CREATE IN ME A PURE HEART

ANSWERS FOR STRUGGLING WOMEN



GALLAGHER

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DEDICATION

We dedicate this book to all of the struggling women who are determined to fight for a holy life in God. May the Lord abundantly answer your cry for a pure heart!

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CONTENTS

Introduction	13
Part 1: The Problem	
CHAPTER ONE: Women and Sexual Sin	17
CHAPTER TWO: Romance and the Emotional Connection	
CHAPTER THREE: Worship Me	
CHAPTER FOUR: Lust, Fantasy and Masturbation	
CHAPTER FIVE: The Process of Sin	
Part 2: The Right Course	
CHAPTER SIX: The Root Issues	91
CHAPTER SEVEN: The Need to Live in the Light	109
CHAPTER EIGHT: Freedom Comes Slowly for a Reason	123
CHAPTER NINE: How Much Do You Care?	135
Part 3: Influences	
CHAPTER TEN: The Sinful Flesh	145
CHAPTER ELEVEN: Separating from the World	157
CHAPTER TWELVE: Battles in the Spiritual Realm	171
Part 4: The Way Out	
CHAPTER THIRTEEN: The Place of Brokenness and Repentance	187
CHAPTER FOURTEEN: Disciplined for Holiness	199
CHAPTER FIFTEEN: Walking in the Spirit	213
CHAPTER SIXTEEN: Overcoming Lust	223
CHAPTER SEVENTEEN: The Power of God's Grace	237
Addendum	259
Notes	265

INTRODUCTION

C. E. S. S.

A Note from Kathy to the Reader

y husband's book, At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry was written by a man to men in the throes of sexual addiction. At times it is a very hard-hitting book. Steve takes aim at the underlying motives that have made a way for a Christian man to indulge himself in sexual sin. In spite of that, there is a reason that there are over 150,000 copies in print. As painful as it can be to read at times, men understand that this book is packed with sound, biblical truth and the Godgiven answer to habitual sin. That's why it breathes hope to the reader throughout.

The first three chapters of *Create in Me a Pure Heart* are completely new, written to the Christian woman who struggles with sexual sin. Chapters Four through Seventeen are an adaptation of *At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry*, rewritten to apply to women.

As Steve's wife I know better than anybody what a deeply loving man he truly is. The staff of Pure Life Ministries understands this as well. Part of his no-nonsense approach is simply because he tends to be that way by nature. But there is also the aspect that he really hates the sin that ruins lives, destroys families and corrupts the Body of Christ.

There will be times as you go through this book that some

truth about yourself will hit you so hard that you may want to set the book down for a few days. That's okay! Please don't let hurt feelings prevent you from getting what you need. God wants to set you abundantly free, but there will be times when the process will be painful. Those who insist on having "feelgood" solutions wrapped in emotional rhetoric and placating jargon will never find freedom.

I pray that as you read this book, you will find the liberating power of the Holy Spirit there to help you through the process of finding the true and lasting freedom you desire.

> GOD BLESS YOU, KATHY GALLAGHER



CHAPTER FIVE: THE PROCESS OF SIN



"And if you say in your heart, "Why have these things come on me?" because of the number of your sins, your skirts have been uncovered and violent punishment overtakes you." (Jeremiah 13:22 BBE)

hose who become bound up in habitual sexual sin—even if it is no more than masturbation and/or pornography—are actually addicted to a complex chain of actions. It all begins with temptation, moves into the person's particular routine, peaks in the actual act itself and ends with the lingering, inevitable consequences. Compelling the person through this entire sequence of events is a driving lust. Thus, the woman is not merely hooked on the act itself but on the whole unfolding drama. The book of James reveals this process from a spiritual perspective:

Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God;" for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death. Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. (James 1:13-16)

Temptation always precedes the process of sin. Typically, the woman is simply engaged in her normal activities of life—working, running errands, watching television, and so on—when the thought of sexual sin enters her mind. It is either placed in her mind by one of Satan's emissaries or simply appears as a longing of the flesh. Regardless, the mere existence of temptation itself does not constitute sin.

