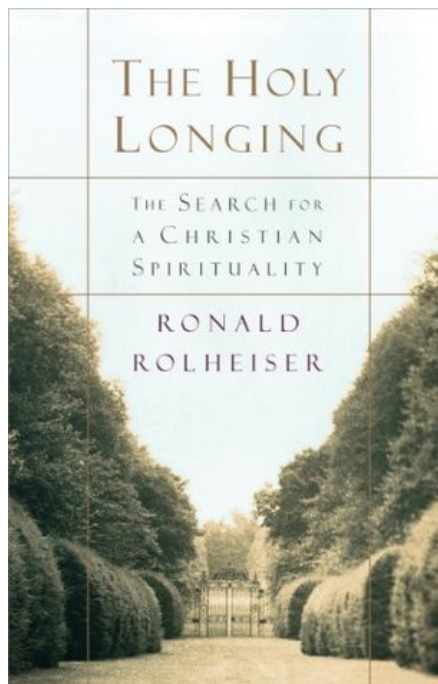




The Holy Longing: The Search for a Christian Spirituality

Ronald Rolheiser

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Ronald Rolheiser makes sense of what is frequently a misunderstood word: spirituality. In posing the question "What is spirituality?" Father Rolheiser gets quickly to the heart of common difficulties with the subject, and shows through compelling anecdotes and personal examples how to channel that restlessness, that deep desire, into a healthy spirituality.

This book is for those searching to understand what Christian spirituality means and how to apply it to their own lives. Rolheiser explains the nonnegotiables--the importance of community worship, the imperatives surrounding social action, the centrality of the Incarnation, the sustenance of the spiritual life--and how spirituality necessarily impacts every aspect of human experience. At the core of this readable, deeply revealing book is an explanation of God and the Church in a world that more often than not doubts the credibility of both.

From the Hardcover edition.

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From Reader Review The Holy Longing: The Search for a Christian Spirituality for online ebook

Gary Cleveland says

Finished reading it today.

One gem to share. "Spirituality is about what we do with the fire inside us....."

Jackie St Hilaire says

When all is said and done: "We come from God, we return to God".

But it's the years in between that make us grow, sometimes it is forced growth and other times we choose. In the last part of life is when most of the choices have to be made because if we haven't figured it out yet, we could severally damage our inner soul. Better to be prepared.

Ron Rohlheiser in his book "Holy Longing: The Search for a Christian Spirituality" gives us hope that all is not lost, that maybe, just maybe, we have made a few wrong turns on our journey. Forgiving ourselves and moving on can be a long process. You can take as long as you want but you might go deeper and deeper into the abyss.

Little steps, don't get ahead of God. Be patient , we have all eternity.

Simon says

One of the most engaging books I've read on Christian spirituality in some time. A friend asked Rolheiser to write a book they could hand on to others, and to read when they needed to be rekindled. It fills that bill. Good coverage on God among us (the incarnation); on the Christian community (Church); on the life, death and resurrection of Christ (the paschal mystery); on justice and peace; on sexuality. Sound thinking is backed up by many examples from the author's life or from other stories. Well worth a read.

Denise says

I have loved reading Fr. Ron Rolheiser's articles in the Catholic Register, but was never expecting how thoroughly I would enjoy this book! His reflection on Spirituality and the "Longing of the Soul" hit home. Rolheiser makes a worthy case on why community is so important to all of us - one of our greatest needs and points to the Church community as necessary for us to live. Each chapter is laid out in an understandable but not simplistic way and is so enjoyable to read. I look forward to reading his other books.

Cameron Murray says

I've got some mixed feelings about this book. A dear priest friend of mine gave this to me to read back in college several years back, and I lost track of it. Recently, I picked it up again when I was perusing through my books to grab another one to read.

There's good, and there's bad. Another review here mentioned that, "when it's good, it's very good. When it's bad, it's horrid." I think those words are true here in regards this book. When I'm leaping for joy after having finished a book because I no longer have to read that book, I don't consider that a wonderful thing. It's important that we reflect on the book itself and ask ourselves, "was I the intended audience for this writer?" I think it's only fair and just to review it according to the answer we have for that question.

I want to say that the author intended this to be read by anyone, but perhaps more beneficial to particular individuals in certain places on their "spiritual" journey. As a practicing and active Catholic who tries to immerse oneself in apologetics, philosophy, and theology, I didn't find this book particularly beneficial for myself.

It was not enthralling or exciting. It was rather boring to read, in my opinion. There was much redundancy and repetition, which made me slug along even slower. The last time I was this bored reading a book immersed in spirituality was the Confessions by St Augustine (whom I love dearly, don't get me wrong) and that book took me like 5 years to read.

I think part of the bore was that the author seemed to stretch awfully far to make connections and conclusions, such as sex being the primordial energy in the universe, calling God a mother, and the like. I also get bummed when I see a Catholic priest make incorrect references to quotes (such as the classic quote attributed to St Francis).

