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The Truth About The Truth



Synopsis

What happens when a born and bred Jehovah's Witness discovers her top religious leaders have been "sleeping with the enemy"? Author Tami Dickerson, a second generation Jehovah's Witness, shares her story of being raised as a Jehovah's Witness and her accidental discovery of the religion's dishonesty and corruption in her first book, "The Truth About the Truth". This book details her experience of being raised in the controlling sect and the discovery of a major indiscretion that was concealed from the worldwide membership. After telling her story, she also includes a series of appendices which cover questionable Jehovah's Witness doctrines and how their own literature contradicts those doctrines. This is not the usual "I-used-to-be-a-Jehovah's-Witness-and-now-I'm-mad-at-them" story; this is an objective piece that strips the sugar-coating off the sect and tells it like it is, warts and all.

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Customer Reviews

I ordered this book & want to say it was very well written & sincere. With all that Tami went through leaving this religion she still stayed positive about the people still within the religious organization. I

think it is very hard when a person starts to pursue different beliefs & religions to find the right place for them. The hardest thing is many "man-made" religions say they are right & only they are the true way. That can be very hard for the new Christian until they have read the Bible for themselves. Many religions take scripture out of context & twist for their own benefit - to get members into their organization. Many are very convincing if a person does not know their Bible & also high-pressure. Many use "good works" as a way to show they are good people - the Lord said, good works will not get you into the kingdom of Heaven. That does not mean good works are bad but there is a perfect example of twisting scripture. My personal feeling is to belong to no "man-made religion" - but I do not need to go into my personal beliefs here. The main point of Tami's book is to give a person a clear basic insight where & what this religion is all about. What happened to her personally while in it & also when leaving & afterward. She hits on very good areas & proof or where they are wrong according to the Bible. I think this book is a wonderful expression from a very strong woman that went through a lot personally to do what she knew was right & to stop being controlled by an organization. She paid a very big price for sure & easily could have lashed out but she didn't. She explained everything in a straight forward manner & simple way for people to understand the brain-washing that goes on. Hopefully people would read this book before getting too involved in this religion & truly question their doctrine. Also open their eyes to realize they need to analyze & question any/all doctrine of an organization before joining. People in general like to belong, be accepted & feel secure & these groups address this & hook people in just that way. After time goes on it becomes extremely hard to get out. I encourage any & all folks to read this book if they are considering joining this religious group or just gaining a basic understanding of what they are all about. Hopefully also J.W.'s that are questioning will read it also & realize just what they are being told & believing & start thinking for themselves.

Unless someone has personally lived within the social circles of the Watchtower organization, it is next to impossible to understand the unique challenges that arise when the conscience of the individual conflicts with the imposed conscience of the Watchtower leaders upon its members. For those on the "outside" of the Watchtower organization, it is only too easy and convenient to label Jehovah's Witnesses as a cult or any number of the other derogatory terms that serve to understand the dynamics behind Watchtower membership even in the face of patently evident contradictions--especially in our modern day of rationality and reason. There is something about Jehovah's Witnesses that continues to draw people in regardless of the controversies. For non-Witnesses who hold the view that Jehovah's Witnesses are a "cult" and Jehovah's Witnesses

who hold the view that non-Witnesses are "worldly," "bad association," and part of "false" Christianity, the lines are too easily and arbitrarily drawn into an over-simplified "us against them" mentality, without ever taking the necessary steps to understand the root cause of the problem. Even so, in her new book, Tami does an excellent job at portraying the subtler, more positive aspects of life among Jehovah's Witnesses that, if practiced on a much wider scale (rather than primarily amongst themselves, with the leftovers going to non-members), would impress upon others just how charitable and caring and clean-living Jehovah's Witnesses are capable of being. Unfortunately, as the book demonstrates, this IS, in fact, primarily limited to the membership itself, and practiced insofar as compliance with the directives of the Watchtower organization's leadership is maintained, first and foremost. The potential among Jehovah's Witnesses is there, but still manages to fall far short of the ideal--and yet the typical Witness thinks of this aspect of their religion as fine and acceptable before God. Tami takes the time to describe her life at home in such a way that the reader should be able to draw a reasonably clear picture of the demands on parents as they prepare their families for meetings, meeting participation, the challenges of having school-aged children when holidays are observed, and many other aspects of daily living (including association with non-Witnesses as childhood friends) that non-Witnesses may not be aware of apart from the common jokes and disdain held against Jehovah's Witnesses in general. There should be no question in the reader's mind by the time they finish those sections of the book where she talks about her parent's efforts to meet organizational obligations that the load is heavy and challenging. One issue in particular was her describing the drudgery for younger ones who are expected to sit quietly and keep themselves dutifully preoccupied whether it's during a meeting or an all-day assembly, rather than being placed in a more age-appropriate setting such as mainstream churches have for their younger attendees. In my own experience as a former Witness parent, I was actually relieved when my youngest children would fall asleep on the floor during a meeting or assembly or convention, because I felt so bad for them, and even my best efforts to try to make the enduring marathon of weekly meetings always seemed never enough. Tami also makes it a point to cover other aspects of Witness life, going into detail about the process by which someone becomes a member of the Watchtower organization and subsequently recognized as one of "Jehovah's Witnesses." Non-Witnesses and potential members alike will find the information accurate and surprisingly tedious; but as she points out, the reason for the process being so excessive is due to the emphasis on unity through uniformity, and this uniformity being based on doctrinal acceptance of Watchtower theology as published and practiced at the time that the potential member undergoes admission into the organization. She also does a wonderful job in

