



Soul Making: The Desert Way of Spirituality

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A leading spiritual writer recovers "The Desert Way of Believing" -- the spiritual pathway discovered by early Christian monks who lived in the Egyptian desert that is still relevant to Christians today. Alan Jones distills the elements that made this fully orthodox way of inner transformation a unique and important part of the early church. Refreshingly readable and filled with rich insights, *Soul Making* draws together the spirituality of modern literature and elements of psychology. Jones shows how the desert way can become for any spiritual seeker a soul-stretching means of experiencing the "wonder, mystery, and awe" at the heart of the Christian faith.

Soul Making: The Desert Way of Spirituality Details

Date : Published May 10th 1989 by HarperOne (first published 1985)

ISBN : 9780060641795

Author : Alan W. Jones

Format : Paperback 240 pages

Genre : Spirituality, Nonfiction, Religion, Theology, Prayer

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Debra says

This book contained some gems, but they were hard to uncover amidst the circuitous writing, use of quotes and metaphors that are as clear as mud, and pontificating against "believers." If I didn't have to read this book for a class, then I would not have finished it.

Kay says

Exhausting read. Clearly, this author was struggling with his own issues. Exhausting.

Kj says

I want to re-read this.

Charlanne says

I could potentially give this book more stars because I love the point this author makes, but it gets lost a little in his language and non-linear expression. So, some artsy and poetic and such would enjoy his metaphors in the desert way of faith and belief, or the desert journey to faith, but it can be hard to follow. Plus, he uses many psychological references which aren't as accessible to everyone.

Linda says

this book came to me when i most needed it. it is full of lovely as well as excruciating wisdom. it had the effect of soothing my soul and helping my spiritual growth and renewal.
i recommend Soul Making for anyone in search of honesty and authenticity.

Sarah says

I'll reread this for the rest of my life.

Jill says

Took me a while to get through this non-fiction book. It is rather deep and thought provoking. Some themes in the book that touched me were "joy", "shame" and different meanings and levels of "conversion".

Amy says

This book helped me through a spiritual "desert" time. It not only gave me perspective on the Desert Fathers who went into the desert to be with God, but also some great psychological insights into why I doubt, why I seek, and why I will never stop asking questions to God and about God.

John Kennedy says

This 25-year-old book was recommended to me, and I'm grateful. Jones says, "one of the ways by which we are encouraged to forget our true worth and are seduced into trying to build up our 'dignity' is in the practice of religion." Jones admits to finding it increasingly difficult to feel at home with fellow Christians while becoming more comfortable with non-Christians. The two characteristics he admires most in both kinds of people are honesty and reverence. Jones is saddened by Christians who have repeated a simple formula designed to get them into heaven, then live an unfruitful life characterized by judging others and seeking revenge. The two marks of the Christian, he says, are joy and penitence. Jones shows that the Christian life is full of sorrow, and that we don't really grow unless we empty ourselves to God's will: "Christianity is a shocking religion, although many of its adherents have managed to protect themselves from its terrible impact. Tears, an awareness of one's psychic fragility and a deep sense of peace and joy are not the most obvious marks of believers today." Even sin can result in good, Jones says, because it is the knowledge of the sin that releases tears.

Carol says

One of the most impacting books when I moved from being Baptist to Anglican. Such startling and comforting revelations about the cyclical nature of spiritual growth. Or I guess I should say spiral as you may end up back where you started, but you are definitely in a different place.

Nate says

Good book about confronting the ambiguities and complexities of the spiritual life. I can't think of anybody who shouldn't read this. Jones grounds his perspective in the life of the ancient desert-dwelling monks who were confronted with their own personal difficulties regularly, but who also learned that by putting to death their fleshly tendencies, they were able to experience the true love of God and communal interdependence. This is a great book for any Christian who feels like their expression of Christianity isn't working, or isn't answering the deeper questions of their soul that keep dogging them. Alan Jones is a wonderful guide through this journey.

Lindsey says

I am editing my initial response to this book. i loved it last year, but it's interesting b/c my response is different this year. i don't really want to hear the voice of a skeptic...not that i'd say he is a skeptic...but, he walks a line that if he leaned slightly to one side, he could easily capture and enter that voice. we'll see.

Kate Davis says

Read an article for CSL528: Interpersonal Foundations. Definitely need to read more of this!!!
