



Fascination with Evil

By Steve Gallagher

The images the investigator saw on that video probably still haunt him to this day. It opened with a girl tied to a chair and an unseen man speaking with her. “Please, give me my baby back,” she pleaded. “I’ll do anything you want.” “You will do anything I want, anyway,” was the cold response. The rest of the video was apparently so horrible that the detective became physically nauseous watching it. It was one of several “snuff films” made by serial killer Leonard Lake.

Now, be honest; you clicked on this article because the by-line grabbed your attention! Don’t feel too badly; the same thing happened to me when I came upon this story. I was at Walden Books when I noticed a coffee table book about serial killers. My life’s work is to help those in sexual deviancy so I always have a cautious interest in anything I might learn in this field. However, as I scanned the pages of this book, I found a morbid curiosity emerging within me and forced myself to put it down.

It was the same kind of interest that compelled me in 1981 when, as a bailiff working in the Los Angeles Criminal Courts building, I would look at the morgue photographs found in the evidence box of murder trials. Since becoming a believer, I have mostly avoided such things. And yet, apparently there is still enough interest within me to be willing to approach the peripheral edges of darkness for an occasional glimpse in.

Apparently, I am not the only person who is drawn to such things. For instance, witness the rash of new television programs that revolve around crime scene investigations. These pseudo-reality shows, which follow the investigation of a person’s murder, typically show some portion of the victim’s body. People have become fascinated with all of the science that goes into solving such murder cases.

This attraction with violence and evil is not limited to TV. Look at the print media, for instance. What stories make the biggest headlines? Are they the articles about someone who spends his off-hours feeding the poor? I’m afraid you will find that one buried in the back of the Living section. You know as well as I that the more shocking the story, the more attention it will be given in the news.

The undeniable truth is that our attraction to wicked things comes from our fallen nature. And yet believers are commanded to maintain a distance from the evil in this world. In the Old Testament, we find the Lord praising Job as “a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil.” (Job 1:8) Solomon said, “The prudent sees the evil and hides himself...” (Proverbs 22:3), and “A wise man turns away from evil...” (Proverbs 14:16)

This instruction is carried on in the New Testament where Paul writes, “Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good.” (Romans 12:9) He also asked, “What fellowship has light with darkness?” (II Corinthians 6:14)

It is clear that believers have no business focusing on darkness, no matter how natural the tendency. There is something about the familiarity with evil that tends to desensitize people. I think that the more we expose ourselves to it, the less we will see it for what it really is. Not only that, let’s face it: each time we come into contact with wickedness, it leaves its nasty fingerprints upon our souls.

This is especially important for Christian men who are trying to escape the clutches of habitual sexual sin. The enemy has used the curiosity of evil to ensnare many people into pornography and worse. Men who are already involved must “make no provision for the flesh.” It is this kind of decision that determines whether or not a man will break free from the hold of sexual sin. Paul said, “For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.” (Romans 8:6)

Instead of looking into evil things, I believe the Lord would have us focus our hearts upon Him. Isn’t that what Paul meant when he wrote the following? “Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.” (Colossians 3:1-2) Wouldn’t it be much more edifying if we spent time doing Bible studies or listening to worship music?

I acknowledge I was wrong for picking up that book. The fact is that my flesh is still interested in the dark side of life. However, in the future, with the Lord’s help, I will refrain from sneaking peaks into the world of darkness.

My commitment is not simply because I am convicted about the wrongness what I have done, but also because I know how marvelous it is to focus my heart upon the Lord. You see, although my flesh is drawn to evil, my spirit yearns for a fresh touch from God. I have come to see that while the flesh is interested in death and mayhem, the spirit is drawn to light and life.

That is the very reason that the writings of David have outlived those that have focused upon evil. I, for one, want to live in the mindset he expressed in the following words: “One thing I have asked from the Lord, that I shall seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to meditate in His temple. *When You said, ‘Seek My face,’* my heart said to You, ‘Your face, O Lord, I shall seek.’” (Psalm 27:4, 8)

Steve Gallagher is the founder and president of Pure Life Ministries. He has dedicated his life to helping men find freedom from sexual sin and the abundant life in God that comes through deep repentance.

2007 www.purelifeministries.org. All rights reserved. Permission is granted to use, copy, distribute, or retransmit information or materials on this page in accordance with our [terms and conditions](#), so long as proper acknowledgment is given to Pure Life Ministries as the source of the materials, and no modifications are made to such material.