In Homer's *Odyssey*, one reads of the adventures of a Greek legend by the name of Ulysses. During one of his adventures he encounters the "sirens" whose seductive songs invoked stark madness that would eventually result in the death of any who heard them. As Ulysses' boat prepared to cross by the coast of the "sirens," he stopped up his men's ears with wax so they could not hear the deadly song, while he listened tied securely to the mast. Only the ropes could restrain the madness that came over him. This illustrates a person being tempted. As that captivating thought starts looming, often the only way to resist it is to be "tied securely to a mast."

Solomon said, "For the lips of an adulteress drip honey, and smoother than oil is her speech." (Proverbs 5:3) This phrase describes how the devil presents temptation. Honey represents promised fulfillment. The temptation seems irresistible because it is laced with the deception that the act of sin will bring about tremendous pleasure and satisfaction. The tantalizing thought is presented and all else is forgotten; the act of sexual sin looks absolutely intoxicating, and therefore irresistible.

The smooth oil represents the craftiness of the enemy. He knows when we are at our weakest moment. He does not mind waiting for days or even weeks if it means a greater defeat for the Christian. Paul twice speaks of the "the schemes of the devil." (Ephesians 6:11, II Corinthians 2:11) The demonic forces of hell have been carrying out their "guerrilla warfare" quite diligently for a long time. Fully camouflaged and extremely calculating, they launch the perfect illusion, timing each consecutive attack "to

steal, and kill, and destroy" (John 10:10) God's property.

Once Satan has managed to get a fish hook in the woman, at his leisure, all he needs to do is to give a gentle tug on the line to get the woman going. It often comes in the form of remembering past pleasurable experiences. Frank Worthen comments:

FLASHBACKS: Very few sexual encounters in the gay life-style could be considered great. Almost always, there is an element of wishing it could have been better. Often we'd feel used, short changed and degraded after such an encounter. Satan, however, has a way of throwing flashbacks of previous sexual experiences at us. In the memories he presents, all negative connotations are written out. We remember only the positive.

He also tempts us through our natural tendency to make associations. We're all triggered by certain music, smells, sounds and visual images. These evoke distinct, vivid memories of past experiences.¹

Ronald Jenson talks about the "triggers" that often lead a person into sin:

A trigger is any event or emotion which evokes an inevitable response. Planning thinks about both the triggers and the usual result they bring in you. What are your triggers?...If you can identify the thing which leads up to your difficult time, you can prepare for and outmaneuver defeat and failure.²

I (Steve) found in my life that there were three circumstances that usually proved disastrous for me if they all happened at the same time. The first, of course, was the actual temptation. Again, demons used perfect timing to implant their thoughts. They usually did not bother to tempt me unless they could

synchronize it with the other two needed elements: the physical build-up and opportunity.

The physical build-up I would experience, if I had not had sex in several days, greatly increased my desire to act out. As my hormones increased, I would become immensely sensitized to sexual stimuli. Lastly, I had to be given the opportunity. For me, this usually occurred when my wife was at work.

A woman's place of employment can often have a lot to do with whether or not she will be in a position to give over to sin. For instance, if she works in a store, and cannot leave her job, she is less likely to get into trouble during work hours.

On the other hand, those in positions that provide a lot of freedom of travel or access to a computer in a private setting will be much more vulnerable to temptation. Jane is a good example of the former. She was a representative for a cosmetics company and would travel to other cities to visit department stores which carried her products. Over time she began using these trips to strange cities as opportunities to engage in anonymous sex. I (Kathy) suggested that she needed to find a different job. Hearing this, she looked at me with an expression of utter shock and quickly responded, "I love my job. I make good money. This job is *perfect* for me!"

"I don't doubt that your job is perfect," I responded. "The enemy is quite adept at providing jobs that are perfect for his evil designs. Jane, if victory over sin doesn't mean any more to you than giving up a job, you might as well resign yourself to a lifestyle of failure. You will never change," I informed her. Unfortunately, to my knowledge, she is still making good money at her job and continues to engage in fornication. She preferred her job over getting the victory.

Jenny was another woman who faced a similar "fork in the road." Her job involved a lot of work on the computer. But in the private setting of her office, she had become terribly addicted to Internet pornography.



Jenny seemed sincere when she asked me how to get free from her porn addiction. However, she had the same disappointed look on her face as Jane did when I suggested that she give up her job. She made good money and didn't want to lose her position. The thought of parting with her career seemed unreasonable—even outlandish. "Jenny," I asked with all earnestness, "do you prefer being a well-paid sex addict to being a godly woman?" She wasn't going to acquiesce without a fight, but those words plagued her for days. She had to make a decision that had enormous consequences.

