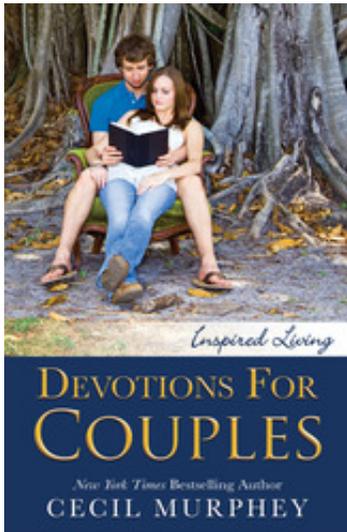




*Cecil Murphey*  
 WRITER \* SPEAKER \* TEACHER \* SURVIVOR 



It's almost Valentine's Day! Do you need a gift for your sweetheart? How about *Devotions for Couples*? It's available in e-book format.

**I would rather be disliked for who I am than to be respected for who I'm not.**

### Misrepresenting Ourselves

A friend was sure he had found his soul mate through an online dating site (and this isn't about dating sites). Eventually, they met in person and later he said, "She misrepresented herself."

Over the years, I've met people like that and that statement applied to me as well. Most of the time it wasn't deliberate deception, but more a matter of showing only our good qualities. And when I write that, I'm thinking of people we like or want to know better. By withholding parts of ourselves, however, they don't truly know us. I used to wonder, if he really knew who I was, would he still want my friendship?

Why do we misrepresent ourselves? Here's my number one reason: For a long time I didn't like parts of myself. If I didn't like those parts of myself, would anyone else? But I am making progress in self-acceptance.

One of my favorite, original maxims goes like this: I would rather be disliked for who I am than to be respected for who I'm not. That has been my goal—yet too often I've failed.

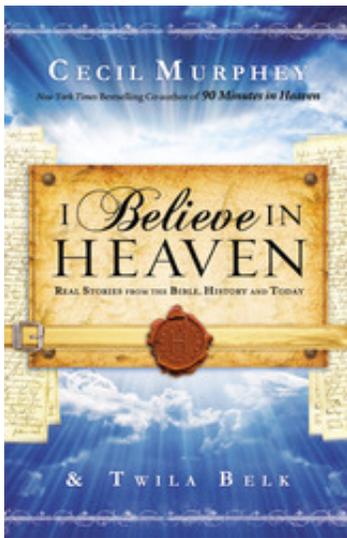
Recently, however, I had lunch with Josh Lord, a long-time acquaintance. At one point he said, "You know why I like you? You're honest about who you are."

Josh's words shocked me and immediately I wanted to protest, but instead I stopped and thanked him. This sentence tumbled out of my mouth: "The greatest privilege I have in this life is to be exactly who I am."

I know I had spoken the truth. I've also embraced this statement: I am

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me—not because of



*I Believe in Heaven: Real Stories from the Bible, History and Today* placed #8 on Vyrso's 2013 Reader Favorites List.



The greatest privilege I have in this life is to be exactly who I am.

achievements or talents, but because I'm God's creation. The more I value myself, the more I can repeat that sentence.

No one else can ever be me. *Ever.*

I'm imperfect and flawed, but I'm me. Everyone won't like me and that's all right. I like Cec and I know God loves him. That's enough to make me shout, "The greatest privilege I have in this life is to be exactly who I am!"

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### Personal News

- I'm still preaching through February to a small-but-delightful congregation on Atlanta's Southside. I'm also teaching an adult Sunday school class.
- On February 5, Dr. Anne Jones has me scheduled to speak to the Peachtree Women Writers Alliance in Atlanta.
- On February 15, I'll speak at the Writers Boot Camp at Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham.
- I'll speak, followed by a book signing at Barnes & Noble in Alpharetta, GA, on February 22.
- Now that I'm free to travel more, I'm filling in my calendar with speaking and teaching engagements, including several events set by Linda Gilden in the Spartanburg, SC, area in March, and I'm finalizing my schedule for Orange County, CA, in April.

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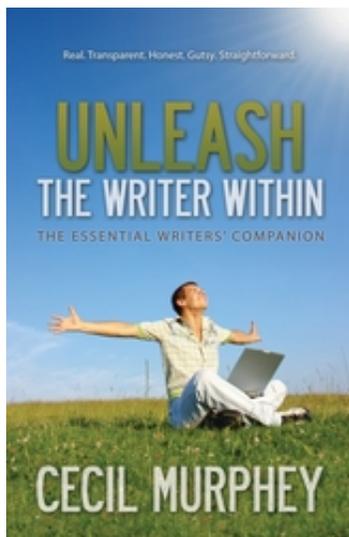
### The Twila Zone—Words from My Assistant, Twila Belk

Cec and I are delighted that our book [\*I Believe in Heaven: Real Stories from the Bible, History and Today\*](#) placed #8 on Vyrso's 2013 Reader Favorites List. [View a sample of the book here.](#)

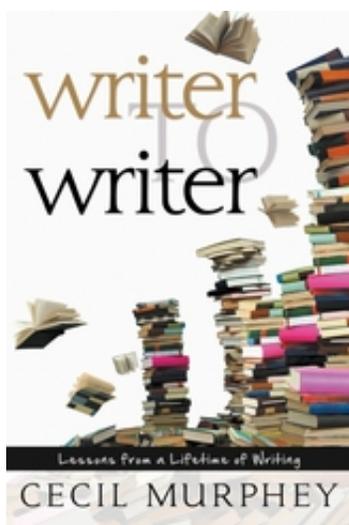
In February, many couples get lovey-dovey and exchange gifts for Valentine's Day. How about giving Cec's e-book [\*Devotions for Couples\*](#)? Amazon's current Kindle edition price is just \$2.51.

I'm often asked, "How can I get Cec to mentor me in my writing?" Here are three suggestions:

1. Read his [blog for writers](#). He posts writing advice and tips twice a week, and the blog's archives are like a treasure box for writers.
2. Purchase his books for writers: [\*Unleash the Writer Within\*](#) and [\*Writer to Writer: Lessons from a Lifetime of Writing\*](#).



Are you a writer or aspiring writer? Cec has two books geared just for you. They're great companions for you on your writing journey.



3. **Attend a conference where he teaches.** This year he is scheduled to teach at the [Carolina Christian Writers Conference](#) in Spartanburg, SC (March), the [Orange County Christian Writers Conference](#) in Southern California (April), the Cedar Falls Christian Writers Workshop in Cedar Falls, IA (June), the [Greater Philadelphia Christian Writers Conference](#) (end of July/early August), and the [New England Christian Writers Retreat](#) (October).

A few months ago, Cec taught a Super Saturday workshop in the Kansas City area. [Here are comments from several of the attendees that tell how valuable it was for them.](#)

Consider this: Cec is open to doing a writers workshop in your area of the country if you can cluster a few additional speaking events at the same time. For example: Friday speak for a recovery group, Saturday a writers workshop, Sunday preach at a local church. Cec has lots of energy and can do multiple events over the period of a few days.

I'm happy to answer questions and to help with ideas. Contact me at [twilabelk@mchsi.com](mailto:twilabelk@mchsi.com) or 563-332-1622.

**Links:** (1) [Cec's website](#), (2) [Cec's blog for writers](#), (3) [Cec's blog for male survivors of sexual abuse](#), (4) [Cec's Twitter](#), (5) [Facebook: Cecil Murphey Author/Speaker](#), (6) [Facebook: Cec and Me, with Cecil Murphey and Twila Belk](#), (7) [Facebook: Twila Belk, The Gotta Tell Somebody Gal](#), (8) [Twila's website](#), (9) [Twila's email](#)

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