

Living Scripture

October 26, 2018

by Rod Fillinger

This year a group of 15 from OBC attended the Christian Counseling & Educational Foundation (CCEF) 2018 National Conference in Virginia Beach, VA. The theme of the conference was "Living Scripture." David Powlison, Executive Director of CCEF, described the topic as one that is at the very center of why we exist and what we do. "Scripture is the living Word of the living God, and we believe he means his words to be lived out as his Spirit rewrites the script of our hearts." For three days the 15 attended 8 plenary and 4 breakout sessions that focused on living Scripture, applying it to ourselves as counselors, and how to improve in helping others apply it to their lives. Indeed, as Dr. Edward Welch reminded us in the first session, Scripture itself will motivate us to get into Scripture, and over our time together, we were encouraged from Scripture to look into how God speaks words to us to sustain us and give us life. I was greatly challenged in particular with the idea of bringing the Bible to my life through praying Scripture, meditating on Scripture and applying Scripture to reshape my thoughts, emotions, and actions. We should see our problems, and help others see their problems, in kingdom categories. For all of life's difficulties, the ultimate comfort is in being connected to Christ.

I was greatly blessed and encouraged to attend with 14 of my brothers and sisters in Christ. I was also encouraged by the 5 young adults who attended with us who were eager to hear, learn, shop in the bookstore, and eat! With their permission, I share some of their thoughts summarizing their 3 days:

My favorite breakout session was called. "Be Like Martha? Scripture's Invitation to the Overly Responsible." I liked how the speaker not only gave instructions for how to work through these things in a counseling setting, but also how I can apply them to my own life.

- Pudge Fillinger

It was such a great weekend both with the teachings and fellowship. One of many things that struck me was the teaching in one break out session entitled, "Counseling from the Margins." Alasdair Groves taught us about using lesser known passages for counseling - like Leviticus 1:1-9. He told us to look for the surprisingly good news about the good news. This really reframed looking at all of Scripture with a new set of eyes when counseling others. I'm so thankful for this weekend of living Scripture.

- Jean Conn

First, take time to slow down over a passage, meditate on it. Slow cooker vs hot skillet. Second, look for the surprisingly good news in a passage. You can use it in your counseling. Third, pray scripture.

- Ken Sullivan

One of my favorite things about the weekend were the providential encounters. I met a woman from Tennessee who noticed my Milligan College shirt and recommended a church for me to attend while I'm in school there. And one of the speakers was filling in for someone else. He was from a church in Chattanooga, TN and he works with the Seniors there. Ms. Lori has been looking for a solid church to recommend to her parents. Pastor Joe (Novenson) is going to reach out to them.

- *Reagan Fillinger*

CCEF 2018 was my favorite CCEF conference thus far because every talk and discussion was a reminder of the riches found in Scripture. I was reminded that every problem have is addressed in God's word to us. I was encouraged to dig into the depths of His word and be reminded that Scripture is living and active in every circumstance, relationship, and struggle that Christians face.

- *Lori Bridges*

Unfortunately, I cannot summarize the conference in a sentence or two. I could write a sentence or two about every session I was in. Not only was I personally encouraged, convicted and challenged by each speaker, but I received valuable insights from Scripture that I can apply to my relationships with others. One of the most practical sessions spoke of how to find common ground between Scripture and non-believers. As I interact with those who don't know Jesus, I want to speak the Good News in a way that sounds like good news to hurting people.

- *Cyndi Fillinger*

May we be people of the Word, but not be so foolish to think that its instructions and warnings apply only to others. As we study Scripture, may our focus be on our Lord Jesus Christ. It is possible to be students of the Word and miss Christ. "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life." (John 5:39-40) May God's Word to us, pointing to the Living Word, be used by his Spirit to transform our hearts and minds to be more like our Lord Jesus Christ.

For his glory and our joy,

Pastor Rod