdo the other in showing love. As Paul tells the believers in Colossae, “So as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity” (Col. 3:12-14). A marriage characterized by such grace will be well safeguarded.



the
CARE & DISCIPLESHIP
PODCAST

We're thrilled to announce the upcoming launch of the first IBCD podcast!
Do you have a counseling topic or question you'd like Jim Newheiser to address?
Send us an e-mail at info@ibcd.org

3 Questions

with Counselor

Ana Jackson



1 How does counseling others help you grow in your own walk with the Lord?

Since the Word of God is useful for correction, teaching, rebuking and training in righteousness (2 Tim 3:16-17), I am aware that my words do not carry the power necessary to produce real change. I must seek out God's Word as I prepare for each session and rely on the Holy Spirit to bring conviction and change. I am comforted that it is His work and not mine. Second, as I recognize that my own heart needs to be in a place to love and care for the counselee, my time in prayer grows. I want to have the right balance of compassion with firmness and grace. I am so dependent on the Lord for these things.

2 What do you find to be the most challenging thing about counseling others?

The most challenging thing with a new counselee is not to lose sight of the fact that this woman is a creature made in God's image and a sinner just like me. As a sinner, she has the same needs to know Christ and what God desires for her in the gospel. As I recognize this, my fear or apprehension of what to say or how to say it turns to dependence on the Lord knowing that He will work His will in His way. I realize more and more that I am merely an avenue for God to use me as He wills. The success of the counseling session is in His hands. This is a great comfort to me.

3 What book has had the greatest impact on your counseling?

The book that has most impacted my counseling is Elyse Fitzpatrick's book, *Because He Loves Me*. Remembering the gospel love of our Savior is a truth that we need to preach over and over again, primarily to ourselves as counselors, so that we can be ready to share this good news to those who come for help. We need to remember that because of His great love we are part of the forever family of God and that He has not left us. Transformation comes as we turn from being self-focused and problem-focused and look towards the risen Savior and what he has promised us in the gospel.

BUILDING ALEGACY

A glimpse of the life and work of Dr. George Scipione

by Christina Henson

Following his induction into the ACBC Academy in October, we asked Dr. George Scipione, to share with us his perspective on over 40 years of involvement in shaping the Biblical Counseling movement. Dr. Scipione has had a hand in the development of biblical counseling since its inception. He trained under Jay Adams, served as director of CCEF in the early years, founded and directed IBCD (formerly CCEF West) and has taught and practiced biblical counseling as both pastor and Seminary professor. He currently serves as Director of the Biblical Counseling Institute and Adjunct Professor of Pastoral Theology at Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Pittsburgh, PA.

How did you first become interested in Biblical Counseling?

Back in '67 I went (as an unconverted professing Christian, as I look back now) to Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia. During that time Jay Adams was beginning to teach and I took the Biblical Counseling Course from him. At that time the only course that existed was the Supper Seminar. It was really primitive - the center was comprised of a portable typewriter, portable table and a rolling file index. That was it. I got involved at that point and literally I think it was a part of my conversion. I wanted to get more training because this stuff was really exciting but there wasn't any more training so they took me on as an intern and then I became the director.

Did you realize at the time that you were becoming part of what would be an entire movement?

No. I was excited, but in terms of a big movement, no. I just knew that *Competent to Counsel* had come out and a lot of people were mad at Jay and thinking we were a bunch of nuts. It was kind of exciting. I mean, I would go places with Jay and he's just an incredible learner and a voracious reader so it was all exciting. To be honest, I didn't know it was going to be a



big movement, but it was exciting enough that I wanted to be involved because God had used it in my conversion and in transforming my life.

So right then you knew you wanted this to be the focus of your life's work?

Well no, I'm 68 years old and I still don't know what I want to be when I grow up.

What was it exactly that excited you enough to motivate you to begin training and opening centers?

