

## Part 1 – Who are we?

### **Everyman's Battle** by Stephen Arterburn and Fred Stoeker

Each part of this book composes several chapters; in this part, the chapters are:

1. Our stories
2. Paying the price
3. Addiction...or something else?

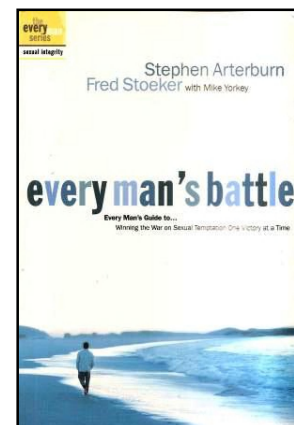
### Our Stories

...Introduces the reader to each of two authors; the one being who wrecks his car while glaring at a girl running along the side of the road; the second who is introduced to porn through his dad.

We all have stories; and each of us has a story (or more) about our introduction and early encounters with sex.

Here's a little about my story (s):

- I remember seeing porn magazines for the first time at friend's houses; the stuff belonged to their dad (s)...
- Girls were always attractive to me (in a curious way because of their apparent difference). My attention was true of elementary school – and it never really stopped; but adolescence brought more attention to sex rather than “innocence” and romance of the relationship...and brought guilt and shame with it.
- There was also the “locker room” variety of conversation or commentary that could not be avoided; the information was both enticing but also shameful too, at times – leaving me with mixed feelings, wanting the experience but shamed still the same...



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Is there a price to pay...when you play with sexual activity? Let's find out....

#### Paying the Price

One of the two talks of his longstanding pattern of one-night stands and short-term sexual relationships. A mild sense of what he went through is described in the simple gesture or act of a kiss. The child or youth might view the kiss as a wonderful, singular and unique experience of affection or communication; but for the seasoned sexual man, the kiss was merely a gate to open for entry into the dwelling. The beautiful exchange of a kiss had long lost its value.

Eventually this first author got help or counseling; he learned in more clarity who he was...before God. The sexual appetite that he had fed all these years was insatiable. He met a woman and they dated the right way, and married in the Christian church with lifetime commitment.

His struggle and losses did not end with marriage however; and for some time to come, he knew that he must further surrender his every part that kept him from greater fellowship with God, commitment and faith toward holiness. He described his life as ensnared; yes, captive in his thoughts and wanting...

In this man's life was a legacy of unfaithfulness. His grandfather had left his grandmother, his father had left his mother, and...  
Was there a generational curse; and if so, what that all there was?

#### Addiction...or something else?

The book, *The Drug of the New Millennium* by Mark Kastleman, made the point of the addiction of porn; that porn actually affects the brain chemically so that it acts as a conventional drug. The sexual appetite is known to be insatiable; it is known to be unlimited as to gratification.

Our sexual appetite can a struggle to the degree of enslaving us – of holding us captive to the carnal nature of our physical being and to the limits of our own ability to overcome this god in our lives. Yes, sex can be a god; something we worship and exalt to the degree that it's what makes life worth living. If we consider sex as just another trap of the flesh (like power, greed, etc.), we can begin to understand the passions of our youth and the impulses of our mind as a stronghold for which God can and will break.

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King David's power and prominence was seemingly at its peak when he sinned in adultery. Remember that David had many wives and concubines; so it wasn't a matter of want when it came to his appetite or consumption of sex. As a king, David had the pick of the litter of those not married or committed to marriage.

His sin with a married woman came on impulse. Some might say it was being at the wrong place and the wrong time; but whatever the saying, David chose to sin in adultery. A moment of lust and passion gave way to action, then adultery, then action to conceal his adultery, then murder...

As close to God as David had been – as blessed in his favor before God – David was not exempt from the trappings of sexual lust and adultery. One fascinating and insightful perspective of this account of sin is that it arrived on impulse and was conducted in a series of immediate and extreme behavior. David seemingly was not aware of the egregious acts he had committed; he was not aware or conscience of his behavior.

When confronted however, David immediately confessed and went into a period of repentance and grief over his sins. His sincere repentance is what restored his life or heart to God.

The consequences of his decisions or behavior were similarly severe. More grief was in store for David and his family. David was "paying the price" of his own folly and sins.

You may remember the song, "Addicted to Love" (estimated in 1990's). Well, the authors of the book have a similar name, "Addictive Sex", to describe our hidden life of sex. Addictive Sex includes those things we do in private to gratify our sexual desire:

- Fantasies or imaginative thought about real or fictitious persons
- Masturbation
- Videos, Internet and other media
- 900 numbers and similar

An important point that the authors make regarding addictive sex is that men do it to "escape from pain and problems." Remember that sex can be addictive (as a drug) and, as with other drugs, can be used to medicate, to escape pain. Once the young man understands that addictive sex serves this purpose, he can develop some honesty about sex and its drive, its purpose, and its abuses.

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In the realm of real people, sex can be used to control, even manipulate. Men develop a sense of control of women whom they have sex with...and vice versa. Historically, women have used sex (or sex appeal) to achieve other things – lending to its use *as a means to an end*. Men may easily fall for this appeal and attraction in that such attention is appealing to their ego. Even the mildest attention, posed innocently, can turn a man *into a loaf of bread* (says the Proverb).

Love and sex is beautiful...as God designed it. As with other designs of God, sex has been *run through the mill* of humanity to an endless degree of abuses. From the initial sin, man has been corrupt; and part of that corruption is shared in relationships, courtship, marriage, divorce, family and society. For the individual, this corruption begins in the mind – the spiritual battlefield. Some level of this battle will always brew in the minds of humans as long as we live in the flesh. Still, God can transform the mind and he cleanses the heart. Addictive sex and its cousins is just one thing that can occupy the mind and lead to idolatry. There are others still...

Women may have difficulty (or impossibility) in understanding the male sex drive: men and women are *wired* differently and, in most cases, have differing senses or behavior. This difference is confusing for men too; let alone the women that must compete or contend with it. The authors tell the reader:

There's a natural tug-of-war in the hearts of women between pity and disgust, between mercy and judgment.

They advise open and honest dialogue in the relationship. Again, there are others gods that can enter the mind, the relationship and the family...to its detriment.