

PODCAST TRANSCRIPT
CPP Ep. 25 Boldly Rooted: Marketing Your Christian Counseling Practice with Integrity

Camille McDaniel (00:04.526)

Welcome back, welcome back to another episode of Christ in Private Practice podcast. If you happen to be new here, then welcome, it's great to have you. And if you have been here, then as always, I am glad that you decided to come back. We're going to look at a topic today that I think pretty much everyone who is an entrepreneur probably thinks about, and that happens to be marketing.

Now, if you happen to be a Christian counselor, then you are possibly have also thought about at some point in time or are currently thinking about how do I market my private practice as a Christian in ways that are going to not go against my faith and belief in Christ, but also allow me to serve people. I don't want to turn people away, but I also don't want to cross my faith and

the guidelines of my my belief system and I don't want to cross my ethics what To do what to do, right? So in this episode I'm going to take some time to answer a few questions that do tend to pop up for individuals who happen to be thinking about marketing a practice that is Offering Christian counseling services. Okay so let's dive into

the first question that sometimes comes up. And that is, how can I advertise my Christ-centered counseling practice without excluding those clients or potential clients who are not Christians? This is a good one, right? Because the one thing that we want to understand is that our gift to even counsel, our ability to have a business where we are providing that service,

This is all a gift. The Lord has gifted us with these particular talents to be used in the world. And we want to make sure that we first and foremost see this as our mission field. It's not by happenstance. This is not a coincidence that you happen to be gifted in this particular area. You have been divinely selected to use these gifts.

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in order to help heal. And you as a follower of Christ are to use these gifts to help heal and also to be able to add some revelation to people's lives. Prayerfully in some cases you are even helping people mend a relationship with Christ or be introduced to Christ on a level that they may not have been introduced before.

This is your mission at the end of the day. This is about saving souls. So there may be people who come to you and maybe in your office, they do not share your same belief, but you still have the opportunity to petition the heavens on their behalf through prayer. You still have the opportunity through your behavior, through the providing of services. You have the ability to shine the light of Christ in that room. You never know.

how you will impact the people that have been assigned to come to you at this particular time in their lives and in yours. So with that in mind, and I should have said that even before sharing the number one question, but with that in mind, I answer these following questions. So now

how do we go about advertising and marketing our Christ-centered practice without excluding those

who are actually not of our same belief system. Well, you want to make it clear, really, that as in clear on your website, clear on any directories that you belong to. You want to really be clear about the fact that the foundation upon which you practice and what guides your worldview is built on biblical principles. And you want to be able to present that in a way that just really expresses that

Your practice is a safe place, is a place of healing, is a welcoming place for all people. I know on our website, under the frequently asked questions, we actually have a question that says, can I come and get counseling if I don't believe or if I'm not a Christian? And the answer is absolutely. We serve all walks of life.

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as in we serve people of all beliefs. We serve people coming from many different experiences in this world and all are welcome to receive counseling, but we would not be providing an ethical explanation of what to expect when you come to our counseling practice if we did not make you aware at the onset that our worldview and our foundation

is rooted in biblical truth and in the following of Christ. And that's kind of pretty much how I worded. I don't have my website up in front of me, so I can't tell you exactly word for word, but that's pretty much how we worded. you can feel free to go to our website at Healing Psychotherapy Practices of Georgia so that you can kind of get an idea of how do we present.

this idea of Christian counseling as we are advertising and marketing through our website and then the same thing goes for the directory that I may be on or more multiple directories that I may be on so you want to make sure that you are first able to have your marketing be one that actually shows that healing and safety and all are welcome however it also is very

informative and truthful in letting people know about your your excitement and your desire to be able to offer these services that are rooted in a foundation of biblical truth and principles as you are following Christ and his calling on your life in order to heal his children in this world. Yeah, hopefully that that makes sense. So you are offering hope you are welcoming all

but you are providing them, you are allowing them to be fully informed so that they can make a fully informed decision and don't feel kind of tricked, know, or duped once they get into your counseling practice and then find out that you have your practice rooted in biblical truth and that your offerings also fall align with that. I know to that,

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There are some who will feel as though, but this is going to turn people away. If my website or my advertising is just too much rooted in my faith, it's talking a little too much about Christ. It's going to turn people away. And I've kind of you know, cautioned against it. Or, you know, some of you may have been told by someone who reviewed your website or reviewed your directory listings that you probably need to

Tone that part down a little bit so that you don't turn people away. Let me tell you something. Let me just go ahead and let's all like, you know, take a collective deep breath while I tell you this truth. You are going to turn people away for many reasons. You will not be the gender that they are looking for. You will not have the cultural background that they are looking for.

