

How to Love Your Life

Heather Sanford

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“Repent from the sin of dissatisfaction” is the advice given in the first chapter of this spiritual study guide. *How to Love Your Life* contains meaningful lessons based on biblical and real-life examples. Each chapter ends with a “Truth,” a “Prayer,” and then a section called “Truth in Action” where the reader can fill in answers to thought-provoking questions. The text builds on the initial theme, leading to an additional eighteen steps designed to make it easier for the reader to stop envying others’ lives and to learn instead to love the life and the tasks that have been given to him or her by God.

Sanford is a mother of four who speaks with fervor about her beliefs and her personal call to help others. She is a native Texan who now lives in Galway, Ireland, where she and her husband have established a ministry based in Protestant Christianity. The couple lean on the arts, particularly drama, to enhance their message.

Sanford uses many examples to illustrate her theme, some of which are strictly biblical and others merely anecdotal. Those who follow her faith will no doubt find these examples inspiring, though others may question their validity. One case in point is the comparison between the offspring of American revivalist Jonathan Edwards—many generations of physicians, college professors, preachers—to that of “an atheist” contemporary, Max Jukes, among whose progeny can be counted murderers, thieves, alcoholics, and prostitutes. There is credible evidence that the Jukes family tree is a fabrication, though it is often quoted and embellished upon. This example weakens the author’s credibility and calls into question other stories she has recounted as fact.

Nonetheless, most of Sanford’s book offers encouragement and helpful advice and can be judged in that light. It is written more for the author’s followers than for her possible detractors, and will almost certainly find a successful niche readership to which Sanford’s message can be a source of inspiration and assistance. The text is intelligently arranged and can serve a useful purpose for those who are seeking to enliven their Christian religious path.

BARBARA BAMBERGER SCOTT (February 16, 2012)

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