In the end, she decided that her walk with God meant more to her than her job. She was willing to forfeit something of huge importance for the sake of her spiritual life. Later, the Lord honored her sacrifice and provided her with a job in a completely different line of work. She didn't make as much money as previously, but she really did enjoy her new career. Most important, she was once again right with God. Her attitude is an example of what Jesus meant when He said, "And if your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out, and throw it from you...And if your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off, and throw it from you; for it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish, than for your whole body to go into hell." (Matthew 5:29-30)

The Idol of Fantasy

The initial step into sin is allowing the thought of temptation to fester. It is extremely difficult to thwart the processes of thought once entertained. James said that a person is tempted "when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust..." This illustrates a woman's lust actually picking her up and carrying her to a place where she cannot defend herself and *then* enticing her. It is almost as if her carnal desires momentarily take control of her mind and carry her away to some dream world where

she is then utterly defenseless. Once there, she is swallowed up in the evil imaginations of her own fallen heart.

This is not something that she *does not* want to do. On the contrary, it is exactly what she *does* want to do. The NIV translates it, "but each one is tempted when by his own evil desire he is dragged away and enticed." It is not only the object of the temptation that she covets, but the actual temptation itself! She *wants* to fill her mind with that tantalizing temptation. It is no wonder that she has such a difficult time exercising self-restraint. Just as a person savors every spoonful of delicious pudding, the woman relishes every thought of the ultimate romantic encounter. The longer she allows herself to fantasize, the more likely she will act it out. She is, in essence, erecting an idol of fantasy. The longer she entertains the fantasy the larger the idol grows. At this point she is being enticed.

These thoughts are difficult to control because the woman sees only the instant gratification. The fantasy of the impending experience overshadows past vows to discontinue such behavior. All that lies in sight is the pleasure of the anticipated act. She completely forgets about God and loved ones. Her past attempts to quit are now lost in the sea of forgetfulness. It appears that she just cannot help herself. As the lust builds in her mind, her behavior becomes reckless. Things she never imagined doing under normal circumstances now become "great expectations." She is starting to enter into a trance, becoming like the dog mesmerized by a piece of meat held just out of his reach. Her heart begins to race, her breathing becomes short, and her palms begin to sweat. She is actually becoming intoxicated with desire. Dietrich Bonhoeffer best describes this struggle:

At this moment God is quite unreal to us, He loses all reality, and only desire for the creature is real; the only reality is the devil. Satan does not here fill us with hatred of God, but with forgetfulness of God. And now



his falsehood is added to this proof of strength. The lust thus aroused envelopes the mind and will of man in deepest darkness. The powers of clear discrimination and of decision are taken from us.³

Physically Moving Toward Sin

The next step is taken when the body actually gets up and moves. The woman may fool herself into thinking she will just view some pornography and go no further, but she almost always does.

I (Steve) can remember thinking in my own mind, "I'll just drive by where the hookers are, just to see what they look like." Another way I would be deceived was by telling myself that I would only look at a magazine. The problem was, once I saw the magazine, I would enter into that mind-altered state where everything becomes sexual and nothing is forbidden. After looking through the magazines, I wanted to see the movies. As soon as I began watching the movies, I wanted the real thing.

A woman viewing pornography becomes warped in her decision making. Sin is never satisfied. One sin leads to another sin. One bad decision leads to another bad decision. Perhaps this is why the prophet Micah warned, "Woe to those who scheme iniquity, who work out evil on their beds! When morning comes, they do it, for it is in the power of their hands." (Micah 2:1)

The Point of No Return

Once the body is in motion, rationalization takes over. "Oh well, it's too late to stop now. I might as well get it over with!" This is "the point of no return." Now uninhibited and oblivious to all fear, guilt or the possibility of danger, the woman is fully convinced that this is the only reasonable route she can take. Solomon would describe her as a woman with, "An heart that

deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief." (Proverbs 6:18 KJV) Thus, the woman becomes totally committed to acting out her fantasy. The tidal waves of lust will carry her far out into the ocean of perversion where she so longs to be. Although she had intended only to check out her particular source of temptation, once she experienced the sights and sounds associated with her particular sin, the pull of sin overwhelmed her.