You won't be the race that they are looking for. You won't be the faith that they are looking for. You won't have the specialty that they are looking for. So don't let the enemy tell you that by

showing that your foundation and worldview is rooted in Christ and in biblical truth, that your whole practice is going to suffer and you will not be able to stay afloat.

because of that one particular aspect amongst many other aspects that will cause people to say, you know what, really nice website. yeah, really nice description, but I'm kind of looking for something else. Okay. So we don't want that trap to take root in our mind at all. If you want to show the light of Christ and practice in a way that aligns

with biblical truth while healing those who are assigned to you at this particular time in their lives and yours. Move forward, being strong and courageous because no worries, the Lord has plenty of people to send your way and by showcasing your faith in Christ, you are not going to have a practice that just essentially does not allow you to sustain yourself.

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If you're not sustaining yourself in private practice, that is possibly something else that we need to look at as far as advertising and marketing and your message that you've crafted and how you're getting your message out there. But definitely if you showcase that you happen to have a faith in Christ and that your services are rooted in that, that's not going to make it so that you cannot help anyone.

Now, I don't want to use myself and say that I can then just generalize this to every single person who is listening, but I will say that we've been in, my private practice has been in practice for 15 years now. And I have been licensed since 2005 and our practice has been running for 15 years. And I have individuals who come to me who have no faith in Christ, who are

not at all, we're not similar in a lot of different aspects of our life, but people are coming because they feel they can be helped or the warmth within the description of what we offer or the phone call where they spoke to me and got a good feeling. And then some people have come because they are of the same faith. They want their faith integrated into their counseling experience. But I don't want that to be.

your faith in Christ should not be a turnoff to you. Your faith in Christ should be something that energizes you, that wakes you up with renewed energy for helping his children, for going out in the world courageously, boldly, knowing that you have been gifted for this particular time to heal broken lives, broken spirits. Number two. All right. How do I balance my Christian values?

without coming off as judgmental or imposing my beliefs on others. This is really an important one, I believe, because I think that is where we want to be super clear on the fact that being an individual, a mental health professional who offers Christian counseling services does not mean that you are going to be offering a sermon to everybody who comes in.

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All right, so you are actually going to be welcoming people into your practice and you are not going to be judging them. So this is not about telling people, hey, you need to change up this as far as the way that you believe. Or, you know, if you only believed a different way, then maybe these things wouldn't be happening to you. Well, no, obviously that would be unethical, right?

So that would just go against our ethics because we're not supposed to be pushing our belief onto other people as enforcing it as in almost essentially requiring them to believe what we believe in order for us to be able to help them. Well, that'd be unethical. So in that way, I think we're talking about kind of two different things when we're talking about not coming off as judgmental.

versus imposing our beliefs on somebody. So imposing our beliefs on somebody is just that as they are sharing their life stories and their challenges and they're seeking clarification and guidance and tools as they can move forward. We're not going to say, well, if you just read the scripture, if they have explicitly told us that that does not align with how they are walking this world right now. And you would know that because your intake

your initial evaluation should be asking them about their supports. And that should be family supports and different things that they enjoy doing like hobbies. And you should ask about friend supports and you should ask about faith supports. So that faith supports question should definitely let you know where their beliefs are if they have any particular beliefs at all. All right.

So we are gonna be very careful in that way not to then tell people that if they just believe this certain way, then their challenges would be fixed and we would have no problem helping them. So them believing like us is not a condition that has to be met in order for them to receive services. Now, that is gonna be a bit different than just showing up

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building genuine relationship with people, them having already known because you've honestly advertised that your worldview is Christian and this is the foundation upon which your practice is built. And it also helps to guide the way that you integrate therapeutic techniques. And in that way, as you build rapport and as you build genuine relationship,

You may notice that very organically while you are in a session, you have opportunities to say, well, from my belief, this, or let me start it and say it this way. From what I'm hearing, this sounds like it could be more spiritual in nature. What are your thoughts on it? Because my belief system would say X, Y, and Z.

and what is it that you notice at this time? Notice I am appropriately sharing my value system as it relates to the challenge I believe is popping up in the counseling session and giving the client an opportunity to share their view so that we can find a way for the client to get resolution.

