

## Connecting the Dots: Twenty-one Devotionals Based on Real-life Experiences to Better Understand Kingdom Principles

**Jason O. Yearwood**

iUniverse (Nov 26, 2021)

Softcover \$10.99 (84pp)

978-1-66322-456-9

*Connecting the Dots is a heartfelt guide that encourages spiritual improvement through daily readings and exercises.*

Jason O. Yearwood's *Connecting the Dots* is a Christian devotional that takes the form of portioned readings and exercises.

Made up of daily combinations of scriptural excerpts, brief lessons, thoughts to reflect on, and pull quotes summarizing their lessons, this devotional collection represents a sincere effort to nurture its audience toward self-improvement. Each entry is designed to be both engaging and fast to engage. Personal anecdotes combine with examples from popular culture, including from reality shows and sports; these complement each of the points in a relatable manner. Such illustrations are also calibrated to fit the book's daily themes; many are vibrant expansions on the points being discussed. However, the volume of reality show references proves to be excessive.

The book covers topics including spiritual health and general well being; it is variously faith-concerned and down to earth, and at different times hyperspecific and widely applicable. For example, one chapter, "The Importance of Self-Auditing," suggests its method—an assessment of "where we are at and what steps we need to take towards the outcome"—as the first step toward self-improvement; in doing so, it presumes the universality of its purposes, and draws on Yearwood's own educational, financial, and physical statuses as examples. Further, references to Barbados, and to The People's Cathedral in Bridgetown, lodge some references in singular times and places. While in such moments the book's details and examples are enlightening, they are also somewhat too specific.

More practical are the book's lessons on sharing wealth, which are amplified by the example of a church whose pastor asked parishioners to bring in items that they no longer needed from home. The items were pooled in a common store, from where others could draw out what they needed, helping to meet the immediate needs of others. Such lessons stand to be universal, and their strong connections to Christian scriptures have broad appeal.

A reckoning with Covid-19 opens the book, confronting the pandemic as a massive disruption of normal life. Thereafter, the pandemic is referenced on repeat throughout the text. While this makes the work timely, it also dates it; not all of its lessons will remain relevant in the near future. Still, the comparison of the pandemic to social cataclysms following the death of Jesus is compelling in the moment. "The new normal is already here," Yearwood declares. "Let us be encouraged to take hold of it."

*Connecting the Dots* is a heartfelt guide that encourages spiritual improvement through daily readings and exercises.

MATT BENZING (June 29, 2022)

*Disclosure: This article is not an endorsement, but a review. The publisher of this book provided free copies of the book and paid a small fee to have their book reviewed by a professional reviewer. Foreword Reviews and Clarion Reviews make no guarantee that the publisher will receive a positive review. Foreword Magazine, Inc. is disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255.*