The bottom line is that if my premise is correct that counseling is discipleship and discipleship is primarily the province of the church, the church wasn't very practically oriented and didn't have a handle on discipleship. Psychologists have sort of always intrigued the church, liberal and conservative, because they seem to have answers to life's problems. Why I got excited about this is because it's the Christian world and life view actually practically applied. This is really the nuts and bolts of pastoral ministry and it affects preaching because it teaches you how to apply the Word of God. So for me it was like, wow, this is what the church needs.

Who would you say has had the greatest impact on the development of your own personal counseling style?

I'd have to say it's Jay because he mentored me. Others who have affected me positively would be Powlison and Tripp through their writings. I think the other influence more indirectly would be running into Jim Newheiser. I call Jim a gentle giant. His gentleness in being able to say the same things [as I would] but in such a [gentle] way has probably had an indirect influence on me.

What do you consider to be your most significant contribution to the field?

I honestly think that my biggest contribution has been behind the scenes, not always graciously you know, sin included, but basically trying to hold people's feet to an exegetical biblical fire and not just let the biblical counseling movement become un-theological. I keep telling people that if we don't stay theologically strong this thing is going to die like any other movement.

Another one, and I honestly mean this with tears in my eyes is how not to do things. I call it the Scipione teaching method. Here's how I messed up the first 10 years, don't do it and you'll

be okay. I've had all kinds of people in my home to live with us because I really believed in the transforming nature of the gospel. You just have to be prudent in how you go about trying to help people. Don't let them rip you or your family off. I always taught to make your family first but then in haste and zeal I really did things that undermined that and put the family in jeopardy.

Would you share with us a personal highlight from your ministry?

To see what Jim's done, to see the stuff at Southern, to see that even now RTS is thinking of starting a biblical counseling program, Masters, you can go down the list. I think that is probably the highlight to see that God is honoring those lumps that Jay and we took early on for taking a stand. That this actually comes out of it is really great.

Some people see two separate camps among biblical counselors. "Traditional" biblical counselors and "Progressive" biblical counselors are terms that have been used to describe this. Do you think this is an accurate view of the current situation?

Honestly, yes. I don't think they are that far apart, but I do think there are differences between the first and second generation. There are things that are changing that are good things, but personally I don't think some of the newer people are as balanced as they need to be.

I'm concerned that the second generation sticks with a reformed and Calvinistic basis. The Westminster standards or the London confession, that kind of rich theology really gets pushed to the side. They are wonderful people, but the slight differences between gospel sanctification, where it seems that justification and sanctification are conflated, doesn't seem to have the richness of those old standards. My concern is that we don't overcorrect. Remember that the Lord said don't add or subtract from the Word and don't deviate to the right or to the left. We all struggle with that, with walking down the center and being balanced.

You've shared some concerns you have for the newer generation of biblical counselors. Are there things you view as positive growth from this generation?

I think the whole emphasis that everything is an issue of worship, everything really centers around your relationship with God, as Powlison would call it, "the Godward referent", I think that was really good. I also think the theme that has come out

with the second generation that counselees are sufferers as well as sinners was really helpful.

Is there anything in the biblical counseling community that you find particularly exciting or noteworthy right now?

I think it's true ecumenism in terms of getting Baptists and Presbyterians, Dispensationalists and Reformed, Calvinists and Arminians together. There is an incredible amount of unity in terms of putting certain things aside to try to get the job done. That's a big thing. I also think it's noteworthy that we are one of the few groups combining the old theology of inerrancy and infallibility with the sufficiency of Scripture. The biblical counseling movement puts the feet on the ground and that's why it is so important. It is orthodox theology and orthodox practice. That should at least have some people sit up and notice and go "wow, something's really being accomplished here!"

To be honest I didn't know it was going to be a big movement, but it was exciting enough that I wanted to be involved because God had used that in my conversion and in transforming my life.

What are some go-to books that you find yourself recommending over and over?

As far as the actual nuts and bolts I still go back to *Competent to Counsel* because of its historic value, John Mac Arthur's *Counseling: How to Counsel Biblically*, Jay's *The Christian Counselor's Manual*, Jay's *Insight and Creativity in Christian Counseling* because that's very different and most people don't think he ever would write something like that and his *A Theology of Counseling*. Also Paul Tripp's *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands*, David Powlison's *Seeing with New Eyes*, and testimonial wise Richard Ganz's *Psychobabble*. Those are the basic books I still recommend to people in terms of getting them started. If somebody read through those books they would have the issues and a direction with which to go.

