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**The Use of Biblical Teachings on Grace in
Counseling Sexual Addiction**

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Introduction

The title of this article suggests that tension exists between acts of transgression, specifically as in the case of acts of sexual addiction, and grace articulated as receiving redemption in the absence of self-earned merits. The title also suggests that such tension can be resolved through the teaching and proper understanding of the Biblical concept of ‘grace’. In other words, if the acts accompanying sexual addictive behavior are perceived or experienced by the addicted to be morally so shameful that he¹ feels that such acts of transgression put him beyond the reach of God’s grace, then the teaching of the intrinsic essentials of grace could restore the counselee’s experience as he seeks to be freed from the addiction.

¹ Although I will use the ‘male gender’ in this article for the sake of making the writing easier, the female gender is assumed to be incorporated as well.

It is however important to be reminded of the context in which the title of this article is positioning the discussion. It is for instance not merely a theological debate at a theological conference with a focus on the Biblical teaching of grace per se. At such a conference you will find a scholar presenting a paper on the proper Biblical understanding of grace. One would focus on the elements of God's grace, such as: it is an unmerited gift, bestowed upon sinners, and no sin, not even sin caused by acts accompanying sexual addiction, can put a person out-with the reach of God's grace. However, the title of this article clearly includes the word 'counseling'. Therefore, for the sake of this article I will take the word 'counseling' rather seriously. My approach would be to position the discussion of Biblical teaching concerning grace in the context of a counseling session. In a counseling session the existential reality of the counselee, that is evident in subjective feelings and emotions, is vital. A person caught up in a soul-destroying spiral of sexual addictiveness will experience feelings of disgrace at a level that will make it extremely difficult for the counselee to actualize the theological truth of God's grace in his situation. In the counseling session, the counselee might even know objectively that as a sinner he is not beyond the reach of God's grace, but on an experiential level he might not feel (experientially know) that at all. It is this added reality that poses an important challenge when it comes to the teaching of all Biblical truths in any counseling setting. The existential nature of a counseling session asks for a complete new understanding of what 'teaching' is all about. Teaching in a counseling session cannot be restricted to a pure theoretical understanding of the truth. It should include an understanding of the specific methods of 'teaching' Biblical truths within the experiential context of the counselee, and therefore it should also take the context of the counselee seriously. In this article I will include these aspects in my discussion.

Counseling Sexual Addiction

In my experience as a counselor I know that counsees in a counseling session often experience intense emotions and feelings, and often fail to experience God's presence existentially. The question, however, is whether there is some scientific support to confirm that people entangled in the spiral of sexual addiction experience feelings of being out of the reach of God's grace and

forgiveness. Research shows that the answer must be in the affirmative. In an article by White and Kimball² with the research objective of identifying vulnerabilities of people addicted to pornography, as one form of sexual addiction, their study shows that the participants distinguish perceptively between sins that are acceptable and sins that are unacceptable. But it is clear that the participants are not making this distinction in a theoretical understanding of sin where all believers believe that there are not big or small sins; rather the distinction is being made on an existential level, on the level of how other believers respond to some sins. The participants knew that those in the church, who had confessed some type of “acceptable” addiction such as alcoholism, had received support and encouragement during the recovery process. The participants of the study seemed to frame their perception of sexual addiction as being morally different from other addictions, and because of the immoral nature of their specific addiction, they feared the unknown consequences due to the contrast that exists between a Christian ethos and acts of immorality. The addicted person on a personal level seems to have a perception that their transgression is an ‘unacceptable’ sin. On another existential level they are also afraid of the judgment that might come from other believers in the congregation. If the sexual addict gets a message from the rest of the congregation that he has committed an ‘unacceptable’ sin, it means that a proper Biblical understanding of grace is not held by some Christians in the congregation or that there exists a kind of dualism within the believe system of some Christians – a dualism in the sense that a Christian holds to a certain theological understanding of a Biblical truth in theory, but in practice does the opposite. In such cases the Biblical understanding of grace has not been fully integrated into the praxis of some Christians. If such a dualistic perception is operating within some Christians, it would seem feasible to accept that such Christians will not only judge the addicted harshly, but if caught up in the spiral of sexual addiction, he might suffer at the hand of his own dualistic perception. Experientially he will feel that he is beyond God’s grace due to the immoral acts if they are caught up in

² Mark A. White and Thomas G. Kimball. ‘Attributes of Christian Couples with a Sexual Addiction to Internet Pornography’. *Journal of Psychology & Christianity* 28, no. 4 (2009): 350-9 (page 356).

any kind of sexual addiction. Using Biblical teaching on grace when it concerns counseling the sexual addict should be done for the broader family of Christians as well. However, for the sake of this article the focus would be on the use of the Biblical teaching of grace in the counseling context of the sexual addict.

