



At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry

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Sexual temptation is undeniably the greatest struggle Christian men face. Here is a book that digs deep and has the answers men are looking for the kind that actually work. While other books deal with the subject superficially, Sexual Idolatry goes right to the heart. It draws back the curtain and exposes how sexual sin corrupts the entire man, something Steve Gallagher understands, having lived in the bondage of it for over twelve years. Put an end to the mystery of lust and maximize God's power in your life with the proven answers that have helped thousands."

At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry Details

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From Reader Review At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry for online ebook

Brandi Leblanc says

Very informative book. A topic lots of marriages are dealing with these days especially Christian marriages.

Paul Decker says

I have read this book at least two and a half times and it is biblically centered! Gallagher's experience with addiction of this type makes him unique in helping others with sexual sins. This book is also great because it's not just for sexual sins the truths in this book can help those struggling with any addiction.

Michael Ibarra says

I read this book many, many years ago (probably when I was in high school at the time... 2000-2004 era or so), and found it really heavy and inaccessible at the time. I picked it up a few weeks ago and started my way through it. Lately I had been feeling really convicted over the "lax" approach I had had for many years on sexual purity/lust/etc. Take your pick, really.

Steve Gallagher outlines many, many solid truths in this book. I found his portrayal of sexual sin especially and its consequences really eye-opening -- both in the Scripture he uses to back up his claims, and in the real-life stories of utter destruction he's encountered through counseling at Pure Life Ministries. Much of the book focuses on explaining the spiral downward into sexual sin (and addiction), and how that affects nearly every aspect of a person's life. It's pretty amazing, how he identifies all of it, and he's spot-on in so much of it.

I wish he would have spent a few more chapters on practical application for battling sexual temptation and sin, and so on (only about 3-4 chapters out of 17 are dedicated to this), so I would consider this book, as whole, more of a deep-dive into the NATURE of sexual sin... though not necessarily an absolute guidebook for combating it. That said, the book stands powerfully on its own, and if you had only read one over the years on the subject, you would be well off even so.

There were a couple things I didn't agree with so much in the book. First, in the opening, pages, Steve cites a few "current events" type stories of college students essentially participating in pornographic live demonstrations in their health classes, along with demonstrations of various sex acts, all within moderately well-renowned college campuses. The footnote stated the story having appeared on a website in 2001-2002, so I tried to pull up the site myself to see if it was true. It seemed so outlandish, so I figured I'd check the facts myself. The sites he was referencing were admittedly very conservative whistleblower-type websites that, while I don't inherently have any issue with, failed to cite any sort of news release, press detail, or interviews with anyone in particular. It was honestly as if the original website could have made up the story from thin air, and published it as fact. I don't fault Steve for this, but I was disappointed that he would quote a source that failed to back up their claims with hard evidence.

Steve also spent a moderate amount of time (a full chapter) on the influence of demonic forces in a person's life driving him to sin. Now... I am not discounting the reality of a spiritual realm by any means. But his level of focus on this aspect seemed, as an afterthought, really forced to try to spin another (seemingly outlandish) cause for sexual sin in a person's life. I come from a very traditional background, church-wise, so I suppose that's to blame for my hesitation as well. He doesn't go so far as to suggest demonic possession in a person's life for sexual sin/idolatry, but he comes close. It just caught me off-guard and rubbed me the wrong way. This section, I found, also lacked the level of Scriptural basis and references he had normally included in other chapters.

Other than those two "gripes", it really was a very good book. For someone really lost in a lifestyle of depraved sexual sin, this is a really powerful book. At any level, really, it's a powerful book. But like Sam (another reviewer, previously) said, there are many other books out there that focus less on the nature of the sin, the stories of depravity, and so on, and instead focus on freedom, grace, and the Truth that sets us free from ALL sin and death -- not just sexual idolatry (Randy Alcorn's "The Purity Principle" and Josh Harris' "Sex Isn't the Problem: Lust Is" both come to mind).

Regardless, I hope this helps you in your decision to read/not read this book. It was certainly insightful for me, and I am very glad I re-read it all these years later. I just wouldn't probably use it as the ONLY foray into the subject.

