

SAMPLE

20 TRUTHS

THAT HELPED ME IN MY BATTLE WITH

PORN ADDICTION

A 40-Day Study Journal



STEVE GALLAGHER

Day One

HOPE

Watch Truth #1:
There is a Way Out



Carter's Story (Graduated 2021)

In spite of the fact that I grew up in a decent Christian home, I got involved in pornography at an early age. This didn't stop me from becoming deeply involved in church activities. In fact, I eventually attended Bible college with the idea of pursuing ministry.

During my time there, my long-lasting struggle with pornography grew worse. I became so heavily controlled by it that I ran up a great deal of debt, not caring about the financial consequences I was incurring. It was all part of my instantaneous lifestyle that eliminated any ability to think about the future. To me, the future would just be more of the same hopeless misery I was experiencing then.

My sexual sin got so bad that I started using dating apps to hook up with women. By the time I graduated from college, I was completely lost, utterly given over to sexual sin and committed to its ways. Any thought of getting free seemed hopelessly distant and far away.

Eventually my secret life came into the light and I was confronted by my spiritual leaders. They presented me with an opportunity to pursue the Residential Program at Pure Life Ministries. I agreed to go, but I was so far gone that I wasn't even sure I wanted to be free.

Nevertheless, the Lord met me where I was at and helped me to start facing the reality of who I was and what I had become.

He also started teaching me to repent. I learned that God could transform my heart if I would begin humbling myself. This was a challenge to me because in the past I was so manipulative with others that I wouldn't acknowledge being wrong about anything. But as I began humbling myself, He really did start that work of transformation in my heart. In fact, He actually gave me the capacity to care about others in a real way. Through this process my need for the Lord's grace every day has become very real to me.

My life today is vastly different from where it was just a few years ago. The Lord has redeemed a lot of things in my life such as friendship, ministry and my outlook on the future. Yes, there are still times of strong temptation and maybe even failure, but when I am faced with strong temptation, I now know how to fight. Yes, sexual sin once dominated my life, but I've begun to taste the true life that comes through Jesus Christ.

A Study in God's Word

Like Carter's story, there was a time when the main driving force of my life was lust. It kept me going from week to week—always looking for my next sexual exploit. My life really was a miserable existence of always feeling dissatisfied—nothing ever scratched the relentless itch that drove me on. Eventually it all came crashing down. But there in the heap of ashes that had been my life was a tiny flower called hope. I hadn't felt it in years. It was just enough to get me headed back in the right direction.

 Write out and then memorize Hebrews 11:1.

01

Explain in your own words the role hope plays in a believer's faith.

02 Carefully consider the following verses which contain the word hope. Explain what point you think the author was making in each verse.

 Psalm 62:5

 Jeremiah 29:11

 Proverbs 10:28

The standard of living in America far exceeds any people group that has ever lived. Of course, it isn't our fault that we live in such a wealthy nation, but that doesn't alleviate our responsibility to limit its effects on our spiritual life. Prosperity has a way of subtly leading Christians into a mindset of self-trust. If we can get by in life through our own efforts, why would we feel a need to rely on God?

03 Look up 1 Timothy 6:17-19 and explain the point that Paul was making.

Another inescapable result of prosperity is indulgence, and unrestrained indulgence inevitably leads to addiction. I suppose there is nothing that can more effectively quench a person's hope for the future than to be addicted to some vice that demands one's entire devotion.

04 If you are addicted to pornography, describe the impact this has had on your hope in the Lord and your hope for the future.

Reflection Questions

Before I got into my testimony in the video, *There is a Way Out*, I shared my desire that you would come away with the attitude, "If that guy can get free, anyone can!" Did my story leave you with the firm conviction that you can have a life that isn't dominated by sexual sin? Take a few minutes to think deeply on this.

01 How would the spiritual quality of your life (relationship with God and others, outlook on the future, ability to be productive in school or career) improve if sexual sin was behind you forever?

02 What things have you already tried in an effort to break free from pornography or other habitual sexual sins?

03 Has the fact that you've tried other things that haven't produced a life of victory left you wondering if the Lord is even able to deliver you?



Prayer Point

Read 1 Corinthians 10:13, 1 Corinthians 15:17, and Psalm 107:10-16. If you have had difficulty believing that God has the power or willingness to bring you into freedom, spend some time before Him confessing the sin of unbelief. Then, ask Him to renew your faith in His character and power.



Day Two

LIVING IN THE MIRACULOUS

Dylan's Story (Graduated 2016)

I grew up going to church and living a profession of faith that appeared to be real to those around me. However, behind all the smiles, church attendance and mission trips was a secret life of sin I had kept hidden from everyone for over fifteen years. Looking back on that time now, I can see that there was no power in my life to really live for God. I was basically living the Christian life “in the flesh.”

In 2015, I spent five months in Brazil as part of a mission team. I restrained my pursuit of illicit sexual pleasure while I was there, but when I returned to my former job in downtown Nashville, my double lifestyle reemerged. I went right back to drinking, doing drugs, and

having random hookups in secret.

