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Can Christianity Cure Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder?: A Psychiatrist Explores the Role of Faith in Treatment

By Ian Osborn



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Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) is a relentless condition, the primary symptom being the occurrence of terrifying ideas, images, and urges that jump into a person's mind and return again and again, despite the individual's attempt to remove them.

Christians who suffer from OCD may grapple with additional guilt, as the undesired thoughts are frequently of a spiritual nature. Yet people may be surprised to learn that some of the greatest leaders in Christian history also struggled with this malady. What did they experience? How did they cope? Were they able to overcome these tormenting, often violent, obsessions? Where did God fit into the picture?

Ian Osborn shares the personal accounts of Martin Luther, John Bunyan, and Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, as well as his own story, in exploring how faith and science work together to address this complex issue.



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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

"This extremely lucid and well-written book provides clear and profoundly useful evidence for the role of faith, hope, and love in the effective treatment of a major neuropsychiatric affliction, obsessive-compulsive disorder. With extraordinary skill, Ian Osborn teaches us how God's grace, Christ's sacrifice, and the work of Holy Spirit hold the key to overcoming this serious but potentially uplifting medical condition."--**Jeffrey M. Schwartz, MD**, research psychiatrist, UCLA, and author of *Brain Lock: Free Yourself from Obsessive-Compulsive Behavior*

"This important new book by OCD expert Dr. Ian Osborn provides much-needed information, historical perspective, and hope for Christians suffering the terrible burden of blasphemous obsessions or religious scrupulosity, as well as for the mental health professionals who treat them."--**Lee Baer, PhD**, clinical professor of psychology, Harvard Medical School

"Cognitive-behavioral therapy and medication helped in my struggle against OCD, but as I look back I can see that releasing the OCD part of my life to God is what has given me the most relief. Luther, Bunyan, and Thérèse discovered this centuries ago, and Dr. Osborn has very clearly put into words their spiritual solutions. When I'm tempted to wrest control of OCD away from God, I will turn again and again to Dr. Osborn's book and the examples of these Christian heroes."--**Cherry Pedrick, RN**, coauthor of *The OCD Workbook* and *Loving Someone with OCD*

"It is a rare pleasure to read a book by a Christian psychiatrist that not only reveals an in-depth understanding of both the pharmacology and psychology of a mental disorder, but also describes how a sufferer's Christian faith may be enlisted as an ally in the course of treatment. Dr. Osborn's book does all that--and more. If you're like me, reading these stories, and the stories of Dr. Osborn and his patients, will stimulate not only new ideas about treating OCD but also a search for a simpler, deeper faith."--**Michael R. Lowry, MD**, clinical associate professor and associate chair, department of psychiatry medical director, University Neuropsychiatric Institute

About the Author

Ian Osborn, MD, is a psychiatrist practicing at the New Mexico Behavioral Health Institute and has taught psychiatry at Penn State University and the University of New Mexico. He struggled with and overcame OCD in his own life and now lectures on the disorder and is recognized as a leading expert. He is also the author of *Tormenting Thoughts and Secret Rituals: The Hidden Epidemic of Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder*.

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