There is yet another aspect to be considered: is there a real need to address such as question? Is the sexual addiction phenomenon manifesting itself within the Christian community at all? Is sexual addiction to be understood as a kind of immoral misconduct not befitting a Christian community? Is this not an immoral pattern of behavior to be found only in communities outside of the church? Research, however, indicates that the use of compulsive internet pornography and sexual addiction are a growing problem among Christian couples and in today's culture.³ White and Thomas refer to a study done in one evangelical Christian denomination where it is clear from the results that among 1,023 male church members, 39 percent have accessed internet pornography more than 25 times. Among lower age group men, 19 to 22 and 23 to 29 year olds, the percentages were 60 percent and 59 percent respectively.⁴ If we take into account that Christians are living in this world and one takes a look at the pattern of sexual behavior within the larger context, the situation becomes even more somber. The statistics on pornography, as one form of sexual addiction, paints a dark picture: there are more than 46 million websites available to search and over 4 million of these websites are pornographic and contain 372 million pages of pornographic material. The internet-based advertising research company, Top-Ten Reviews, states that pornographic material searches are currently at 68 million daily. Forty million adults in the U.S. regularly visit pornographic websites with 20 percent of men and 13 percent of women accessing these while at work.⁵ Within such a broader context and in the light of research, it is clear that there have to be many Christians caught up in the web of sexual addiction and, therefore, in need of counseling.

³ White and Kimball, 350.

⁴ Ibid., 351.

⁵ Ibid., 351.

Having established the need for counseling people caught up in sexual addiction, we can get to the essence of the question of this article: how to use Biblical teaching of grace in the counseling of people that struggle with sexual addiction? As indicated previously, teaching in a counseling setting is not to be confused with the teaching in a traditional setting like in a class room setting. We mentioned that the method on how to teach Biblical truths in a counseling session is of vital importance. We need to remember the fact that the various counseling skills are as vital in counseling the sexual addict as in all other counseling sessions. Therefore, when one begins to look at the biblical teaching of God's grace in relation to counseling the sexual addicted one should begin by reflecting on the importance of applying the skill of listening. This skill must be applied in order to prevent the counselor from engaging with the counselee in a kind of teaching or preaching style similar to what one finds in a traditional class room or from a pulpit. Even though the (Christian) counselor knows cognitively that the deeds of sexual addiction do not exclude the believer from the grace of God when forgiveness is sought, and even if the counselee knows that on a cognitive level, and even if it might be with the best intentions that the counselor would want to teach the counselee that he cannot fall out of the gracious arms of God, it might be of no help, existentially speaking, if the counselee has not reached that point in the session where he is receptive to hear the proclamation. How and when does one tell or 'teach' the counselee about God's grace? I would propose that, initially, *God's grace should not be proclaimed by way of preaching or teaching, but rather by way of the embodiment of that truth in the counselor's being and actions.* What does this embodiment of God's grace in the counselor mean? If God's grace is to be understood as God's unrestricted willingness to forgive, as God's preparedness not to relate to the counselee in terms of what he deserves but in terms of His own unconditional love, then the counselor should first and foremost demonstrate that loving and gracious character of God in his dealings with the counselee. This embodiment or demonstration then should be detectable in the concrete behavior and attitude of the counselor. It should be the body-language of the counselor. It should include a non-judgmental approach towards the counselee, an authentic listening to the

counselee's experience as he articulates his feelings of worthlessness, of shame, of remorse, and narrating what has led to the situation of sexual addiction. To listen authentically, non-judgmentally and reflectively is an act through which the grace of God is being demonstrated. Such a listening implies that the counselee does not have to 'earn' anything in the eyes of the counselor. That might help the counselee to understand in the end that he does not have to earn anything before God. If a counselee feels a need to 'justify', 'soften' or plain 'explain why' he was caught up in this spiral of sexual addiction to the counselor it would be a confirmation to the fact that God's grace has not been embodied successfully by the counselor. The counselee will not experience anything of God's unconditional love, and it is indeed 'feelings' that are important at that point; when a person is caught up in any kind of addiction (and other counseling situation), even sound cognitive knowledge are easily overshadowed by existential feelings such as feelings of low self-worth, feelings of guilt, fear, etc.

