

About Theophostic Prayer:

John Regier's comments:

Theophostic Prayer was developed by Ed Smith. Although it is not called 'counseling' by Ed Smith, it is. His technique is to identify the lies one believes due to their emotional pain and then to reveal 'truth' about that lie. Ed Smith is an intellectual and relates intellectually.

This method only focuses on individual issues – it doesn't deal with relationships with others in our lives. Their 'counselors' ask what the pain is, what was the first instance of this pain, what is the lie you believed? They only talk and do not resolve the root issue that caused the pain.

There is a partial similarity to CFTH in that we ask Jesus about the damage and ask if we believed a lie because of the damage. After that CFTH is different because we ask Jesus to reveal the lie and then to heal the emotional damage caused by the act against us. We believe the act of emotional damage is what causes the pain, not just the memory of the damage.

You can read a little from each side of this issue below. The websites where the information was taken are listed if you want to do further research.

The following excerpt came from the Ed Smith's website: <http://theophostic.com>:

"Theo (God) Phostic (light) is a ministry of prayer that is Christ centered and God reliant for its direction and outcome. Simply stated, it is encouraging a person to discover and expose what he believes that is a falsehood; and then encouraging him to have an encounter with Jesus Christ through prayer, thus allowing the Lord to reveal His truth to the wounded person's heart and mind. It is not about advice giving, diagnosing problems, or sharing opinions or insight.

Theophostic Prayer Ministry believes a person's present emotional pain is often rooted in misinterpretations (lies) embraced during life experiences. This is not to say that some emotional pain is due to what is happening in the present, but there are often historical roots as well. Our emotions tend to match what we believe. If I am feeling something then I probably believe something. For example, if I believe that a robber is in my house I will probably feel some measure of fear. If I discover what I thought was a robber was only my cat making a fuss, then my fear changes to relief because my belief changed. If an adult feels shame when he thinks about a sexual abuse memory, the shame is not because he was abused, but because of what he believes about the abuse. For example, he may believe the abuse made him dirty or was his fault (lies). He uses a technique to identify the lies one believed due to their pain. It is a better approach than most counseling techniques.

Theophostic Prayer Ministry recognizes that the emotional pain one experiences in the present is often coming from a lie contained in an earlier experiential source. If the

emotional pain is being generated by a lie rooted in earlier faulty thinking, true release of the emotional pain in the present will not likely occur unless the person is able to identify this falsehood and receive God's perspective..."

The following is part of a rebuttal from Critical Issues Commentary, website: <http://cicministry.org>:

“Theophostics: Unbiblical Teaching Wedded to Mystical Experience (Theophostic Ministry)

A Warning against the Unbiblical Teachings of Ed Smith

by Bob DeWaay

“Seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.” (2Peter 1:3)

A few weeks ago my wife and I were driving to the house of some close friends, listening to a tape of Dr. Ed Smith, the founder of Theophostic counseling, who was preaching at a large evangelical church in our city.¹ As we listened, my wife asked, “what kind of sermon is this?” The sermon was filled with psychological terminology, a sprinkling of Scripture giving 21st century psychological meanings to 1st century concepts, and many anecdotes to convince the listeners that every one of them needed “Theophostic” ministry. After some time my wife looked at me and said, “Why are these people listening to this? We heard this 25 years ago.”

As we continued to listen we heard about “performance based spirituality,” “lie-based pain,” “first memory interpretation,” and other concepts that have nothing to do with anything Christ or the Apostles teach in scriptures. Smith claims that our negative emotional responses are caused by memories of the first time something similar happened earlier in life. As I listened I had a very negative response, so maybe Smith was onto something. I felt angered that heresy dressed as therapy was being pushed on well meaning Christians under the guise of God’s word in a “sermon.” I was distressed that people were being put under bondage by his suggesting that if they feel upset about losing their job then they have no genuine faith that “God will supply” all their needs. I was dismayed at his claim that if they behave more cheerfully in church than they do in their car on the way there, then they are guilty of practicing “performance based spirituality.” I was outraged at the suggestion that every negative emotion is proof that we need counseling and that if we say we do not need the counseling we are just “putting on a performance” and are like Martha and not Mary. Sure enough I was experiencing the same emotions now as I did 25 years ago listening to similar false teaching.

THEOPHOSTICS AND ITS KEY PREMISE

Theophostics is false teaching dressed in psychological garb: that is the point of this article and the premise I will defend for the rest of this paper.

Dr. Edward M. Smith, the inventor/founder of Theophostics Ministry (formerly TheoPhostics Counseling) claims that through Theophostics, people are delivered from emotional pain, totally and permanently.² Once free from emotional pain, these individuals can break free from sin habits supposedly caused by their “lie-based thinking,” and live free from emotional pain without effort of maintenance.

These results cannot be obtained through what Smith calls “cognitive truth” (understood by the mind), but can be obtained through “experiential truth” (found in subjective experience) in which a person is brought back to the first memory of a similar emotionally painful experience and receives personal revelation from the Spirit of Christ about that experience.

According to Smith, people who repent and obey God without having this experience are guilty of “performance based spirituality,” and are merely masking their “lie-based pain.” So the former alcoholic who quits drinking, but who still has temptations to drink, is merely “performing” and is guilty of “works salvation” unless he has a mystical experience that heals the true cause of why he or she started drinking (a childhood memory and a lie based on it) and thus never has a desire to drink again, without maintenance. Then the person is truly free. Here is how Smith describes it:

Often victory is falsely equated with the cessation of a particular behavior and its replacement with a more acceptable one. For example, we may stop compulsive eating or not eating by replacing it with daily jogging . . . We might quit drinking and overcompensate with religious behavior. Any attempt to overcome our lie-based pain by adjusting our behavior is works salvation (Smith: 164).

By Smith’s definition, what used to be called “repentance” or “faithful obedience” is now “works salvation.”

A key category in Theophostics is “lie-based thinking.” Smith defines lie-based thinking as thinking based on how one interpreted his or her first memory of an event that caused pain. For example, if a woman was sexually abused in childhood and then began to believe, “I am a shameful person and this is my fault,” that is “lie-based thinking.” Smith supplies dozens of examples like this. The point of Theophostic ministry is to have the Holy Spirit cause the memory to come back in a vivid, emotional way, and then subjectively reveal to the person what the truth is. For, example, the person might hear in his or her mind (not from the counselor), “it was not your fault, you are not shameful.” That revelation cures the person of lie-based thinking and the negative emotions go away instantly and permanently. Though this is supposedly a work of the Holy Spirit, it is evidently dangerous because Smith warns his readers that they need his training before they can be involved with it (Smith: 20)...