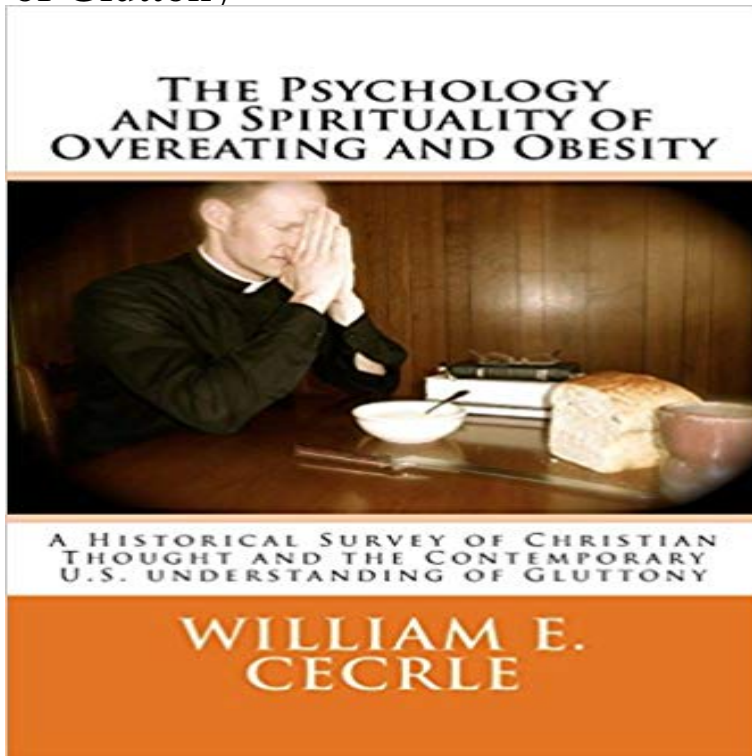


The Psychology and Spirituality of Overeating and Obesity: A Historical Survey of Christian Thought and the Contemporary U.S. understanding of Gluttony



Eat to live, dont live to eat. This was a common precept through much of Judeo-christian history. Gluttony held a special and deadly place in the taxonomy of sins for many centuries and it is particularly interesting that now, during our countrys epidemic of obesity and eating disorders, the Church has become relatively silent on the issue. This book is an in-depth exploration of gluttony. The methodology is an interdisciplinary one that incorporates theology, psychology and biological sciences. It addresses the pertinent issues of obesity, overeating and other eating disorders from a distinct theological and psychological perspective. The first chapter is a historical survey of the Christian treatment of gluttony. The historical survey begins with detailed exegesis of Old and New Testament passages that are the most relevant to the sin of gluttony, followed by gluttonys treatment by the Patristics, Thomas Aquinas, Martin Luther, John Calvin, and John Wesley. The second chapter is a review of contemporary literature about gluttony. This chapter includes a review of both academic literature and popular religious literature. The third chapter discusses the current Christian and U.S. understanding of gluttony. Both the philosophical and sociological underpinnings of the current understanding are discussed. Chapter Four is a proposed reclamation of a more potent definition of gluttony. Chapter Five is an exploration of the theological and moral importance of gluttony. Chapter Six is about how gluttony is expressed within the contemporaneous U.S. and the role of the Church within that expression. Chapter Seven has recommendations for the Church and for individual Christians.

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