Authentic listening in a counseling situation does not imply that the counselor has an empty slate (*tabula rasa*) onto which the counselee is writing his experience. No matter how ideal this notion might present itself to some counselors, especially those trained in person-centered counseling,⁶ the psychological reality is that a counselor needs a *frame of reference*⁷ consisting of some perceptions on reality that correspond with those within the frame of reference used by the counselee; such as sharing the same language, sharing a basic understanding of concepts such as guilt, addiction, shame, etc. Without that no communication can take place between a counselor and a counselee. Or to put it another way; with no basic *frame of reference* within himself, the counselor would not be able to make any sense of what the counselee is communicating. However, the

⁶ Carl R. Rogers, *Client Centred Therapy*. U.K.: Constable & Robinson Ltd, 1951; 2003.

⁷ I use 'frame of reference' as a concept to explain that all people develop, through a process of experience, through education (structured and unstructured learning), a frame of reference in terms of which they make sense of experiences or situations they are confronted with. This frame of reference contains more than just cognitive knowledge; it incorporates emotions, feelings, etc. Therefore, a specific experience makes sense at a deeper level than just a cognitive level. Therefore, although a person might cognitively know the load bang is not an explosion, yet if the frame of reference links the noise to emotions of fear embedded in the frame of reference due to previous war experiences, then the reaction of the individual to the load bang might not make sense to other people that also heard the load bang when the door was shut a bit too load.

counselor is trained not to let his personal preferences interfere with what the counselee is communicating, and yet the counselor is not receiving data coming from the counselee as if into a complete empty ‘cup’ or ‘head’ or *tabula rasa*. Counselors are listening against the background of the specific counseling approach of his own training which would be in according to a specific theory on counseling (person-centered, cognitive therapy, etc.).⁸

Any specific counseling approach is embedded in a theoretical view which held certain perceptions to be crucial to the counseling process in order to be successful. Most counseling theories for instance would comprise a specific anthropological view. But although there is such a specific anthropological perspective underpinning that specific approach to the counseling process, the counselor will not engage with that anthropological perception explicitly during the counseling process. In the Christian counseling context the same principle should be applied: the perception of God’s grace that underpins the counselor’s understanding of a Christian’s approach to counseling is similar to the anthropological element that underpins a specific counseling theory. Therefore, the Biblical perception of God’s grace should not be explicitly included in the counseling process, at least not at the start of the counseling process. During the initial phase of the counseling process, the counselee normally starts the process in which he reveals and narrates his addictive behavior and for the counselor to ‘teach’ at that stage should be detrimental to the counseling process. That the Biblical perception on God’s grace should be implicitly part and parcel of the frame of reference of the Christian counselor is apparent as it was explained earlier with reference to the counselor’s embodiment of the concept grace.

The true embodiment of the grace principle should not be restricted to the authentic listening effort of the counselor or a non-judgmental attitude towards the counselee, but should include sound knowledge about issues pertaining sexual addiction as such; this would include issues such as the aetiology of sexual addiction, its symptoms, and the ways of intervention and methods of treatment of

⁸ For an overview of counseling theories see Richard Nelson-Jones, *Theory and Practice of Counseling & Therapy* (London: Continuum, 2001).

sexual addiction disorders. God's grace towards us is grounded in His unconditional love for us, but also grounded in the fact that as our Creator He has a sound knowledge about us. It is exactly based on this comprehensive knowledge that He knows that His creatures are fallen human beings and therefore not able to renew or save themselves and that they are therefore in need of His grace. Therefore, a Christian counselor, in order to embody God's character in himself as a person, should have a sound understanding of the counselee and the aspects of sexual addiction such as the aetiological and diagnostic elements concerning sexual addiction.

What is sexual addiction and how is it diagnosed, explained and treated? The Marylebone Centre for Psychological Therapies specialising in helping men with addictive compulsive patterns of sexual behavior defines sexual addiction as having the following characteristics:⁹

- It becomes a preoccupation and is experienced out of control.
- Individuals find that they cannot stop the behavior or, more usually, they cannot consistently stay stopped.
- The behavior brings with it real or potential harmful consequences. These may include health risks, professional misconduct, impaired parenting, financial loss, damage to marriage and other primary relationships, and the neglect of important personal and vocational goals.
- It tends to be used, often unknowingly, to anaesthetise shame, low self worth, core loneliness, anger, stress and anxiety.

