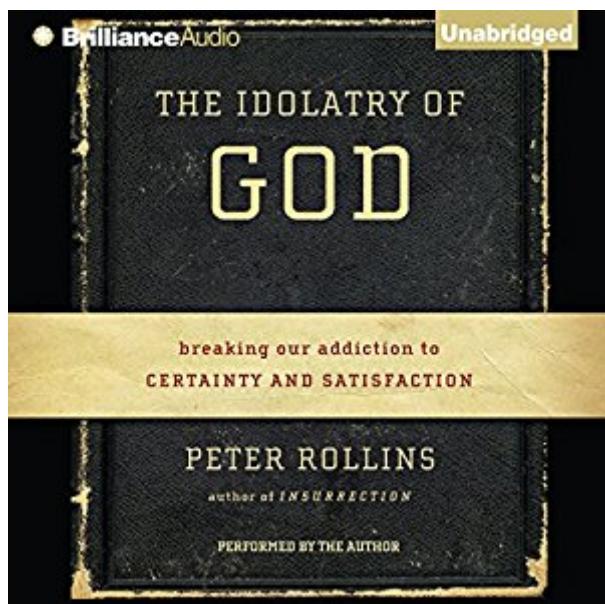


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The Idolatry Of God: Breaking Our Addiction To Certainty And Satisfaction



Synopsis

Whether listeners are devout believers or distant seekers, The Idolatry of God shows that we must lay down our certainties and honestly admit our doubts to identify with Jesus. Rollins purposely upsets fundamentalist certainty in order to open listeners up to a more loving, active manifestation of Christ's love. In contrast to the usual understanding of the "Good News" as a message offering satisfaction and certainty, Rollins argues for a radical and shattering alternative. He explores how the Good News actually involves embracing the idea that we can't be whole, that life is difficult, and that we are in the dark. Showing how God has traditionally been approached as a product that will render us complete, remove our suffering, and reveal the answers, he introduces an incendiary approach to faith that invites us to joyfully embrace our brokenness, resolutely face our unknowing, and courageously accept the difficulties of existence. Only then, he argues, can we truly rob death of its sting and enter into the fullness of life.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In this book, Pete continues his program of incendiary theology - burning all the things that get in the way of having a bare bones, gut-level relationship with God. He talks about our quest for answers and victory over our circumstances as being idolatrous, as being the real object of our worship rather than God Himself. He is not writing anything new, because people like Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Soren Kierkegaard have written in a similar vein many years before, but Pete brings his unique version of this message in a different style, using more contemporary images and stories. As an

example, have a look at this passage from Bonhoeffer (Ethics):"Only by God's executing judgement upon Himself can there be peace between Him and the world and between man and man. But the secret of this judgement, of this passion and death, is the love of God for the world and for man.What befall Christ befalls every man in Him. It is only as one who is sentenced by God that man can live before God. Only the crucified man is at peace with God. It is in the figure of the Crucified that man recognizes and discovers himself. To be taken up by God, to be executed on the cross and reconciled, that is the reality of manhood." [in chapter titled Ecco Homo - The Successful Man]Peter Rollins puts it like this:"This means that the crucifixion bears witness to a form of life that is free from our obsessive drive for the idol, a form of life in which our zombie nature is cured. For to lose the idol means to lose that drive which prevents us from fully embracing our life and taking pleasure in it. It means giving up our desire for ultimate satisfaction and then, in that act, discovering a deeper, more beautiful satisfaction, one that is not constantly deferred but that can be grasped here and now. Not one that promises to make us whole and remove our suffering, but one that promises joy in the midst of our brokenness and depth in the very embrace of our pain." [End of Chapter 4]Obviously they are writing in very different styles and using very different perspectives, but essentially they are bringing the same message.This is one of those books that should be read slowly, and every image savoured. Like Bonhoeffer's Ethics and his Christology, it should be re-read every year because new meaning and application can be found again and again.Anyone looking for answers or new methods of creating "meaningful worship experiences" will be disappointed by this book. It doesn't give answers, but raises questions that we need to explore in our own lives and communities. And ultimately it's questions that keep us close to God, whilst answers drive us away from Him.Ethics

This, like the other books of Rollins' I have read has been extremely helpful. Assisting me with tools to interrogate the way I have believed what I have believed. In a world and (western) culture where consumption and capitalism permeates our lives in such constant and prevalent fashion, the message of this book is never more pertinent. The way God is generally perceived and intertwined with the capitalist way of life is laid out well here.Our need to view God as another subjective entity to add to our shopping list is an insightful and necessary aspect of generally accepted modern faith well analysed and critiqued here.Definitely a book for the open minded. If your views and beliefs are rigid, expect them to be challenged.And this review goes out to a dog bearing my name... May you live long and prosper Hudson. :)

This book is a challenge to the way the Christian life is often perceived. It encourages readers to understand that life can suck and in this world uncertainty and dissatisfaction are the norm and no matter how much we would wish it otherwise we need learn to live in the current environment.

This book has helped me deal with and understand the brokenness of being human. I identified with the idea of holding God as an idol (placing God in the same category as money, cars, wealth, success, etc.) with the hopes of eventually not feeling suffering any longer. Peter Rollins offers a different approach to Christianity which helps me embrace the brokenness of being human, and dive in to the act of loving others, with no hopes of reward.

Few books about the Christian experience have spoken to me as deeply as have those written by Pete Rollins. Rather than merely regurgitating the same old, Pete 'lifts the hood', as it were, and thoroughly examines what is actually happening. While most Christian authors pen books that rubber stamp the status quo to assure their book purchasing constituency that everything is ok, Pete invites us to ask honest questions no matter how it hurts. He brings to the surface the 'process' of our thinking, rather than simply discussing the content of our belief. This book is well worth reading if you are honest enough to wrestle with realities.

Peter Rollins is an emerging voice in the art of desecrating sacred cows for the purpose of reconstructing a new way to theorize about the character of God. He suggests that our fundamental presuppositions are based on answers to the wrong questions, and therefore begs the reader to re-think the framework of our systematic theologies. I would have liked to have seen a final chapter with a few resolutions, based on the revelation of God to us through the Bible. I know it's trendy to shrug it all off as mystery, but at the end of the day - spiritual leaders are entrusted with the mission of guiding God's children into deeper streams of Truth. And there are few things that God has indeed revealed about His own character; let's talk about those things...Jay DePoy, Lead Pastor of Exodus Church (Asheville, NC).

Rollins makes one consider whether or not the conception of "God" they have in mind is an idol of their own creation or if we need to think about and encounter "God" in a different way. Rather than reinforcing the concepts that many of us have regarding the God of the Bible, especially evangelicals, Rollins turns these upside down and makes us look deeper inside, deeper than many of us are comfortable with. A great book.

I really liked "The Idolatry of God." It challenged my images/idols of God. It raised questions about how I view God in unhealthy and unreal ways. I believe Rollins drew heavily upon Paul Tillich's theology for the basis of his work. I appreciated the illustrations. However, I found the movie illustrations to not always exactly fit the point he was trying to make or illustrate. Overall, it was an excellent read.

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