



Focus on Workers of the Church

THE LUTHERAN
CHURCH Missouri Synod



Focus on the Workers of the Church

Encouragement for Busy Church Leaders

*"Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer."
Romans 12:12 (ESV)*

The Nature of Obsessions

Why write about obsessions here? When someone suffers from obsessions, it is not uncommon for the person to judge this to mean they are a terrible person and/or that they are sinning. Their shame frequently causes them to suffer in silence. Their relationship with their pastor can play a crucial role in their self-understanding and recovery. We now understand that Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder is a neurobiological disorder that affects 1 in every 40 people.

What is OCD? Obsessions are persistent impulses, ideas, images or thoughts that intrude into a person's thinking and cause excessive worry and anxiety. Compulsive behaviors are repetitive behaviors in response to obsessions that serve to relieve anxiety. They often have the intent of magically preventing some calamity such as death, illness, or misfortune. When some one has OCD, the obsessions and compulsions are time-consuming, distressing, and/or interfere with normal routines, relationships with others, or daily living. People with OCD live in a constant state of anxiety and dread which can feel unbearable. OCD can take many forms such as compulsive checking (that appliances are turned off, doors locked), ordering things, repeating certain behaviors or doing them in a ritualized way (such as getting dressed, tying shoes), washing and cleaning, hoarding, and scrupulosity (obsessions about religious or moral issues). Some people primarily have obsessions without compulsive behaviors.

It is the nature of obsessions that they tend to be the worst thing a person can think of. This is why it causes so much shame. People have obsessions about harming some one they love, or standing up in church and yelling obscenities or committing a violent or sexual act and then they over-interpret the meaning of this, thinking "If I have these horrible thoughts then I must be a horrible person." The truth is that people with OCD do not act on their obsessions. They are highly distressed by them, unlike a sociopath who would not feel distress or guilt. The fact that the obsessions intrude and cannot be controlled by will also make the person feel bad at the core. When the obsessions are of a religious nature, the person may

seek reassurances about their purity or perform prayers as compulsive rituals.

Because the nature of obsessions is that they are extreme, a person may approach you with vague talk about being bad or having bad thoughts. They may be too ashamed to tell you the specifics. We know that these obsessions are caused by a disturbance in the functioning of the brain. We now have treatment options that can greatly reduce these symptoms. Being alert to the nature of obsessions may help some one suffering from OCD who does not have enough information about the disorder to learn that, in fact, there is help available.

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Hopes and fears...

Hopes and fears...

we all have them

of all the years...

past, present and, no doubt, in our future

are met in Thee tonight.

In You, Lord, we find hope in the midst of our fears.

In You, Lord, hope wins over experiences-**always!**

Hopes... for ourselves, our families,

our friends, our Church,

our nation, our world.

Fears...

of the unknown,

of what tomorrow will bring.

Lord, we bring our hopes and our fears to You this day,

and everyday; **through faith in Your gift of the Christ-child.**

You have taken away the fear of dying.

You have taken away the **fear of living!**

Hopes and fears of all the years

are met in **Thee** tonight

and every tomorrow!

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Resources for Improving Financial Literacy

The Good \$ense Budgeting pilot program is live! <http://elearning.lcms.org>. In a grace-filled manner, this resource deeply integrates biblical principles with day-to-day financial management. Those who take the course leave with a Personal Spending Plan in their hand, the knowledge in their head to implement it and the motivation in their heart to follow through.

Have you ever wondered, "How much debt is too much?"

The level of debt one can reasonably manage is related to the level of income. Obviously, the higher your income the more debt you might reasonably expect to manage.

The Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support (CMGS) has recently added a [Debt-to-income Analysis Calculator](#) to their web site. To get a rough idea of your own level of financial balance, click on the link, insert your financial information in the boxes and click on "calculate" to receive information about your own "financial balance."

Check out the [Consumer Purchase Payment Calculator](#). Click on the link, put in the information requested, then calculate to get an idea of the monthly payments for a larger purchase. Also, find out what the total cost of the item will be when including the interest charged for the loan.

Visit the CMGS Website (<http://cmgs.lcms.org/>) for more information about healthy living!

These brief words of encouragement are offered to the professional church workers of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod with the prayer that God would renew and strengthen us all in the various dynamics of healthy relationships. In truth, all of the skills and all of the knowledge of human relationships are meaningless unless applied in the realities of day-to-day interaction.



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