For these specialists it is not about any particular sexual behavior but rather about how the behavior functions and is subjectively experienced in the life of the individual.¹⁰

⁹ Marylebone Centre for Psychological Therapies (www.marylebonecentre.co.uk) 10/01/11; 15:05

¹⁰ It is interesting to note that the *DSM-IV* (the American's Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostics and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*) does not have a category for sexual addiction as a sexual disorder anymore. In his review of Goodman's book (*Sexual Addiction: An Integrated Approach*) Stein writes, 'In keeping with the sixties' focus on the celebration of sexuality, the emphasis is on problems of hyposexuality rather than on hypersexuality. But perhaps Freud, as in so many other instances, had at least part of the story right. Growing awareness of sexually transmitted disorders, not the least being AIDS, makes it easier to characterize unfettered sexual behavior as something that may meet the *DSM-IV* catch-all criterion of leading to "impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning." At the bottom line of clinical practice, we are not uncommonly confronted with patients whose chief symptom is an excessive reliance on masturbation, Internet pornography, or sex workers and [Footnote continued on next page ...]

It is clear from this description that sexual addictive behavior can manifest itself in various ways and in a variety of contexts and that individuals suffer harmful consequences because of this addiction. It is normally when these consequences become unbearable and when the suffering person can't escape the attention of significant people (family, colleagues) from whom he wants to hide his addiction (a person has been caught out by his wife/partner or the feelings of low self-worth becomes unbearable, etc) that the suffering person would begin to seek help in the form of counseling. Once the person has entered a counseling process, the initial stages can be very difficult. On an experiential level the emotions fluctuate during efforts to make sense amidst the confusion caused by this behavior, efforts to find any explanation where this addiction has come from, and a search for face-saving opportunities, etc.

It is important to know that sexual addictiveness is to be found amongst all walks of life and there are many different ways leading up to this pattern of behavioral. The Marylebone Centre gave five examples of sexual behavior illustrating the fact that the phenomenon is present in all spheres of society and inclusive of very ordinary people in contrast to the idea this is only for the perverts! It might be a middle-aged married man who has little control over his use of internet pornography. He would go online for half an hour and then compulsively stays much of the night online. It might be that he also uses prostitutes. He might be a Christian and his behavior will put him in conflict with his strongly held religious beliefs. The person could be a young heterosexual male with a female partner that has three children from that union. His addiction might involve exhibitionist behavior in showers and changing rooms and other public places. He might have been cautioned already by the police for exhibitionist behavior on public transport. Another example is of a self-employed man who spends four to five hours, four to five days a week, using the telephone and the internet in pursuit of semi-anonymous sexual encounters against a background of mounting debt and decreasing employment opportunity. Or there might be the young professional who uses telephone chat lines to have ritualized sex about once a

who describe such symptoms as having had dramatic negative impact on their lives.' Stein is arguing that the compilers of the *DSM* should reconsider re-introducing the category *sexual addiction* to the *DSM*.

week, while talking through a fantasy of innocence and seduction with an anonymous paid female operative. He might be unmarried and, while he desperately would want to have a girlfriend, he is incapable of sustaining an intimate or committed relationship. Another example might be a woman in her mid-fifties who lives alone. Her sexual patterns involve picking up men who are unknown to her in bars and yet she brings them back to her flat. She might be concerned about the compulsive nature of the behavior and the danger that this behavior creates, but in spite of the personal danger she persists in these patterns of behavior. Although one could say that these are examples that one surely hopes not to find amongst Christians, for a number of reasons we need to revisit such an assumption. First, as indicated earlier on in this article, research revealed that many Christians are caught up in the spiral of sexual addiction. Second, instruments of communication such as the internet and phones are available and easily accessible to most people, including Christians. Christians find themselves living in the same world as all other people and therefore are exposed to all these devices. It would therefore be naive to think that Christians are beyond the dangers that come with these very functional devices.

