

Transformative Encounters: The Intervention of God in Christian Counseling and Pastoral Care

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Transformative Encounters Invites God's Spirit Into Therapy

What made you want to write a book on how God intersects with counseling when there are already so many integration books available?

David Appleby: As a graduate counseling professor I became aware that, even at a Christian university, we often did not have enough time in the program to adequately address various uniquely Christian methodologies that made what we do, as Christian counselors, different than what a secular counselor would do. While we might have a course in the integration of psychology and theology, it rarely went beyond the theoretical. No one said, "These are examples of how the Scriptures and the ministry of the Holy Spirit can be used to empower your counseling."

The goal of this book was to give examples of how the Scriptures and the ministry of the Holy Spirit can drive the ministry of those doing Christian counseling. My hope is that counselors and pastors would be able to read these chapters and find that the Spirit of God might quicken to them. They would then have the opportunity to be introduced to the practice, to be encouraged to explore these areas further and to then begin to integrate them into their work. It is difficult to embrace and practice something that you do not know exists.

George Ohlschlager: We wanted to show both the wide-ranging variety of counseling models, as well as what happens transformatively when God is invited and shows up in counseling.

What makes *Transformative Encounters* stand out for students and practitioners?

Appleby: The central thesis of the book is that God is desirous and active in meeting the needs of his children and that he can do that through various spiritual interventions. Some of these interventions are more "spiritual" than others. Some readers may be more attracted to certain chapters than others. The counselor/pastor can choose which intervention would best serve the needs of the client.

What knowledge should readers be able to gain from reading your book?

Ohlschlager:

- There is a wide variety of useful and biblically connected models for change in modern Christian counseling.
- God desires to be invited directly into counseling as the third member of the counseling interaction.
- When God shows up in the counseling session, there is usually transformative and

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long-term change in the life of the client.

Appleby:

- It makes a case for the use of a supernaturally oriented, Christ-infused Christian counseling practice.
- It includes specific examples of methodologies that are appropriate for use in church, clinical/church, and clinical settings. I have been told that this is the first time practices that are often utilized in church settings are being given a place at the table with those practices which find their expression primarily in clinical settings.
- It seeks to present what can make Christian counseling unique when compared to secular counseling. We have something to offer the world that the secular world does not have.

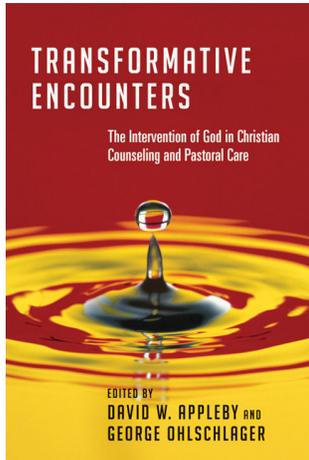
What's one major point you'd like readers to take away from this compilation of essays?

Appleby: *Transformative Encounters* presents deliverance and inner healing as being within the context of Christian counseling and caregiving. It invites these ministries to join other standard counseling practices as legitimate expressions of Christian counseling.

Ohlschlager: God is alive, and he will show up to bring transformative change if he is invited to do so.



AUTHOR BIO



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Editor **David W. Appleby** (Ph.D., University of Delaware; Ph.D., University of Northern Colorado) is a minister, counselor and trainer working in the overlapping fields of family counseling, psychology and deliverance ministry. He is the founder and president of Spiritual Interventions, Inc., a nonprofit organization that promotes spiritual interventions in Christian counseling practice. He also teaches courses in psychology and professional and pastoral counseling at the Center for Counseling and Family Studies at Liberty University, Lynchburg, Virginia.

The author of *It's Only a Demon: A Model for Christian Deliverance* (2009), Appleby has spoken and conducted training sessions on deliverance in therapeutic practice at numerous churches and institutions across the country.



Editor **George Ohlschlager** (J.D., M.S.W., University of Iowa) is a psychotherapist, ethicist and writer. He is a certified Christian counselor with the International Board of Christian Counselors and a certified professional Christian counselor and Christian mediator with the American Association of Christian Counselors. Among Ohlschlager's many books and publications are *Caring for People God's Way* (coeditor with Timothy Clinton and Archibald D. Hart, 2009) and *Competent Christian Counseling, Volume One: Foundations and Practice of Compassionate Soul Care* (coauthor with Timothy Clinton, 2002).

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