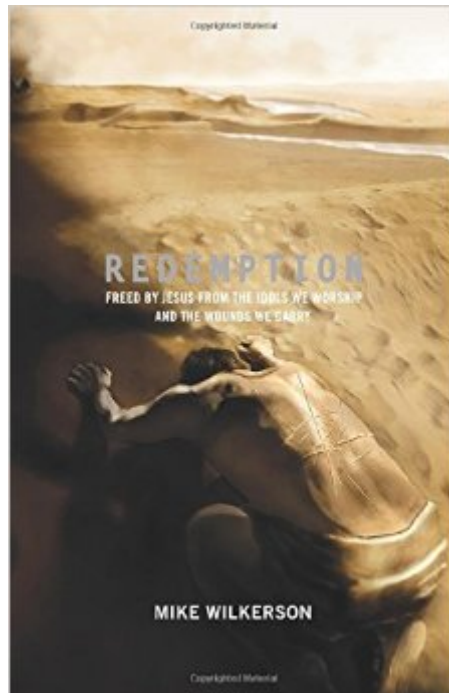


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Redemption: Freed By Jesus From The Idols We Worship And The Wounds We Carry



Synopsis

Exodus is a real story about God redeeming his people from the bondage of slavery and how their difficult journey home exposed their loyaltiesâ”though wounded by Egypt, they had come to worship its gods. Most Christians donâ”t make golden idols like the Israelites in the wilderness, but we do set up idols on our own desert roadâ”idols like substance abuse, pornography, gluttony, and rage. And even those who donâ”t know the pain of actual slavery can feel enslaved to the fear and shame that follow sexual abuse or betrayal by a spouse, for we suffer at the hands of our idols as well as those created by others. We need more than self-improvement or comfortâ”we need redemption. Redemption is not a step-oriented recovery book; itâ”s story-oriented and Bible-anchored. It unfolds the back-story of redemption in Exodus to help Christians better understand how Christ redeems us from the slavery of abuse, addiction and assorted trouble and restores us to our created purpose, the worship of God. Readers will discover that the reward of freedom is more than victory over a habitual sin or release from shame; it is satisfaction and rest in God himself.

Book Information

Paperback: 208 pages

Publisher: Crossway; a edition (January 5, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 143352077X

ISBN-13: 978-1433520778

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.5 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 starsÂ” See all reviewsÂ” (121 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #32,412 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #28 inÂ” Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Ministry & Evangelism > Counseling & Recovery #720 inÂ” Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Christian Living > Spiritual Growth #7500 inÂ” Books > Religion & Spirituality

Customer Reviews

Christians sometimes have an odd relationship with the Old Testament. Some simply avoid it, due to its particularly nasty depiction of humanity (well deserved at that). Others moralize it, treating everything as an object lesson. "David overcame his giant, what's yours," and that sort of thing. And still others seek to discover where the Old Testament bears witness to Christ. as He Himself said it did (cf. John 5:39; Luke 24:13-35). From the first word of Genesis to the last word of Malachi, it's all

about Jesus. That includes the exodus. This momentous event in the history of the Jewish people became the archetype of God's saving work as the writers of Scripture in both Testaments referenced it again and again. Indeed, Pastor Mike Wilkerson writes, "When it comes to understanding redemption, the key back story in the Bible is the exodus" (p. 33). But what does the Exodus tell us about Jesus--and how does reading it help me, practically? In *Redemption*, Wilkerson offers thoughtful answers as he examines the exodus account and shows us how through it Jesus frees us from the shame of sin and the futility of idolatry. The challenge with many books of this nature is that it's very easy for solid, biblical answers to some of life's toughest questions to ring hollow. "If God is really good, why did this happen to me?" "Why does God feel so far away?" "I thought this addiction was behind me--why does it keep coming back?" "Do I really have to forgive him?" "Am I destined to be alone for the rest of my life?" Our anger at others, our anger at God, our frustration over besetting sin... these are not subjects handled lightly.

I expected *Redemption* to strengthen the way that I do ministry and help me develop a plan for healing the brokenness in our church community. I did not expect it to confront my idolatry. But it did. One of the things that I often pray is, "Break me where I need broken and heal me where I need healed". There are certain books that have a tendency to be used by God to do both. Wilkerson's book confronts our idolatry (breaks us) but it also displays the beauty of Christ and provides substantial healing. As stated earlier this is an adaptation of what Mars Hill uses for their redemption groups. Their redemption groups are an interesting concept. Rather than having specific groups for various addictions they have one specific group. But what is even more interesting is that they not only combine the various forms of addiction, they also have those that are victims go through the same material in the same group. This book is essentially what they use. How can something possibly tie together victims and addicts? The thread that holds these two together is the biblical theme of Redemption. In this book Wilkerson uses the biblical story of the Exodus as a framework for God's pattern of redemption. One thing that addicts and victims have in common is a desperate need for redemption (freedom). Wilkerson uses the story of the Exodus to both break and heal sinners in the name of Jesus. The book is eight chapters long. Stories of real people is interwoven with the real biblical story of the Israelite Exodus. God redeems people today just as He redeemed the Israelites, and he does it through Christ. Wilkerson shows his firm commitment to the Scriptures and solid biblical scholarship. But he also shows that he is a physician of the soul as well.

We live in a sin-stained, idol-filled, addiction-prone world and humanities' greatest need is for

redemption. However, for many Christians, bridging the gap that often exists between the Bible and the trial is incredibly difficult. Even those who are well-trained in hermeneutics struggle from time to time to apply God's Word in a relevant way that speaks powerfully to the human condition. With this in mind, Mike Wilkerson, counseling pastor at Mars Hill Church in Seattle, has written a brilliant book entitled *Redemption: Freed by Jesus from the Idols We Worship and the Wounds We Carry*. Drawing upon the Exodus event and real-life stories of addictions, hurt and idolatry, Wilkerson paints a vivid picture on how Jesus leads us to freedom. Some of the stories Wilkerson tells are absolutely gut-wrenching and will make even the most jaded reader wince. Yet that makes the picture of the redemption we have in Christ all the more beautiful. After an introduction that orients the reader to the reason why sin exists, the first chapter, entitled "When You Suffer, God is Near" outlines how just as Israel suffered under the brutality of the Egyptians, we too suffer. Yet it is in our darkest hour of suffering that we can see the evidences of God most clearly. The second chapter, entitled "Bricks Without Straw: How Long Oh Lord" encourages believers and those who are hurting most to cry out honestly to God in the midst of our hurt. We may not always receive an answer for why we suffer, yet the Christian can place his or her faith in a God who is always faithful. Chapter three, entitled "The Passover: At Your Worst, God Gives His Best" Wilkerson shows how the Passover becomes a picture of the cross and a model for God's dealings with us.

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