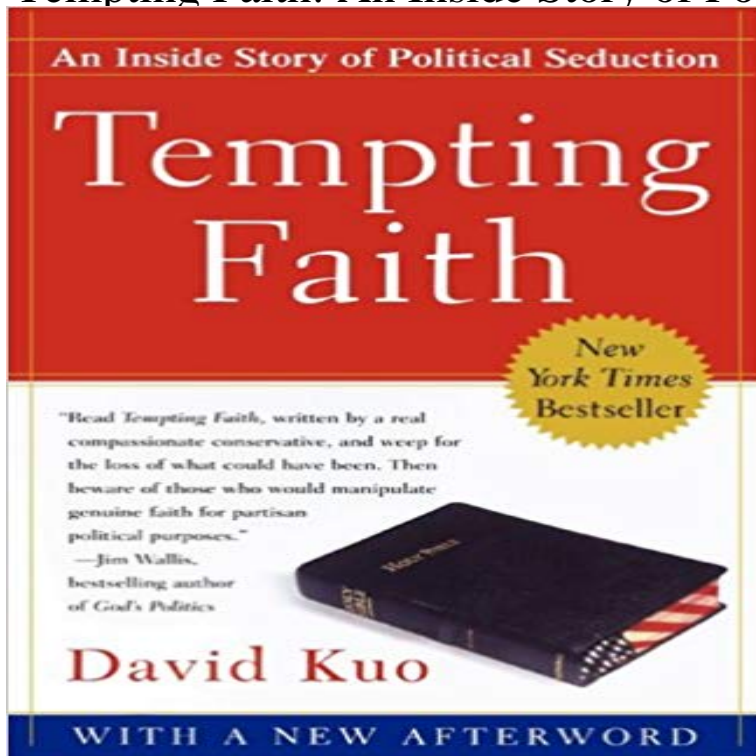


## Tempting Faith: An Inside Story of Political Seduction



David Kuo came to Washington wanting to use his Christian faith to end abortion, strengthen marriage, and help the poor. He reached the heights of political power, ultimately serving in the White House under George W. Bush, after being policy adviser to John Ashcroft and speechwriter for Ralph Reed, Pat Robertson, and Bob Dole. It was a dream come true: the chance to fuse his politics and his faith, and an opportunity for Christians not just to gain a seat at the proverbial table but to plan the entire meal. Kuo spent nearly three years as second in command at the presidents Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. Yet his experience was deeply troubling. It took both the Bush White House and a severe health crisis to show him how his Christian values, and those of millions of Americans, were being corrupted by politics. Instead of following the teachings of Jesus to serve the needy, Kuo found himself helping to manipulate religious faith for political gain. Public funds were used in battleground states, for Republican campaign events. The legislative process was used as a football, not to pass laws but to deepen purely symbolic fault lines. Grants were incestuously recycled to political cronies. Both before and after 9/11, despite lofty rhetoric from the president claiming that his faith-based program was one of his most important initiatives, there was no serious attempt to fund valuable charities. Worst of all was the prevailing attitude in the White House and throughout Washington toward Christian leaders. Key Bush aides and Republican operatives spoke of them with contempt and treated them as useful idiots. It became clear, during regular conference calls arranged from the White House with a key group of Christian leaders, that many of these religious leaders had themselves been utterly seduced by politics. It is time, Kuo argues, for Christians to take a temporary

step back from politics, to turn away from its seductions. Tempting Faith is equal parts headline-making expose, political and spiritual memoir, and heartfelt plea for a Christian reexamination of political involvement.

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