C.H. Cobb says

One of the more intractable problems the biblical counselor faces is helping men conquer sexual sin. Gallagher's book is a great resource, for both the counselor and the addict. He casts the problem as it should be presented: a matter of idolatry, and offers excellent practical solutions and directions. His use of Scripture is for the most part very solid, and Gallagher does a good job at digging down to the roots of the problem, rather than simply giving instructions for moralistic fruit-clipping.

The book is sufficiently graphic in its description of the spiral of degradation that a man can read it and identify with it, but not so graphic that it becomes a problem for a man already wrestling with sexual fantasy. Some reviewers have felt otherwise, so you'll want to read the book before you use it and form your own opinion.

I recommend working through this book chapter by chapter with a counselee. Don't be in a hurry--they need to digest what is being said. In my counseling I have them reading through this and Jerry Bridges' *Pursuit of Holiness* at the same time, to provide a more complete "put-off put-on" emphasis.

There's also a workbook available that my counselees have found useful.

I highly recommend this book.

Mikey says

[One man who had been convicted for attempted rape but later struggled his way out of sexual addiction said, *"If you don't want to get rid of the problem, confess it only to God. If you want to get rid of the problem,*

confess it to another person. And if you really want to get rid of the problem, keep yourself accountable." - page 74-75 (hide spoiler)]

Sérgio Alencar says

This is an excellent book, one that every Christian - especially men - should read. You can't deny the constant presence of lust and pornography in our daily lives. That is why we should know how God wants us to deal with it.

Jon K says

This is a great book for helping those who are struggling with sexual temptation and sin better understand what God has to say about the topic. Gallagher's helpful anecdotes and biblical examples properly lay out the ins and outs of the mindset of someone struggling with sexual temptations. That being said, I echo the other reviewers who wish that there are more practical steps to take in helping people get out of their habitual sins. If I were to use this book as a way to counsel men struggling in sexual sin, I would definitely use it in conjunction with other books dealing with the same subject such as Finally Free which deals mostly with those struggling with pornography. I can see using this book to help guys who already desire repentance in this area.

Patrice Tyler says

Even if you THINK you don't have sexual sin in your life, you have to read this book. The reader can relate to the sin of idolatry on more than the sexual level. Having said that: 1 in 4 women are molested, 1 in 6 males have been molested; over 70% of Christian men view pornography; every family knows at least one child molester. This book and Pure Life Ministries is a Godly resource for those trapped in or effected by sexual idolatry. "The Kingdom suffereth violence and the violent take it by force!" Let God help you.

Kenneth says

This is an excellent book for understanding and helping treat folks who are struggling with sexual addictions.

Michelle says

Unpleasant, but enlightening. Forewarned is forearmed, as they say---wish I'd read this one sooner. We need to understand how prevalent and destructive these addictions/sins are and help our families be more aware, awake, alert and armed by His Grace and His Spirit. It's a battle we can't afford to lose.

Michael Locklear says

I want to thank my friends, Revs. Bob Dimmitt, Wayne Miracle and Eric Brown for recommending this book.

Sam says

I appreciate the ministry of Pure Life Ministries and its founder, Steve Gallagher very much. Having heard of this book years ago, I was finally able to read it. Overall, the content was good. The author has certainly earned the right to speak out and write on this subject! I view this book from the same perspective as I have with Jay Adams' works. While other authors have come along and refined and furthered ideas of Adams, I don't want to be in the group bashing the original guy. Same here. Other authors have refined and furthered many of Steve's ideas, but that doesn't mean this book doesn't still have its place. While it won't be the first for me to hand out, I'm glad that I've read it and I'm glad Steve wrote it.

David says

This is a great book for any who struggle with enslaving habits of any kind. Helpful stuff on christian growth
...

Dan says

A great book for men dealing with the sin of sexual idolatry. Gallagher deals honestly with the issues of lust, pornography, sexual addiction, masturbation, etc. and exposes the root cause of these issues: pride. Many well-meaning authors have come at these issues from various standpoints, but Gallagher makes the point that if you don't start with pride, you'll never deal with the real issue and find true, lasting freedom from these sins. A great read!