Now let's say it's something else that we notice is happening. Maybe a particular behavior that we notice might be detrimental to them according to how our worldview is influenced by our belief in Christ, but maybe the client doesn't see it that way at all. In that case, you really want the Holy Spirit to be able to provide you wisdom, which is why it's so important.

for us as clinicians to stay in our words, stay in relationship with Christ and continue to build that up. For example, I can remember that there was a client that had a certain behavior that they were engaging in that it seemed as though was causing them some real big challenges was at the root of their issue. However, this actually did not seem like a challenge

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for them. So this is where my belief system and what truth tells me, biblical truth tells me, would be an issue was not one that they picked up on because we were not of the same belief system. And so in that case, one of the things that I was able to do is obviously not say, well, the Bible says this and...

And so that's probably why you're experiencing this problem. And even though you don't believe that way, you know, the Bible has a lot of truth and then start going in a direction of explaining and all. No, that's where it would be imposing beliefs and could cause the client to feel like they're being judged. Instead, one of the things that I asked them was I said,

I know that you don't necessarily believe that this particular thing is challenging, but let me ask you something. And then I ask them questions to get them to just consider, again, what I was seeing in the counseling session. And in this particular case, it was something that was diminishing their self-esteem because of some of the things that were going on.

And I noticed it was diminishing their self-esteem because I noticed certain changes in the way that they were describing themselves and talking about themselves. But again, that was something that they weren't necessarily picking up on. And just asking for clarification caused them to start to slow down and just evaluate within themselves. Now, they did actually have to think about it a little. And then we moved on as we were progressing in our counseling together.

And they came back a session to say, you actually had a point. I didn't want to really see it that way. And so that's why I didn't say much more about it. And I was thankful for their honesty. really, in my experience, I rarely have gotten that level of honesty. But they then shared that. But when thinking about it bit more, I realized that that is what was going on and I didn't really want to see it.

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again, genuine connection helps you to be able to showcase your Christian values without imposing them on anybody, but allowing you to not also compromise those values because you've been very honest with the client upfront in your marketing, in your advertising. And then when they meet with you, you are able to stay genuine. They are able to then receive help.

and everyone understands where everyone is coming from. And that's really important. And that's how you can mitigate those instances of coming across as judgmental or like you are pushing your beliefs on somebody else. The next question, should I avoid advertising certain aspects of my faith just to ensure that I appeal to a broader audience?

And again, this is gonna go back to what I had talked about a little bit earlier. We don't necessarily want that one concern to take over and make us think that our faith in Christ and our following of Christ and our delivering services that align with biblical truth is going to be a turnoff. It might be, right, for some people. Now here's where you're going to have to really dive deep for yourself into your belief system, right?

because then this is gonna kind of go along the lines of your faith in Christ's ability to actually allow you to flourish with the gifts and talents that he put into you. Do you believe that he is powerful enough to not only give you these gifts and give you these talents, but is he powerful enough to also send referrals your way now?

Again, we're not just going to sit on our bottoms and do nothing. Obviously, we have to work. We have to put forth action, right? Faith without work is dead. We definitely want to make sure that we are putting forth the behavior. But then as we put forth the behavior to make connections, to make sure that we know how we're explaining our services,

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in order to make sure that we have a proper website and we're doing all of the things to just be known, to show ourselves, do we really believe that the Lord has the ability to sustain us and to fill our business and to meet our needs and to meet the needs of those he sends our way? That honestly, when I hear that question of like, basically, essentially saying, should I kind of like mute?

my faith a little bit. Like, you know, because this is counseling, this is a professional setting. Maybe I need to kind of tone it down a little bit. I think that's where you have to ask yourself, what exactly did the Lord give you these gifts and talents for? Matter of fact, you know, in the scriptures in the book of Matthew, it talks about we are to be a light on a hill, right? And who having a light in their hand or a candle in their hand puts a basket over it.

Are we supposed to cover up that light? Now, that's gonna be where you talk to the Lord in your prayer time and you actually kind of get really real with Him because maybe in that question, what's coming up are just a little bit of fear that condemnation will come your way from other people, that hate will come your way from other people if you're a little too out with your faith, if you're a little too honest and a little too genuine, you know, that...

it'll turn people away. And I honestly believe that that goes into another topic of just being bold in Christ and what happens when you actually want to live your faith and take it with you wherever you go. So it's not that you just put your faith on a shelf and you put Christ in a bottle and put them on a shelf or you put them in a closet and close the door before you walk into this particular room, because this particular room may not necessarily want you to show up.

as believer in Christ, but this particular room is okay. And so then you can take them off the shelf and you can, you know, allow them out the closet for this particular room and group of people. I think that's honestly going to be something that you have to in your prayer time, talk to the father about, talk to the Lord about, get real honest with the Lord about your fears, maybe stepping into your faith so boldly. But.

