



Real Christian: Bearing the Marks of Authentic Faith

By Todd A. Wilson

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The evangelical church is home to many who claim to follow Christ but who show little evidence of a truly transformed life. Todd Wilson's *Real Christian: Bearing the Marks of Authentic Faith* biblically defines what it means to be a true Christian, calling readers to look at their own lives and diagnose where they aren't living authentically for God. With a prophetic voice, Wilson looks at how we deceive ourselves into thinking we are really living for God through believing the right things or doing lots of spiritual activities. In contrast, real Christians are marked by five key qualities: broken-hearted joy, a humble disposition, a readiness to acknowledge sin, an ability to live balanced and avoid legalism, and a deep spiritual hunger that drives growth. All of these qualities culminate in the single defining mark of a real Christian—love.

To help in distinguishing genuine faith from counterfeit spirituality, Wilson draws upon the gospels, the writings of Paul, and the insights of theologian Jonathan Edwards to help readers understand the necessary marks of an authentic, transformed life, marks that show evidence of a new heart and bear spiritual fruit through the work of the Holy Spirit.

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Editorial Review

Review

What do you find on apple trees? Apples. What do you find on orange trees? Oranges. So what do you find on Christians? Christians bear fruit too. And our assurance of salvation is this---Jesus said, “You will recognize them by their fruits” (Matthew 7:16). Jesus also said, “The one who endures to the end will be saved” (Matthew 24:13). These are the marks of a real Christian. Todd Wilson gets it right in this great resource. He’s the real deal, and so is this book. -- James MacDonald, senior pastor of Harvest Bible Chapel, author of Vertical Church, and founder of Act Like Men conferences; jamesmacdonald.org

This is a book about reality---real Christians who have been delivered out of darkness into the divine light that is Jesus Christ. The marks of a Christian profiled in this book are a call to discipleship. They are also a call to transformation---piercing, enduring, and leading at the end of the day to joy, real joy. A great primer on the spiritual life. -- Timothy George, founding dean of Beeson Divinity School of Samford University and general editor of the Reformation Commentary on Scripture

I loved this book! I was alternately encouraged and challenged as Todd Wilson guided me through the key marks of real Christianity as revealed in our lives. His careful teaching about humility stands out for how it clarifies our mistaken notions. Now I’m praying that God will give me the opportunity to walk through this delightfully biblical and compelling book with a new Christian or with someone considering the claims of Jesus. -- Collin Hansen, editorial director of The Gospel Coalition and coauthor of A God-Sized Vision

Todd Wilson is a genuine pastor-scholar. With a heart for people and a mind for God---and a mind for people and a heart for God---Wilson unleashes a challenging message for a church drunk on safety and security. Real Christian is a gem. Written with sparkling clarity and rich conviction, this book will burn off the blinding fog of spirituality that hinders genuine faith. The American church desperately needs this book! -- Preston M. Sprinkle, director of Eternity Bible College’s Boise extension site and author of Fight and Paul and Judaism Revisited

Todd Wilson’s Real Christian is exactly the book we need at this moment. It shows us that real faith in Christ truly changes us. It isn’t enough to say you’re real; real Christianity has effects in our lives that are visible, and Todd shows what those are. What we see is radically biblical, and yet not what we often think---which is exactly why this book is so important. Todd writes with a humility and clarity that is convicting and yet hopeful. Instead of throwing us back on ourselves, he points us to Christ in a way that few books today do. This book can help the church recover its authentic witness. I cannot recommend it highly enough. -- Matt Perman, author of What’s Best Next: How the Gospel Transforms the Way You Get Things Done

Todd Wilson’s new book shows that real Christian discipleship is about deliberately cultivating Christlikeness. He shows what it is that separates followers from fans. Wilson encourages readers to leave behind a mediocre faith and shows them how to get serious about following Jesus. A great guide on how to grow into Christian virtue, foster spiritual fruitfulness, and gain godly character. -- Michael F. Bird, lecturer in theology at Ridley Melbourne Mission and Ministry College in Australia

Jonathan Edwards spent his life impressing real, spiritual truths on the hearts and minds of others, helping them sense the reality of things revealed in the Bible. Here, Todd Wilson renders these things real to the rest of us. Using Edwards’s best-known book, A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections, Wilson shows us

what it means to be a genuine child of God. In crisp, clear, compelling prose, he helps us see what God has done for us in Jesus and the cross, and what he is able to do in people he transforms by his Spirit and suffuses with his love. Please take this book and read it. God wants to make you real. -- Douglas A. Sweeney, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

Read this book. Soak in it. Savor each word like you would each bite of a fine meal. Real Christian is strong, convicting, and inspiring. It's unvarnished but filled with light. It's powerful yet approachable. After every chapter I wanted more. More of Christ. More of what I need for my journey with Christ. More of the power that should accompany an authentic walk with Christ. More of being marked by the signs of following Jesus. It's practical without being just another how-to book. It's profound and fresh at the same time. Yes---a thousand times, yes. -- Dan Wolgemuth, president and CEO of Youth for Christ/USA

Real Christian is a journey down the "ancient paths ... where the good way is." But this isn't a "been there, done that" sort of read! Todd Wilson's lively style and challenging applications helped me see both God's truth and my own heart in fresh and redemptive ways. The chapter on meekness is alone worth the price of the book, making these pages ones worth traveling more than once! -- Randall J. Gruendyke, campus pastor at Taylor University

True conversion is an act of grace, through Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Period. But true conversion has necessary evidences that accompany it. Justification by faith alone is a reality that can be seen and experienced, and naming this reality serves to make much of this cardinal doctrine. Todd Wilson has captured the beauty of gospel transformation in this practical work by uncovering the nature and evidences of real Christianity---one that gifts us with actual godliness. -- Jay Thomas, lead pastor of Chapel Hill Bible Church

Taking his cues from Jonathan Edwards's Religious Affections and remaining rigorously biblical on every point, Todd Wilson has given us a powerful (and at times painful) antidote to inauthentic Christianity. Many who think they are Christians will not recognize themselves in this book (and will, I hope, be brought to repentance), while those who actually are will be challenged to an even more passionate pursuit of that holiness apart from which no one will see God. Highly recommended! -- Sam Storms, Pastor

About the Author

Todd A. Wilson (PhD, University of Cambridge) is the Senior Pastor of Calvary Memorial Church in Oak Park, Illinois and the chairman and co-founder of the Center for Pastor Theologians, a ministry dedicated to resourcing pastors engaged in biblical and theological scholarship. He is the author of *Galatians: Gospel-Rooted Living* and *Pastors in the Classics*. Todd is married to Katie, his high school sweetheart, and they have seven children, three biological and four adopted from Ethiopia.

Users Review

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