At the beginning of our interview you mentioned still not knowing what you want to do when you grow up...

Oh, actually I do know. What I really would like to do is short term missions work. What I really salivate to do is just to go

somewhere and teach biblical counseling courses, or preach, or do conferences and the like and help people in missions stations because they have so much less available than we do.

I just came back a month and a half ago from Uganda. Unexpectedly I had a bunch of Rwandans. Here's a country which is going through the genocide and here are six or seven leaders taking biblical counseling over in Uganda. They admit, 'We don't have discipleship. We get people saved and talk to them a bit, but we don't have anything like counseling. We have a lot of secular counseling in the aftermath of the genocide, but we don't have biblical counseling.' To see them helped and to give them some good theology, to see that begin to gel in their minds, that's what I get excited about.

I have one last question for you. If you could go back to the very beginning of your career and give yourself one piece of advice what would that be?

It would be hard to choose just one. Probably pray more and talk less.

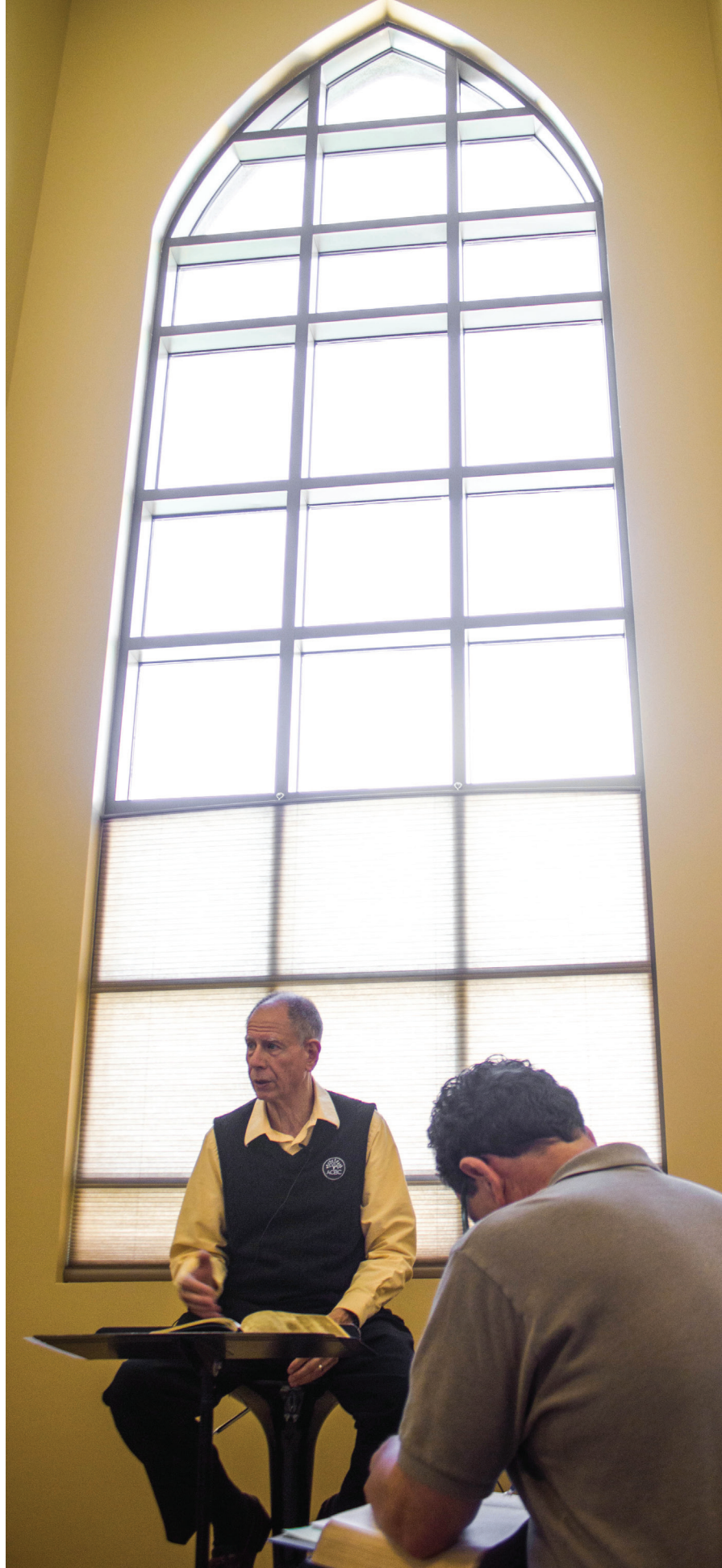
Is there anything else you would want to share with us that has come to mind as we've been talking?