Camille McDaniel (23:32.778)

Again, know, just to that, like I said, I feel like that kind of takes us into a different direction. And my simple answer to should I avoid advertising certain aspects of my faith to ensure that I appeal to a broader audience, I would say not to appeal to the world at the expense of your faith in Christ. Now, if you happen to be saying, you know, something different, like, well, I also

Am like a deliverance minister and should I actually put that on my website? Well in that case I would probably say you're going to need to be careful if that's what you're gonna offer because if you happen to be Licensed you need to make sure that you have proper insurance and if you are being called to offer like deliverance within your practice then you just want to make sure that if you're going to be offering that that you have

all awareness of any liability that might ensue. So you make sure that all of your paperwork is very clear on how that integrates into the mental health services that you provide. So obviously there is going to be a significant aspect as it relates to the spirit realm in your services. And you want to be able to just explain exactly how everything is going to look when people come to you.

for counseling services. And then, like I said, I would run that by just to make sure an attorney kind of looks over that to make sure that you are doing things right and in order so that no harm is done and everybody is well informed prior to how this is going to go and what services or I guess I should say what support systems are available afterwards to care for people.

and what procedures are in place should things happen to, should people happen to feel like, know, feel some after effects of any kind of deliverance, you know. So people would just need to be well informed. That's the first thing that popped up in my mind, because I know that there are some individuals who do deliverance and then they are also licensed mental health professional or licensed mental health professionals, but you would have to be really careful.

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about how you are going to explain it so that you are thorough, don't leave anything out, and just the same way as we have like emergency policies, you would want to do that because that is a deeper level of the spirit realm. Not necessarily something that I'm saying you have to like be, you know, be shy of or, you know, not at all delve into, but you definitely have to be clear and open and honest about your procedures and what people can expect ahead of time.

And so I think that as long as you are able to do that and able to inform people of whether or not that's something that you do with all clients or if that's something you do only with specific clients and the process that you would take for the two of you, you and the client to determine that that is needed is explained. Okay. So then the next question.

How can I keep my practice open to individuals from all walks of life while staying true to my Christian convictions? Okay. And again, this one I think kind of folds into some of what we've already talked about because we definitely wanna be able to be truthful, be open, be honest in what it is that we are offering. You the Bible encourages.

Encourages us. I believe in the book of Ephesians to speak the truth and speak it in love Right for for the lifting up of the kingdom for the you know strengthening of the body of Christ Speak the truth and speak it in love. And so you want to be able to explain exactly how you go forward in providing your services and your care to whatever populations you provide services and care to and you want to do that in a way that is

that is loving, that is gentle, that shows respect for everybody, no matter what their belief systems happen to be. And so this is how your faith can kind of guide your principles as you move forward. And so we wanna be able to just offer that and people are attracted to that kindness. There are some people that will even, to that love, to that kindness, to that patient, to that message.

Camille McDaniel (28:17.196)

Right. And so there are some people who will see that you are Christian and they will, they will see the message and how you constructed on your websites and on your, you know, on any other marketing tools that you have, pamphlets, directories, and they will be attracted to that. They may not believe what you believe, but what they will believe is that they will not receive judgment. So that's another way of thinking. I've actually had people

who have said, you I know that we don't believe the same way, like, or I know that you're a Christian, but you know, it just, it just seems so warm here. It's so comforting here. You know, you're so kind or something along that lines. I've even had clients who in reflecting about their own life, kind of maybe toy with the idea that maybe if they had a belief system and you know, maybe things would feel a little bit lighter for them or, know, in question or ask a few questions of me sometimes that were,

that were pretty appropriate, like, you know, because you're a Christian, right? You know, things like that. And it's like, yes, I am. am a believer in Christ, a follower of Christ. they're, okay, yeah, yeah. And then it kind of, you know, trails off a little bit. Sometimes people might circle back around and sometimes they won't. Yeah. Now there are some times where, you know, you may have somebody that you have in your practice and they are coming from all walks of life.

