



Hidden in Christ: Living as God's Beloved (Apprentice)

By James Bryan Smith

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A Deeper Sort of Devotional Words are powerful. They contain ideas and shape the way we see God, ourselves and all of reality. We're transformed, in particular, by God's Word, and by "the Word," the Logos?Jesus himself?as described by John in the first chapter of his Gospel. Memorizing and studying a passage in depth can offer a deeper sense of the meaning of each word. In this unique introduction to the hidden life in Christ, James Bryan Smith walks readers through a thirty-day immersion in Colossians 3:1-17. Each of the thirty short chapters of this book bring out the main truth of just one word or phrase of this rich passage. You'll also find a very simple daily practice to take up, reflection questions and a guide for five weeks of group discussion. The chapters are short in length, making this book an ideal daily devotional. Since there are thirty chapters, it could be used for a one-month introduction to the hidden life in Christ. Though brief in terms of length, each chapter tries to unearth some very deep truths. For those who have read and practiced the exercises in the Apprentice series, this book will be a helpful refresher as you continue your sacred journey. Each chapter also contains an exercise or practice ("Living into the Truth"), as well as an affirmation that summarizes the main point of the chapter and a written prayer designed to move you deeper into the truths of the Word. In addition, each chapter concludes with a few reflection questions that can be used either by individuals or in a group discussion. The only way to tell a story is to use words. May the words of Colossians 3 become a companion to you as God continues to write your story.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Much of our spirituality is a mile long and an inch deep. James Bryan Smith helps us go deeper. This book is based on one chapter of the Bible, and it is a dazzling one. On these pages, you'll find a countercultural invitation?an affront to the self-centered world of self-help books, blessing-obsessed televangelists and fluffy motivational messages. Here is an invitation to die to live, to find your life by giving it away. It's a smooth, easy-to-read book, but underneath it all is a radical message about reorienting our lives so that we look more like Jesus?and thereby interrupt the patterns of inequity and injustice that plague our world." (Shane Claiborne, author, activist, and lover of Jesus, thesimpleway.org)

"What a wonderful, life-giving book! Each chapter is a bite-sized morsel of substantive spiritual food that will nourish your life in Christ." (Ruth Haley Barton, founder of the Transforming Center, author of *Sacred Rhythms*)

"The third chapter of Colossians is one of the supreme passages in Scripture, brimming as it does with life-giving realities. *Hidden in Christ* can serve as a kind of midwife to help bring these realities to birth within us." (Richard J. Foster, author of *Celebration of Discipline and Sanctuary of the Soul*)

"Jim Smith probes the great mystery of where our true life lies. He walks us through one of the great passages in all of Scripture so we may discover the life that is hidden only to be found." (John Ortberg, senior pastor of Menlo Park Presbyterian Church and author of *Who Is This Man?*)

"Highly recommended for a transformational 30 days. Repeat often." (Andrea Hunter, Worship Leader Magazine, October 2013)

"Smith's clear, thoughtful and pertinent engagement with the text strikes a careful balance of personal anecdotes, insights into spiritual formation and exposition of the biblical text. . . . This book will serve pastors, ministry leaders and small groups in their journey toward understanding not only this passage, but the Christian story as a whole." (Ben Espinoza, Bible Study Magazine, March/April 2014)

"This is a beautiful book, perfect for busy and tired nurses. . . . This small book is ideal as a daily devotional or for a group discussion with other nurses. A small group of nurses at work or the university could easily share insights from a chapter in a brief discussion group." (Lesia Gardner, Journal of Christian Nursing, January-March 2015)

"This book is similar to an inductive study, as Smith breaks down every word or phrase in the passage. He successfully keeps the book engaging by sharing personal experiences, while still including biblical studies. . . the book is well organized, thought provoking, and insightful." (Church Libraries, Winter 2013-14)

"The pocket-size book is a convenient resource to carry, consult and meditate on throughout the day. . . . *Hidden in Christ* will undoubtedly help readers with a Christian foundation find faith-enriching direction and challenging disciplines for their spiritual journey." (Tom Schaefer, The Wichita Eagle, August 17, 2013)

"With today's emphasis on speed and covering the most amount of territory in the least amount of time, it may be challenging to thoughtfully focus on a single chapter of the Bible for a whole month. But try it! It can

be a wonderfully enriching experience. A beautiful chapter to explore is Colossians 3?and an excellent study guide for that chapter is *Hidden in Christ*." (Elaine Raxon, CBA Retailers + Resources, July 2013)

About the Author

James Bryan Smith (MDiv, Yale University Divinity School, DMin, Fuller Seminary) is a theology professor at Friends University in Wichita, Kansas, and a writer and speaker in the area of Christian spiritual formation. He also serves as the director of the Apprentice Institute for Christian Spiritual Formation at Friends University. A founding member of Richard J. Foster's spiritual renewal ministry, Renovaré, Smith is an ordained United Methodist Church minister and has served in various capacities in local churches. Smith is also the editor of *A Spiritual Formation Workbook*, *Devotional Classics* (with Richard Foster), *Embracing the Love of God*, *Rich Mullins: An Arrow Pointing to Heaven* and *Room of Marvels*.

Users Review

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