describing the shifts in social acceptance within the congregation as the individual member first becomes one of Jehovah's Witnesses, and then changes based on that individual's responsiveness to and compliance with the organizational obligations, such as field service, meeting attendance, and participation in the meetings. Too, she touches on another aspect of life among Jehovah's Witnesses, when she describes how general members tend to view other members who hold particular stations, ranging from pioneers to elders to circuit overseers, up to and including those congregations who discover that they have an "anointed" brother or sister among them. Perhaps the hardest thing to come to terms with for Witnesses who suddenly find themselves at odds with the Watchtower organization is that the "Christian" love that they have touted and practiced and been shown for perhaps their entire lives is, in fact, strictly conditional and controlled by organizational stipulation, intended to control and manipulate the members into conformity, under the guise of "unity." Tami's coverage of the range of topics in the book are sound and personalized in such a way that the reader can't help but realize that she is speaking from experience. Scattered throughout the earlier sections of the book are her side thoughts which she comes back to later in the book as she begins to relate her own crisis of individual conscience and how it eventually but inevitably led to her own disfellowshipping (excommunication) from the Watchtower organization. Here, too, Tami makes sure to take the time to describe the disciplinary process within the organization so that the reader, who may not know about this, can perhaps better understand what it means to a Witness who finds themselves cut-off from everyone they may have known their entire lives, even one's own spouse and children in many cases. The last part of the book (not counting the appendices) is used to relate her own struggles as she came to terms with life outside of the organization. Here, again, it is impossible for a non-Witness to truly comprehend this unique, challenging stage of healing, although Tami's narrative does a respectable job of what she did in her particular situation. What worked for her may not work for the next person, unfortunately. But having a loving, compassionate support mechanism of some sort is of the utmost importance, regardless, and I think Tami makes that point clear. Thankfully, Tami was able to find her means of spiritual and social support throughout her healing process. Tragically, there are countless others who are not so fortunate. Without question, Tami's book is a much-welcomed and appreciated personal account, and I feel privileged to have been able to read it in book form, having known her for years now through online forums and her personal website. I am painfully aware that this review is far too brief, for there is much more I would have liked to touch upon from her book, and I worry that I am not doing Tami justice by my brevity. Still, I hope that others take the time to read this book, especially those who are right now feeling isolated, alone, and discouraged because of their own crisis of

individual conscience, and who may have been cast from the ranks of the Watchtower organization, from perhaps the only life they have ever known.--Timothy Kline

I was wanting to learn more about the Jehovah's Witnesses. Book after book talks about the same sorrows. It is ashamed that this has not been put before the Witnesses. This is nothing else but a cult and it is hard to convert back to reality.

I was also raised as one of "Jehovah's Witnesses." The book revealed a remarkable parallel to my own life. Tami Dickerson, you just plain nailed this one. Good job. It is nice to know i am not alone...

Very well documented, this book is a very informative tool

Many grammatical errors and places where the text just ends, then starts somewhere else. Still, one can read around such things. I'd like to see some of the missing material in Chapters 10, 11 and 12. The author comes away from her experience still believing many of the JW's false doctrines. She would do well to take some comparative religion classes and talk to people from other religions regarding doctrines like soul sleeping, etc. There are many questions this book answers. I was amazed that the sect discourages higher education, but it doesn't surprise me. Education and interaction with others outside their religion are the two biggest threats to the Society. Their Bible translation is widely regarded as being a joke. It's never used in comparative translations and only members of the WBTS would use it.

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