The Various Routines

Now different behaviors come into play. Each addict has her own fantasy—her own routine. Actually, this is where they find the real excitement. Note: The addict's routine begins immediately when she moves toward her sin. Just as the woman who is addicted to shopping thinks fondly of her favorite boutiques, the sales they are advertising, the excitement of a day out with the girls at the mall, and the all the new outfits she might enjoy wearing, the female sex addict thinks of the many things that comprise her routine. The actual routine varies with different people. Even the girl who only struggles with a habit of masturbation has a predictable pattern of behavior that makes up her sin.

I (Steve) personally spent nearly 15 years of my life during the 70's and early 80's obsessed with sex. In those days one had to go to an adult bookstore to see hardcore pornography. My routine usually began by browsing the magazine racks for awhile. As my lust heightened, I would venture into the movie arcade, a dimly lit area located in the rear of the bookstore containing a number of booths where a man could watch a pornographic film in private. I would "size up" the movie advertisements for each one, determining which one most appealed to me. Then I would go from booth to booth, saving my favorite for last. Other times I would view pornography as a precursor to visiting a prostitute or going to a strip club.

These days, people are more likely to do their cruising online. This is what Brittany would do. She had become addicted to Internet porn when she discovered it on her brother's computer. Before long she was searching it out on her own computer.

She really wasn't attracted to the guys; it was the bodies of other girls that turned her on. Her routine would actually begin earlier in the day when she would either remember some picture she had seen previously or just start thinking about the updates that would be posted on her favorite websites. Throughout the day the expectation about what she might see would keep her in a state of semi-excitement. After everybody went to bed that night, she would go online in the privacy of her bedroom. She was amazed at how the hours would race by, while she visited one explicit website after another.

But not everyone is satisfied with simply looking at dirty pictures. Their addiction has taken them much further than they ever imagined they would go. Whatever the particular form of sexual sin a woman may become addicted to, it is certain that a specific routine will play a part in the event.

Jane's routine always took the same basic form. She would typically catch an early flight to the city she would visit that week to sell her cosmetics. On the plane she would close her eyes and remember past experiences. Once she arrived, she would rent a car, put her things in her hotel room and make her rounds of the department stores. After grabbing a bite to eat and freshening up, she would head out in search of an upscale bar. Through all of this her anticipation would grow.

Once she arrived at the bar, she would scan the room for a guy who appealed to her. Having set her sights on some guy, she would be sure to make eye contact. After making her interest fairly clear, the man would eventually wander over and strike up a conversation. Before long, the two of them would be talking, laughing and having a good time together. A couple of hours and a few drinks later, she would invite him to her room.

To say that Jane was only addicted to the sexual act would be an oversimplification. She was hooked on the entire experience: flirting with the guy, teasing him, driving to the hotel with him in pursuit and even going up the elevator alone together. The sexual act would simply be the culmination of the entire experience.

Whatever form a woman's addiction might take, there will be a distinct or observable pattern which plays a major part in her "acting out" sexually. While the routines they give over to are different, each woman shares one thing in common: lust has been conceived in the heart, and each one is now on a personal mission to satisfy herself to the best of her ability.

The Act of Sin

Sin. The actual act. It is often a terrible disappointment after a prolonged period during which the fulfillment of the fantasy was anticipated. Nevertheless, it is the object of desire on which the woman has fixed her mind. Once she has entered into the trance and begun the routine, it is highly unlikely that she can stop herself from following through with some kind of sexual act. Once she has invested her time and energy into her fantasy, it will require something special to culminate the entire process.

Death

Finally, when the act of sin has been committed, it brings forth death: death of self-respect and death of feelings. It will also bring despair, anger, helplessness, hopelessness, guilt, condemnation, and vows never to do it again. It is a horrible price that Satan and his demons exact upon those deceived. First, they lead the woman by the nose into sin; then once committed,

they condemn and attack her for being weak and despicable. The shame grows deeper and deeper.

