ForeWord Reviews
Clarion Review

RELIGION

Our Beloved, Our Friend: Explore the Word. Experience Jesus. Share His Love.
Judy Huitt
CrossBooks
978-1-4627-1639-5
Four Stars (out of Five)

Our Beloved, Our Friend, by Judy Huitt, contains forty meditations designed to help readers get to know Jesus. Huitt uses scripture and analysis of its words to teach and encourage readers.

Each meditation follows an alliterative, nine-step pattern derived from Psalm 119. The pattern includes steps like “Ponder God’s precepts, principles, and promises from the Word,” and “Pursue parallel precepts, principles, and promises from the Word.” Once readers learn the pattern, they can apply it to any biblical passage; this ongoing learning method is one of the true gifts of the book. Each meditation contains numerous verses exploring the theme as well as space to write responses at the appropriate steps. This method ensures that readers obtain more than just a cursory glance at the truths contained in the Bible. To experience the true depth of the lessons, readers will need to commit substantial time to each meditation.

Huitt’s writing is clear and concise and offers readers a sense of her calming wisdom. She includes illustrative stories, insights from her own life, and illuminating retellings of Bible stories. She consistently uses scripture to root her own thoughts, giving readers confidence that her perspective is biblically sound. Readers who are sensitive to Bible studies that feel overly feminine will find that Huitt’s style strikes a reasonable balance between emotional and logical thinking, which indicates the balanced maturity of the author’s faith. Overall, the book has a somewhat conservative, orderly approach that helps readers learn basic foundational truths without sacrificing depth.

The appendix contains a compendium of Huitt's Bible study wisdom and tools, including ways to read through the Bible, methods for memorizing scripture, and suggestions for how to share one's personal story about Jesus. While it may seem a bit random and perhaps too exhaustive, the content provides readers with solid wisdom to help them grow. The table of contents is particularly useful to help readers find the resources in the appendix—although printing a list of appendix contents in the main table of contents and at the beginning of the appendix itself is unnecessary.

Huitt's broad experience with Christian organizations and events like Young Life, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and Billy Graham Crusades shines through in the simplicity and usability of her book. *Our Beloved, Our Friend* is a well-organized, compelling, and widely applicable devotional.

Melissa Wuske