Yes, one last thing in summary is that I consider myself and my experience with Jay and being in this movement, I consider myself to be one of the most blessed people that has ever lived. I have the work of my Savior, I have good theology, I got Vantillian apologetics. To be trained under Jay and to be involved in this - I don't think many people in the history of the church have had access to as much good theology and practical application as I have and I just consider myself an incredibly blessed man to be able to have had this experience.

Pictured right and above: Dr. George Scipione teaches a workshop at the 2014 IBCD Summer Institute. (photos by Anthony Parisi)

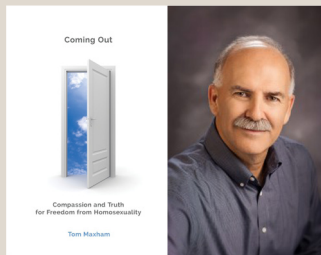
To listen to the audios from this and other sessions please visit www.ibcd.org/resources/messages/

Topics by Dr. Scipione include:
Confessions of A Biblical Counselor, Lessons from First Peter, Depression, Worry, Fostering and Adoption, Sexual Purity and many more.
All audios are available free of charge.



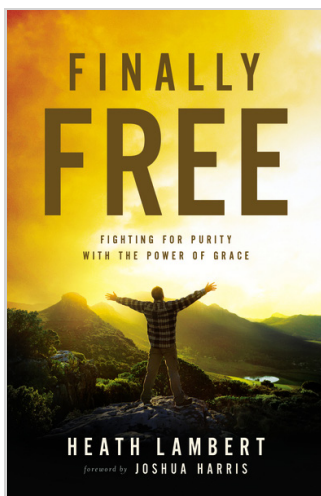
Book Reviews

IBCD Staff Spotlight



Coming Out: Compassion and Truth for Freedom from Homosexuality Tom Maxham

Tom Maxham is a pastor of Grace Bible Church in Escondido, California. He has been counseling with IBCD since 2003. This new booklet, based on his Master's Thesis, is now available on Amazon.com. Tom writes about the challenging topic of homosexuality with clarity and compassion. He offers hope and direction for those who struggle with same-sex attraction as well as for their friends and family. Anyone can benefit from reading this helpful resource.



Finally Free: Fighting for Purity with the Power of Grace Heath Lambert (Review by Curtis Solomon)

When I first encountered *Finally Free: Fighting for Purity with the Power of Grace* I was skeptical that it would be just one more book to cloud an already hazy horizon of literature on the topic of counseling those enslaved to pornography. Rather than adding to the fog, however, Dr. Heath Lambert's book cuts through the dense haze to provide clear biblical insight and instruction on gaining victory over pornography. Four strengths to highlight are the extremely practical nature of the counsel, a firm biblical foundation, it is Gospel centered and it avoids many mistakes other works make in addressing this issue. All the chapters are purposeful, directive and practical, but each one is firmly rooted in grace. Furthermore, Lambert offers enough information to show that God's Word addresses any and all sexual sin without offering explicit-unnecessary details that can excite sinful imagination. This work would be a valuable resource to anyone entangled in sexual immorality of any kind. To say that I highly recommend this book would be an understatement. *Finally Free* has become the book of choice for me when it comes to counseling those battling sexual sin.