I think the book would likely best suit someone of a secular walk who has some interest in the Christian thought of parts of spirituality. The author had many gems and one liners, one of which I liked: "It is not so much that we misunderstand what the incarnation means, it is more that we grasp only the smallest tip of the great iceberg. We miss its meaning by not seeing its immensity." (pg 75). Lines like this show up time and again throughout the read, and admittedly, kept me engaged just enough to plow through and try to find more.

Linda Robins says

As is frequently the case, this book came to me just at a time when I needed it the most. Father Rolheiser's loving, intelligent writings are the perfect antidote for the "crazy Christians" who seem to be the public face of faith in the US right now. His God is loving, intelligent, and expansive--I will return to this book many times when I need a "tune-up" from cynicism and reassurance that ignorance and intolerance are never a part of following Christ.

Nicole says

An intelligently written book about Jesus and Christianity. I like this book because it offers up Christianity in a positive light, not commercialized, no hint of any social conservatism/right of center politics, and most importantly no littering of fundamentalist views. The Holy Longing speaks about spirituality in regards to Christianity instead of 'religion,' which is why I gave this book a chance and I'm glad that I did. There is no phony Christian agenda evident, just a book about discovering your OWN personal relationship with God.

Whitney Holley says

Beautifully written and thought out. I took my time reading this and found myself thinking about certain passages throughout my day. Rolheiser makes the case for combining religion and spirituality and how you can't have one without the other. He is able to challenge his reader in a loving way that makes you trust him and try to understand his point of view. I look forward to reading more from him and plan to come back to this book when I need to be reminded to look for peace within myself and my community of faith.

Matthew says

This is a great book to offer people who have lost their Christian way or are interested to Christianity. The author is a Roman Catholic priest and brings in the joy and fullness of faith of the Catholic faith in certain parts. His perspective of certain issues has really opened my eyes. I do find a stretch to some of his conclusions to Biblical readings but his stories paint a great picture and helped me relate to his points to Christianity.

Jess says

Valuable book. I will need to read again to digest. An easy read but concepts deserve contemplation. One of the few books that actually provides a unique and authentic perspective. Not cliché or tired.

David Clark says

This was a book recommended by a wise and thoughtful friend and it did not disappoint. I have used it for my morning devotionals and both the author's craft and content have been a rich source of delight and stimulation. I awarded this book five stars but a better measure might be the copious margin notes, underlining, and large number of colored reminder tags now peeking out from the text.

Rolheiser writes from a Roman Catholic point of view but is remarkably open handed. This is not to suggest the author does not advance a theological point of view. However, the author chooses to search for and occupy that ground common to all Christ followers. As a non-Roman Catholic, I found his critique of both Protestant and Catholic approaches to spiritual practice fair, open-handed, and quite helpful.

A particularly notable feature of this book is Rolheiser's emphasis upon an ecclesiology centered Spiritual Practice. While others have suggested we need religion rather than spirituality--perhaps a glib caveat spurred by the our current hyper-individualistic culture--Rolheiser's book clearly suggests this push to choose between spirituality and religion is unnecessary--heretical even.

A well written book, a book of practical help I will recommend to my students and friends, and a book of wisdom to which I shall return.

Rosemarie says

This book had some great insights. Rolheiser begins by defining Spirituality in very broad terms and showing how everyone - religious or not - HAS a Spiritual side. There is a very interesting part where he compares three women: Mother Teresa, Princess Diana and Janis Joplin, showing how they may seem very different, but it really all comes down to how they dealt with their Spirituality. This part comes at the beginning and really got me into the book.

He then focuses specifically on the components of a healthy Christian Spiritual life. He talks about the "non-negotiable" pillars of Christian Spirituality and makes some very good points as to why he considers them so.

There is also a wonderful part where he talks about how a person can be happy or unhappy in ANY state or stage in life. If you think you are unhappy because you don't have something - you're wrong. Lots of people who have it are very unhappy - and lots of people who don't are very happy. It's about surrendering to the Spirit - allowing it to descend and give you the grace to live happily with any life situation. This was one of my favorite parts of the book because the idea was new to me - I'd never heard anyone put it quite the way this author does.

Overall, I really enjoyed the book. Rolheiser is a very good writer. I had heard of him before but never had the chance to read any of his work. I had to read this book for a class, but now I'm just glad that I read it for myself, and would gladly read any of his other books. I'd recommend this one to anyone who would like a better understanding of what Spirituality is...and what it is not.

Matthew says

Perhaps one of the best spiritual books ever written. This book really provides a persuasive argument for the human need for spirituality and a sound foundation for anyone who wants to practice an authentic Christian faith, especially the Catholic faith. It gave me a vocabulary and appreciation for the faith I have been practicing and challenged me to go deeper on several levels. Great and easy read that can transform you very quickly!

Jan Petrozzi says

By far, this is one of the best books I have read. Rolheiser presents a look at spirituality in a way that, until now, was unfamiliar to me. I cannot think of anyone I know who would not benefit from reading this book. I want to send it to all of my friends. It is lovely. Received an assignment to read certain chapters each week for a theology class and I couldn't help but to jump ahead and finish it way before it was due. Hated to put it down to attend to my other assignments.

Maria Elisabeth says

When it's good, it's very very good, and when it's bad, it's horrid.

It's mostly good. :)
