

Soul Rape: Why People Hate Going to Church, Distrust Clergy, Avoid Religion, Keep Searching for God, and the Revolution They Started

Shean A Smith

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There's something elusive about the spiritual freedom the Church promises to those who come through its doors. The Church preaches God's unmerited favor towards humanity and then adds lists of duties we must perform to keep God happy. "If you love God," pulpits say, "you'll go to church, obey the clergy, tithe, witness, and get more people into church." Feeling like we have no other choice and fearful of reprisals from God, as Church members we perform our religious obligations and feel ashamed and guilty when we fail to meet the Church's expectations. The cycle is never ending; we feel guilty and shameful when we fail in any of our religious obligations. When we feel guilty, we try harder and rededicate ourselves to God but always end up back where we started-feeling guilty for failing him in our duties. Soul Rape identifies the elements of organized religion, its services, and its leadership, which work in concert to make and keep loyal members, using guilt and shame as the driving forces. The book shows how walking with God should be simple and free from religious obligation. No more religious obligation means no more: Religion, Going to Church, Clergy, Sermons, Tithing, Church Politics, Shame, or Guilt.



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