Clarion Review

Self-Help

Beyond Instinct: The Search Is Over
W.J. Walls
CreateSpace
978-1-4537-2295-4
Three Stars (out of Five)

Pastor W. J. Walls has counseled privately and spoken publicly about methods for bettering relationships. He is also a man who found himself "faced with the pain, misery, and humiliation of a failed" marriage.

Thus, readers have the inspiration for *Beyond Instinct*. Walls wants to help others avoid the mistake of marrying the wrong person. He wants to "impart a wisdom that permits you to intentionally enter the dating world empowered with a unique set of tools!" Walls covers his topic in twenty chapters. Nearly every chapter ends with or incorporates what the author calls "Check Points." Many of them are spiritual. Many are practical, such as the ten steps toward physical fitness provided at the end of the chapter titled "Fit for a Date."

A glance at the table of contents shows readers that Walls uses everyday language to reach his audience. And he doesn't avert his eyes from the contemporary world. A chapter titled "Dating a Wild Girl or Dating a Wow Girl" shows that Walls takes on the changing of sexual mores that has occurred over the past few decades.

The author believes that every man and woman is "anchored" by four "compilations" of theological, philosophical, ideological, and psychological "patterns" that work against the openness in communication that makes for a solid relationship. He believes, for example, people ignore relationship red flags because "they are being misguided by the puppeteer of past psychological decisions." Walls believes recognizing these patterns is a key element in comprehending the nature of a prospective partner.

Noticing the numerous citations of the Bible, one might think that Walls has limited his prospective audience by relying on religious elements to frame his thesis. However, not even a nonbeliever can argue that stable marriages are counterproductive to good social order. And much of his advice is practical rather than spiritual. For example, he writes that, "Everything

you need is within your reach; you simply need to open your eyes to the reality of who you are."

Walls analyzes many relationship situations by delving into backgrounds, character, misconceptions, and foibles of people he has counseled over the years. Prospective readers should understand that Walls' work has been carried out in a church setting, and his book has a spiritual foundation, "…both men and women have the ability to determine with accuracy whom their eternal soul mate should be."

Beyond Instinct isn't a book to be read in one or two sittings and then placed on a shelf. It's a guidebook, from both a spiritual and practical point of view, one that people might find valuable in navigating the dating scene.

Gary Presley