But they determined that maybe for them, they thought that it was going to be a good experience going to a Christian counselor, even though they were not Christians. But they found that maybe they were looking for someone to maybe validate certain things that did not align with Christian, the Christian belief system and would cause the counselor to maybe come in conflict with their own belief. And so in that case,

they may kind of taper off. So nothing that you've done, but maybe even them just recognizing that, this feels like a conflict even within their own spirit. Yeah. And I remember actually having somebody that had kind of expressed that there was maybe like a conflict even when they saw images of a cross, that they felt a big conflict within themselves and they just kind of felt irritation.

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And that allowed us to open the door to just talk a little bit about how it is very possible that they did feel that because what was within them was in opposition to what the cross stood for. And they could feel that, you know, cause the spirit realm is very real. And I know that a lot of people don't mind talking about, let me just say, I know I'm going off on a different direction for a minute. I'm very aware, but.

Just stick with me, I'll come back around to the next question. You know, we talk a lot about the spirit realm. People seem to be very comfortable talking about spirituality, but not necessarily talking about Christ. So, you know, we talk about spirituality and we talk about spirits or spirit gods or different, whatever it may be. And people can have those conversations easily, right? But when we start talking actually about like Christ and the kingdom of God,

then you notice that that like can cause people to feel a little tight. But with that understanding, this client knew that the spirit realm was real and that it's possible that because of some of the beliefs that they held and some of the practices that they held and did, that it was indirect opposition to the cross and what the cross represented and so that they could feel that war.

within them. And so, you know, they processed that with me and then it just gave them something additional to move forward and think about and some clarity, excuse me, and some clarity on their challenge.

Let's see.

Camille McDaniel (32:35.618)

Okay, the next question.

let's see.

Camille McDaniel (32:46.904)

Can advertising my Christian approach make potential clients feel like they are not welcome if they don't share my faith?

Camille McDaniel (33:07.95)

Okay. So, you know, one of the things that...

Camille McDaniel (33:19.384)

So what I would say after looking at these questions is I would really, again, with much prayer and making sure that you just get peace within yourself after talking to the Lord, I would move forward and start looking at how I could implement my marketing techniques in a way that's a lot more honest about

your beliefs and how you'd like to deliver your counseling and how you can help those who are experiencing certain challenges in their life. One other question that has popped up is, what if I have a clinician within my practice who is a believer but not very well versed in the Bible and doesn't really offer Christian counseling services?

But I would like for my practice to start offering that with more of the clinicians in the practice. And that's where I believe that this is where training comes up. So if they happen to be followers of Christ, but they really don't know how to provide Christian counseling, and you want your practice to go in a direction of offering that, you wanna make sure that you are able to

either provide training for those clinicians or secure some type of resources where they could start taking some courses, they can start taking some trainings so that they would be able to actually provide that service as you are moving your counseling practice in a direction that better aligns more and more all of the individuals within your practice to those who are too.

being able to provide counseling to those who are seeking it, aligning with biblical truth. Now, if you happen to have somebody in your practice where you actually have not made that known to them, that, we want to go in this direction, or maybe you have someone in your practice who's providing services.

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and they are not operating from a Christian perspective, but you would like to take your practice in that direction, then that's where I actually would have you seek counsel from legal, so legal counsel, just to make sure, you know, the obvious, that you're not crossing anybody's, I guess, legal boundaries, if you will, for lack of better term.

But just making sure that you are following labor laws, especially if you have a W-2 employee. If you happen to have a 1099 contractor, that is possibly going to be a bit more room that you have to make changes within your practice as there are different laws regulating W-2 employees versus 1099 contractors.

But ultimately, I would say if you happen to have individuals who are already Christians who are in your practice, they just are not able to provide counseling, then that's gonna be training. If you happen to have individuals in your practice that are not Christ-centered, not believers in Christ, but you would like to take your practice in that direction, or you are feeling the Lord speaking to you more and more,

about being in that lane and in that direction in all that you do. That's where you want to be able to just honor your commitment to your employees by seeking legal counsel so that you will know the proper steps to take as you want to move your business in that direction. All right. I hope this gives you something to think about, again, to pray about.

And like I said in the beginning, if there are any questions, if there are any comments, if there's anything that you want to share, go ahead and drop a comment under this video. Or if you are listening to my voice on audio podcasts, then go ahead and drop a comment because you can do so there as well. I do enjoy hearing feedback. I think feedback is just great for everyone in general. Have a wonderful rest of your week until we meet again.

Camille McDaniel (38:02.36)

for another podcast episode.