Although this bondage continued, I was unwilling to admit it to anyone else. I even maintained that I knew the Lord, in spite of the fact that there was no power of God over sin in my life. I would often tell myself, “I know I will eventually outgrow this issue—especially if I get married.” I was blind to the depth of my sin and the effects it was having on my relationships with those around me. Every step into sin was taking me further into an ever-greater deception.

In the meantime, I had applied online to go on another mission trip. During the application process, the counselor wrote me that everything looked good, but he

wanted to revisit one of the questions that was lacking detailed information. The question was regarding the history of my sexual sin.

As I read his email it was as if everything came to a halt. I was confronted with the reality of where I was and where I was heading. It was not an audible voice, but I knew in my heart Almighty God was speaking very clearly to me. I could either continue lying about who I was—and even go on this mission trip—or I could come into the light by telling the truth. There was no getting away from the choice sitting in front of me. Never in my life had I encountered the presence of God in this way. I was in great trepidation as I deliberated between the two alternatives. As I considered the ramifications of this decision, I realized that it was going to cost me everything if I chose to confess

my hidden sin. My life would never be the same again.

This experience served as the catalyst to get me to Pure Life Ministries. The Lord met me there powerfully and gave me the grace to come into the light about my sin for the first time. The conviction of the Holy Spirit led me into true repentance and a supernatural regeneration of my heart. God gave me new birth and put His Spirit in me. After that, the miraculous work of Almighty God continued as He persistently and lovingly drew me to Himself.

Looking back I see God's divine work of taking my unresponsive heart and giving me a new one. Now I know the supernatural power of God through faith in Jesus Christ, no longer by mere profession, but by the life He now lives in me and through me.

A Study in God's Word

I want to begin today's study by touching on a very precious possession of yours. I'm referring to your Bible. That book is the historical narrative of God's miraculous interactions with mankind during the first 4,000 years of this earth. When God is at work in people's lives, supernatural things occur.

01 Look up the following verses and briefly describe what God did that was out of the ordinary of human life as we know it.

 **Genesis 5:24**

 **Genesis 7:17**

 **Genesis 11:9**

 **Genesis 12:17**

 **Genesis 15:1**

 **Genesis 19:24**

 **Genesis 19:26**

 **Genesis 20:18**

 Genesis 21:2

We haven't even made it half-way through the first book of the Bible and God has already performed at least nine miracles—some of them nearly unfathomable. And miracles continue as part of God's work among men all the way through the Old Testament. He parted the Red Sea for the children of Israel and brought down the walls of Jericho. Through the power of Yahweh, Daniel survived the lion's den and Elijah called down fire from heaven.

Now, fast forward to First Century Judaism and suddenly the miracles are nonexistent. Formal religion has taken the place of the supernatural. The Pharisees knew the Scriptures and were exceedingly religious. Yet they were blind to the fact that the Son of God was in their midst.

02 Can you see how religious activities can take the place of possessing the life of God and the miraculous living that should accompany it? Explain the difference you see between a religious lifestyle and a life that is controlled by the Holy Spirit.

Now, fast forward again, this time into 21st Century American Christianity. Once again we find a religious system that largely lacks the miraculous. I believe that much of this is due to a lack of true supernatural conversions.

It seems that most Christians have grown up in church and learned how to "become" Christians by adapting into their lives the unspoken rules of conduct inherent in the denominational culture they are a part of. One might even call this "Christian atheism." What I mean is that there are many professing Christians who mentally ascribe to the

tenants of the faith, faithfully attend church services every week, yet lack the kind of supernatural activity one would expect to find in the life of a person who is indwelt by the Spirit of God. Their “faith” in God doesn’t seem to reach into their hearts.

- 03** Read the story of Jesus returning to His hometown in Matthew 13:53-58 and explain in your own words the dynamic at work in the people of Nazareth and then compare it to the lack of the miraculous at work in the lives of American Christians.

Reflection Questions

- 01** Take a few minutes to think back on your own Christian history. Describe some of the more notable incidents you have experienced that can only be regarded as something beyond the scope of the explainable—something supernatural. If you haven’t experienced anything you would consider to be beyond the scope of natural life, just say that.

02 Based on what you've learned today, would you say that your life has been characterized by a living and miraculous relationship with God, or has it been characterized by religion that lacks the power of God?

03 I think it's fairly obvious to assert that those who walk closely with God will have a greater experience of His power in their lives. What are some areas of your life that would need to change in order to have a closer relationship with God? (Focus your list on other things beside sexual sin struggles).

Whether or not you have experienced the supernatural activity of God, one thing is certain: if you are addicted to pornography, you need God to perform a miracle in your life. To be gripped by a habit—to commit the same sinful activity time and time again with an inability to stop—means that your only hope is for God to do the needed work inside you to set you free.

Believe me when I tell you that He wants you to walk in victory. The truth is that He wants you for Himself and this idol of sex is keeping you from Him.



Prayer Point

This might be a good time to pour your heart out to the Lord, asking Him to do for you what you cannot do for yourself.