Looking at the explanations for sexual addictive behavior it becomes even clearer that Christians per definition are not excluded from the danger of getting caught up in sexual addiction. As the professionals at the Marylebone Centre explain, sexual addiction is a learning process that could start in childhood, in adolescence or even later. It is often a process in which people are learning to use sexual fantasy and behavior to manage the problems and troubles they might face in life. One could easily compare this to a person that uses alcohol to manage life. In the case of sexual addiction the person has learned to use sex like a drug.

In addition to the learning process, it should also be mentioned that the lack of sound education concerning healthy sexual relationships is playing a part in the development of sexual addiction. The Western world is bombarded by the propaganda of sexual behaviors functioning according to a complete different ethos compared to a Christian ethos concerning sexual behavior. The church needs to raise its level concerning the teaching of sound sexual behavior within the Christian ethos. It is not enough for the church to

strongly speak out against the world's ethos of sexual behavior while failing to inform Christians about what a proper Christian ethos of sexual behavior is all about. The Biblical teaching of God's grace with the accompanying of sound teaching on what a healthy Christian ethos of sexuality entails will be extremely significant in the process of helping people to be forewarned and enlightened about the dangers disguised in sexual behaviors. Research shows that in general the Church has been silent about sexuality and that most churches do not teach healthy sexuality.¹¹ Elsewhere White and Kimball refer to an inadequate relational sexuality development and say: "Anecdotal evidence, professional experience, and a lifetime of Christian education in the church, seem to indicate that Christian couples are relatively undereducated about healthy sexuality."¹²

Also, since it is not sufficient just to teach sound Biblical truths without the incorporation of teaching on healthy sexual behavior within the Christian ethos; it would also be completely insufficient if in the counseling process the related psychological, sociological and biological aspects that are integral to sexual behavior were not included in the counseling process. As indicated earlier sexual behavior is often used, knowingly or unknowingly to anaesthetize aspects like shame, low self-worth, core loneliness, anger, stress and anxiety. Therefore the treatment of sexual addictive behavior must incorporate the psychological and pharmacological treatment of comorbid disorders. Not only is it important for the counselor to understand physiological, sociological and biological aspects that go with sexual addiction¹³, research shows that psycho-education of the counselee is also important, as are the involvement of family members specially assisting in decisions of self-disclosure. Group therapy is helpful in dealing with feelings of shame with the group rendering support but also confrontation. Developmental psychology

¹¹ White and Kimball, 2009, 357.

¹² Ibid., 355

¹³ Collins, Gary R. *Christian Counseling: A Comprehensive Guide*. USA: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2007, 693.

that includes elements such as family dysfunction, traumatic experiences or neglect should be part of the counseling process.¹⁴

In the treatment of people struggling with sexual addiction, Goodman presents a psychotherapeutic stage model integrating pharmacotherapeutic, behavioral and psychodynamic approaches.¹⁵ During Stage I (initial behavior modulation) individuals who engage in addictive sexual behavior can begin to adjust this behavior by means of a combination of inner motivation, psychological support and affect-regulating medication (SSRIs, anti-androgens in severe cases). In Stage II (stabilization of behavior and affect) relapse prevention is addressed to distinguish between forms of sexual behavior that are high-risk and those that are low-risk, and to refrain from engaging in high-risk forms of sexual behavior. In addition, counselees learn to engage in sexual behavior in ways that are healthy rather than pathological. Stage III focuses on personality pathology mostly by a psychodynamic psychotherapeutic approach. Sometimes couple therapy seems to be useful, too.¹⁶

In the context of this article it is not feasible to give an in-depth exploration of the biological, psychological, and sociological dimensions within an integrative approach concerning the counseling of a person struggling with sexual addiction. But it is important to have mentioned these dimensions purely for the sake of reminding the counselor that even with the intention of using Biblical teaching on God's grace in the counseling of the sexual addict, the reality of the sexual addiction is extremely complex. Teaching the Biblical truth about God's grace to the sexual addict should be done in an integrated way.¹⁷

Once the process of healing has reached the stage (having dealt with the biological, psychological, sociological dimensions) where the counselee might begin to ask questions relating to possible

¹⁴ Briken, Peer, Niels Habermann, Wolfgang Berner, and Andreas Hill. "Diagnosis and Treatment of Sexual Addiction: A Survey among German Sex Therapists." *Sexual Addiction & Compulsivity* 14, no. 2 (04, 2007): 131-43. (Page 134).

