



Cec concentrates on the next question posed to him during his interview at WDLM-FM radio in the Quad Cities.



The overwhelming response to *When a Man You Love Was Abused* shows the need for Cec's book.



Cec launched his *Shattering the Silence* blog to help other male survivors of childhood sexual abuse.

## Praying for Nora

I've met a number people I haven't liked; I've known a few individuals I strongly disliked. Even though she's been dead for two decades, Nora still holds first place at the top of my list.

I could write about many things she did (and especially what she said). Mostly it was unsubstantiated gossip passed on as fact; occasionally she lied (and even grudgingly admitted it once). I was her pastor and for the first few months she tried to tell me who needed help. Her needs-help suggestions were usually tidbits of gossip.

I tried to talk with her several times, but she fiercely defended her actions and her most frequent response was, "I'm only trying to help people."

I prayed for Nora every day and with great fervency. Usually I prayed with a word I remembered from the King James Version of the Bible: *Requite*. "Requite her for her sins." It was a better-sounding word than *punish* or *condemn* and means "to pay back" usually for rendered service. That word made me feel more virtuous.

Many days I reminded the Lord of the evil she had done and the people she had injured. And, of course, I pointed out that she had also hurt my feelings. "Requite her for her sins."

No matter how much I prayed, Nora didn't change.

One day as I studied my Bible I paused when I read these words: "Bless those who persecute you" (Romans 12:14a NRSV). I thought about Nora, but decided she didn't *persecute* me, so that seemed to exclude me from blessing her; however, the rest of the verse reads: "bless and do not curse them."

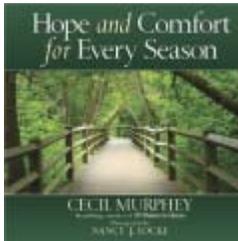
I almost got past that statement until I realized that although I prayed for Nora each day, I didn't bless her, and I certainly didn't speak evil against her.

*Or did I?* "Bless and do not curse," the words reminded me. I wasn't actually cursing her, only asking God to give her what she deserved—what *I felt* she deserved.

That's when I realized that Nora might never change, but I could. Since that day and every day (until I moved away) I prayed for divine blessings on her. She still didn't change, but I was able to accept her as a hurting woman.

She had to be a sad, hurting woman to have so much venom and poison flow from her lips. Once I could see her as pain-filled, I was able to pray compassionately for her.

Learning to pray for Nora was an invaluable lesson in my life.



Do you know someone who needs hope and comfort? Consider giving this beautiful, small gift book in a basket of goodies.

## Personal News

- I have several radio and blog interviews set up this month.
- I'll preach at Westside Church in Simpsonville, SC, on July 18. That weekend I'll speak Friday night to a Celebrate Recovery in Spartanburg, and do brief workshops/book signings in Spartanburg and Greenville on Saturday.
- Sunday afternoon, July 25, I'll speak to a writers group at First Baptist Church, Atlanta.
- July 30-31 in Concord, NC, I'm scheduled to give a keynote message at SheSpeaks—a women's conference where I'll probably be the only male.

## The Twila Zone—Words from My Assistant, Twila Belk

Cec and I were in St. Louis last week for the Advanced Writers and Speakers Association conference and the International Christian Retail Show. We were overwhelmed by the openness to his book, *When a Man You Love Was Abused*, and opportunities to speak to those who have been abused. We're more convinced than ever of the need for this book.

If you work with survivors of abuse or know of someone who needs help and healing, please consider recommending [\*When a Man You Love Was Abused: A Woman's Guide to Helping Him Overcome Child Sexual Molestation\*](#) as a resource. Another help for male survivors is Cec's blog: [www.menshatteringthesilence.blogspot.com](http://www.menshatteringthesilence.blogspot.com).

Cec's newest gift book, [\*Hope and Comfort for Every Season\*](#), was already in its second printing before its release date, and I didn't see it until last week. I was surprised at how small and beautiful it is. Immediately I thought how nice it would be to include it in a gift basket or to keep on hand to give to someone going through a difficult time.

I was delighted to read the following good words from a woman who had purchased it:

"... Every page is filled with such beauty and wisdom. I feel inspired to change my attitude faster like a child would so I can be a better child of God. This book has me wanting to clean out the filing cabinets of my heart (and college papers too) and to embrace what is really important. . . am blessed to have this treasure of a book and would recommend it to anyone who desires personal growth and a closer relationship with the Lord and each other, no matter our age."

She also said, "The photographs by Nancy L. Locke are outstanding."

If you live in the United States, you might have spent the Fourth of July



Need some writing help? Join the hundreds of others who learn from Cec's Writer to Writer blog.



Twila decided to come out of hiding and say hi.

weekend celebrating with parades, friends, and fireworks. Or maybe you didn't celebrate because it feels as if God turned off the lights in your life. If that's the situation, perhaps [Cec's ten suggestions on what to do when the lights go out](#) will help you.

Are you a writer who wants to improve? Visit [www.cecmurpheyswritertowriter.blogspot.com](http://www.cecmurpheyswritertowriter.blogspot.com).