



The Abuse of Power: A Theological Problem

James Newton Poling

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Pastoral care instruction and observation from a therapist of survivors of sexual abuse.

"The Abuse of Power is 'must' reading for clergy and denominational officials.... Weaving case stories with theory, Poling demonstrates that sexual abuse of children is not a private matter, but very much a matter for society and church--a question of structure and ideology, not just of individual character. He is not afraid to tackle the tough question: Does the image of God sacrificing Jesus on the cross contribute to abusive parent-child relationships?...If pastors and church officials read this book the church will change." --Karen Lebacqz, Pacific School of Religion

"For the exploitation of women and children to stop, men must be willing to break ranks with all forms of privilege that sanction male dominance. James Poling does so by deconstructing his own sense of male entitlement, by refusing to distance himself from perpetrators, by allowing survivors of sexual and domestic violence to speak with their own voices, by giving us profound words of hope, and by articulating a powerfully healing theology wrought through the depths of his own struggle with one of the worst evils in our society. His courageous and compassionate work reveals the love and hope that is born of solidarity across the boundaries of gender, sexual orientation, race, and economics....The psychological, political, spiritual, and theological power of this book is such that all educators, ministers, therapists, and Christians must read it." --Rita Nakashima Brock, Hamline University

Chapter titles are: 1. Hearing the Silenced Voices 2. Power and Abuse of Power 3. "Karen": Survivor of Sexual Violence 4. Stories of Recovering Perpetrators 5. The Schreber Case: Methods of Analysis 6. The Search for Self 7. The Search for Community 8. The Search for God 9. Ministry Practice and Practical Theology

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