Clarion Review

Self-Help

Anchors of the Soul
G.E. Beaver
BookSurge
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Two Stars (out of Five)

"The evolutionist would suggest that we came from nothing and go to nothing," G.E. Beaver writes. "Rather hopeless, wouldn't you say? The worldview of the Christian is the complete antithesis of this." In *Anchors of the Soul*, Beaver offers his own worldview, discussing the relationships that people have with God, society, and their families. He covers both the positive and the negative, tackling topics including love, security, significance, leadership, fear, conflict, and confrontation.

The author is a marriage and family counselor, and the insights he presents here are a blend of psychology and Christianity. "Only one thing can satisfy our soul—having a personal relationship with Christ and having our sins forgiven through Christ," he writes. Most often, his advice comes in the form of self-help psychology. Regarding poor emotional development, he writes, "I once heard a therapist say, 'borderlines don't get married, they take hostages!' Sad but true. Those who marry borderlines/narcissists become scapegoats and dumping ground for all that childhood anger and emotional pain."

In *Anchors of the Soul*, Beaver presents nothing controversial or surprising, and readers will not find anything to argue with. The truths presented are timeless and based squarely on Christianity or well-accepted social principles.

Beaver's intent is to anchor his readers in biblical truth. Often however, this truth is delivered in terms of psychological advice. For instance, in his first chapter he intends to cover the basics of Christianity, but manages to mention humanity's need to feel accepted, developmental steps, the concept of boundaries, and parental influence on children. In that chapter, Beaver pours out his practical insights in a fatherly, friendly manner. For example, he writes, "One sure way to avoid the pain, guilt, and shame that poor choices inflict on us and on others is not to open the doorway that leads us down that path in the first place."

Nearly all readers in need of some advice will find a suggestion here to help, but only if they already know the truth, and only need a brief reminder. Ideas are stated briefly and points are not developed, making the insights cursory and shallow. For that reason, this is not a persuasive volume. The book's thoughts are sometimes profound, but they are not new. Beaver makes no attempt to entertain readers, and there are few examples to deepen his message. This little book reads like an outline of psychological wisdom or a summary of all the little talks a father should have with his offspring.