Once the sexual act is over and the lust has drained from her body, she can begin to see the sin more clearly for what it is. The empty promises of the fantasy are nowhere to be found; all that remains is the horrible penalty for her sin. During the temptation she was oblivious to the consequences of her choices. Now, they are in full view. As Solomon laid out the presentation of sin, he described in riveting detail the consequences of giving in to sexual temptation. He brings it all to life in the following passage:

For the lips of an adulteress drip honey, and smoother than oil is her speech; but in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to death, her steps lay hold of Sheol... Now then, my sons, listen to me, and do not depart from the words of my mouth. Keep your way far from her, and do not go near the door of her house, lest you give your vigor to others, and your years to the cruel one; lest strangers be filled with your strength, and your hard-earned goods go to the house of an alien; and you groan at your latter end, when your flesh and your body are consumed; and you say, "How I have hated instruction! And my heart spurned reproof! And I have not listened to the voice of my teachers, nor inclined my ear to my instructors!" (Proverbs 5:3-13)

On two different occasions, Solomon used the Hebrew word *aharit*. In verse four he says "in the end..." In verse eleven it is expressed "at your latter end." *Aharit* is the same word used in Proverbs 14:12: "There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death." What Solomon has shown, is that the sin does not just disappear once it has been indulged.

The woman may have to face the results of her actions for a long time.

We have already mentioned the death that is experienced following each act of sin. In addition to these, there are also the long-term consequences of a lifetime of giving over to sexual sin. Adam Clarke comments on this passage:

The mourning here spoken of is of the most excessive kind: the word *naham* is often applied to the growling of a lion, and the hoarse incessant murmuring of the sea. In the line of my duty, I have been often called to attend the death-bed of such persons, where groans and shrieks were incessant through the ejaculating pains in their bones and flesh. Whoever has witnessed a closing scene like this will at once perceive with what force and propriety the wise man speaks. And "how have I hated instruction, and despised the voice of my teachers!" is the unavailing cry in that terrific time. Reader, whosoever thou art, lay these things to heart.⁴

Resolutions and Repentance

As the woman enters the beginning stage of remorse, she will often make certain promises to God vowing never to repeat the same sin again: "Lord, I swear I won't do this ever again!" As her eyes are opened to the reality of the horrible emptiness and nature of her sin, she readily makes such a vow; for, it is at this moment that she truly sees sin for what it really is.

However, the problem with making such a resolution is that it stems from her own strength and determination to resist and overcome an evil. This sort of "promise-keeping" will never endure future temptations in the same area. It is for this exact reason that she has attempted countless times before to break the habit, yet to no avail.

The woman desperately needs repentance. True repentance comes when a person's heart has changed its outlook on sin. A woman will only quit her sinful, destructive behavior when she has truly repented of it in her heart. As she moves closer to the heart of God, she begins to develop a "godly sorrow" over her sin.

Overcoming Temptation

As the woman grows stronger in her Christian walk and closer to God, she begins to see the whole act of sin, including the consequences, rather than just the reward. Rather than concentrating on the delicious experience, she will be able to realistically see that past experiences usually were only mediocre, at best. Instead of focusing her thoughts on how much fun it might be, she will clearly see the consequences that await her: the *aharit*. She will recall the guilt-ridden days of shame, disgust, and condemnation. Worst of all, she will remember the feeling of being isolated from the Lord.

A woman will overcome temptation by refusing to dwell on sexual thoughts. When a fantasy enters her mind, she will make the conscious decision not to entertain it. The woman who affords herself the luxury of savoring a fantasy is setting herself up for a huge fall. The time to deal with temptation is when it *first* appears. The longer the thought lingers, the more difficult it is to resist.

A Way of Escape

One important aspect of dealing with temptation is that there is *always* a way out. Paul said, "No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that

you may be able to endure it." (I Corinthians 10:13)

Paul said that God would "not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able..." An illustration of the word "able" is the line that is drawn on the side of a ship. As the ship is loaded with cargo and sinks into the water, it approaches the point at which the "Plimsoll line" parallels the water level, indicating that the ship has been loaded to capacity. When the loaded ship sinks to where that line is under water, they know the ship has been overloaded. We are never tempted beyond our "Plimsoll line." We are never loaded with more temptation or testing than we can bear. God never allows our temptations to go beyond that line. He always provides for us a way of escape!

Thus, we must learn how to be sensitive to the escape route He provides. We can only learn His methods by studying His ways. This is the reason it is so important that we know where to go to find help. If we haphazardly seek out just any source for answers, we will likely be misguided and led further astray.