Finding Your Child's Way on the Autism Spectrum Laura Hendrickson (Review by Brandon Hoffman)

The primary theme of many books on autism is law: strategies to produce more normalized behavior. These have their place, as parents need to run a well-ordered home and teachers need to manage well-ordered classrooms. The thing that is missing, however, is the gospel: understanding that spectrum children are also created in the image of God, are sinners in need of a Savior, and need their minds to be engaged and hearts shepherded—according to their unique needs—to seek salvation in Jesus Christ. With this dialectic in mind, I was excited to read *Finding Your Child's Way on the Autism Spectrum*, which addresses both aspects for parents, as well as provides encouragement for those who need God's grace to sustain them in their more challenging parenting situations. Dr. Laura Hendrickson wrote this book because she herself had a child on the spectrum and needed to learn how to parent him according to his unique abilities and interests. This is not another how-to book, although it offers some sage advice; it is rather a book of personal reflections and general principles stemming from the author's lifetime of parenting her own child. This is an excellent, very readable book and I would highly recommend it to any Christian parent or teacher of a child with autism.

To read extended reviews visit our website at www.ibcd.org



Go and Make Disciples Papua New Guinea

Care & Discipleship
Fulfilling the Great Commission
by Christina Henson

At the stage in life when many people start thinking seriously of retirement, Lena Allen and her husband John were packing their bags for a move to Kotidanga, Papua New Guinea. The tiny village of Kotidanga is home to the Kamea, an unreached people group of about 30,000 scattered throughout that jungle region. The Kamea have yet to receive a Bible in their own native language. It is here, three days hike from the nearest city, that Lena and John labor to bring in the harvest. It is also here, thanks to the wonders of modern technology, that Lena was able to begin and complete all three levels of Care & Discipleship Course.

Lena began to sense the need for more training in counseling as their missionary team, That They May Know, grew larger. "It's very difficult for people to come out here to the middle of the jungle," she says. "They've left their homes. They've left their families. There's such a learning curve. You have to learn how to buy all of your groceries. You have to learn how to cook from scratch. You have to learn how to get along with your husband because he doesn't go off to a regular job."

She was thrilled to discover she could get that training through IBCD's website. "The ease of use of your materials really was attractive to me," she said. "I mean, I'm in the middle of the jungle and I use satellite internet which is not very user friendly. I went to your website and I realized I could download the messages, I could download the workbooks, I could download the whole thing right there in front of me. It was just so easy to use." Despite a hectic schedule as the chief (and often only) medical officer at Kunai Health Center, Lena's te-

nacity spurred her to complete the Course in just over a year. "I [would] have a mom that's having a baby and I [would] have my computer out there and be working on it at that time," she recalls.

Another result of her training is that Lena feels more equipped to address the spiritual needs of the people she treats in the clinic. The Kamea are no strangers to the ravaging effects of sickness and sin. "On Tuesday I did a pre-natal check for a fifteen-year-old that got pregnant out of wedlock. We've been counseling her," she shares. "It would be normal for her to kill herself because of what's happened to her. Her boyfriend is expected to pay the family not only for her bride price but also for her death price and for the baby. It's just so different than

we are used to." She says the training has taught her not only to listen better, but then to be able to give an answer from the Word of God. "I've learned that there are certain biblical rights and wrongs that transcend any culture. I'm learning to trust what the Bible says is right and wrong," she

continues. "I've done a lot of thinking this past year and I'm a lot stronger, a lot more confident in what I believe. I feel more comfortable and confident in using the Word than I did before." Her desire is that those coming to the clinic would be ministered to holistically, body and spirit.

The Allens have served in Papua New Guinea for the past 7 years. John just completed translating the book of Luke into Kamea this past month. Lena works as a midwife, treats tuberculosis and malaria, gives vaccinations and addresses just about any other medical need that comes her way. They ask for prayer for their health, for progress in the Bible translation work and that the work in the clinic would give glory to God.

"I feel more comfortable
and confident in the using
the Word than I did before."



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