¹⁵ Goodman, Aviel. *Sexual Addiction: An Integrated Approach*. Madison, Connecticut: International University Press, 1998 – for this section I will follow the summary given by White and Kimball.

¹⁶ Briken, et al. 2007, 134

¹⁷ For understanding the integrative approach of counseling within a Christian context, see, McMinn, Mark R. and Clark D. Campbell. *Integrative Psychotherapy: Towards and Comprehensive Christian Approach*. Illinois: IVP Academic, 2007.

consequences because of the deeds concerning sexual addictive transgression, for instance, relating to the counselee's relationship with God, it would then finally have reached the stage where it is the appropriate time to *explicitly* begin to share the Biblical truth on the grace of God. At this stage the fluctuation of emotions might have subsided somewhat and therefore the counselee would become more receptive to receiving objective truths on a cognitive level. Such information then might add to the healing process as it would steer the healing process further in the right direction. Nevertheless, even at this stage it is important to remember the context, i.e. that it is a counseling session not an academic endeavour as in traditional classroom setting. It cannot be preaching from 'above' as from a pulpit. The 'teaching' must still be in the context of the experiential reality of the counselee. The counselee should still be determining the initiating of the 'teaching' and the continuation of the teaching process, whether it is about God's grace or any other Biblical truth. The counselee should dictate the progressing of that teaching both in terms of content and tempo.

In the context of such an approach, examples of Biblical teaching could be the following. If the counselee might wonder whether the activities associated with an addiction to sex might have terminated his relationship with God, it is then the opportunity to share the true Biblical teaching and proclaim the truth about God's grace. The counselee, if a Christian might have drifted away from God and might, during the period of sexual addictiveness, felt that God's presence was completely absent, yet the counselor should emphasize that God is still his faithful Father through Christ the Savior. The status of his once regenerated new identity in Christ, as achieved by the saving blood of Jesus has not changed. This proclamation then should be supported by evidence from Scripture: e.g. John 10: 27-30:

My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one.¹⁸

Although the objective for using this text is to put the emphasis on 'no one can snatch them out of my hand', it might be that on an existential

¹⁸ NIV.

level, the counselee might feel so guilty and find himself in such a stage of personal doubt that he might fail to see the emphasis. He might only hear the part of the text that says ‘they follow me’. The counselee might then begin to ask; if he was one of the sheep why was he not listening to the voice of the Shepherd? Why did he not follow the Lord? This is a fine example for illustrating the powerful influence a counselee might experience on an existential level. In such situations it is again the counselor’s responsibility to keep to the tempo of the process as determine by the counselee.

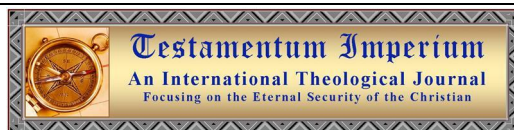
However, since the counselee at that point in the counseling process might be more receptive to objective truths, another text from Scripture could be used. Additional Scriptural evidence to support the theological truth that the counselee, as a Christian, has an unchanging position ‘in Christ’ is from the first chapter of Paul’s letter to the Ephesians. There one finds a doctrinal truth that might help the counselee to get out of his subjective state and existential reality to a more objective reality. In Ephesians the teaching is clear that Christians have a position or a status, with an objective basis, ‘in Christ’. This is contrary to the subjective experiences anchored in the deeds (bad or good) of the counselee. In chapter 1 Paul, as the author of the letter, clearly deals with the objective status of the believer by declaring that *in Christ* a believer is chosen (v4), predestined (v5), redeemed (v7), and has obtained an inheritance (v11), and all of this because we are ‘*in Christ*’ (‘in Him’, v4; ‘through Christ’, v5; ‘in the Beloved’, v6; ‘in Him’, v7; ‘in Christ’, v9; etc.)

Conclusion

Although in the end to hear the consoling truth that God’s grace, as is clearly taught in Scripture, is inclusive of the believer who struggled (or still is struggling) to be freed from the sexual addiction, it is of cardinal importance to know that such teachings, within the confines of a counseling situation, need first to be embodied and demonstrated by the counselor. This embodiment of God’s grace should be seen clearly in his attitude towards the counselee. This is against the background that the experiential reality of the counselee at times can be such a powerful reality that it might override any effort of explicit articulation of such objective Biblical truths until such a time that the counselee finally finds himself receptive to those truths.

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