

Did Jesus Really Call?

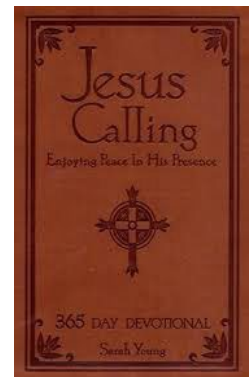
One Woman's Story About Jesus Calling: A Surprise I Never Expected That Changed My Life

A.R.

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Over the past month, God has opened my eyes to see just how deceived I have been when it comes to what I read, what I listen to, and who I go to for Godly wisdom. As a Christian, my greatest desire is to be a true disciple of Jesus Christ, the REAL Jesus Christ. In order to pursue that, I must know the Truth, I must know Jesus Christ, I must know the Word of God. I would like to share my testimony with you in regards to this past month and talk about how God has rekindled a deep desire in me for the Truth. Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." John 8:31 & 32.

To get started, let me go back about a month ago. My sister-in-law had come to visit, so John¹ and myself and our kids all went down to our friends Shawn & Shirley's to eat supper one evening. As we were sitting in the living room visiting, the subject came up (I still don't know how it came up, but it did!) about a very popular devotional called, *Jesus Calling* by Sarah Young. I wasn't sure at the time where this conversation was going and who in that living room actually read the *Jesus Calling* devotional, but I knew that I DID and I knew that I LOVED THAT BOOK! I also loved Sarah Young, even though I had never met her or knew anything very significant about her—all I knew was that she must be a Christian to write a book like that, and that's all I really needed to know.



Back to our conversation in the living room though. Apparently, there is a man named [Warren B. Smith](#) who has written a book titled, "*Another Jesus*" Calling, and he was featured on a radio program in which he lays out Scripture after Scripture, along with vast amounts of research, all to come to the conclusion that this devotional, *Jesus Calling*, is a HUGE deception among believers today. It is a LIE! What? "You mean, after I listen to this Warren Smith I may not want to read my *Jesus Calling* anymore?," I remember asking my sister-in-law during our conversation, which I could feel was quickly heating up!! Honestly, I was getting mad—wait, who am I kidding, I WAS mad!

¹ The names in this letter have been changed.

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I had taken up a defense inside and put up a wall immediately after hearing that something I cherished and loved so much was possibly a huge deception I had allowed in my life—my spiritual life, my life with the Lord. How could this be? The book sounds so good, so real, so true—it even has Scripture verses following every day’s devotion. It encourages me, it blesses me, makes me feel special—there is NO WAY that anyone is going to convince me that this book isn’t good and wholesome and a perfect addition to anyone’s Christian walk.

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NO ONE!

OK, so I needed some space—some time away from everyone in that living room. Tears were on the verge of overflow and I had to get a way . . . so I went to the bathroom. I will never forget getting into that bathroom, closing and locking the door, and realizing how wrong I was in the way I had reacted inwardly. I didn’t want to be stiff-necked in my thinking or harden my heart towards what God might want to teach me. So I surrendered my hurt feelings and my rebellious attitude and gave it all to God. I told Him that if He wanted me to quit reading the book then that is what I would do, but He was going to have to be the one to show me that.

Now I must be honest and say that doing this was not an easy thing to do and something sadly, I haven’t done much in my walk with the Lord. Laying down my pride and admitting that, “Hey, I may be wrong in this.” Its not an easy thing for me to do, for anybody to do, for that matter. I think one reason is because when I admit that I am wrong that shows weakness. But weakness isn’t always a bad thing, because as Christians, the Bible says:

And He (Jesus) said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am made strong. 2 Corinthians 12: 9 & 10

So moving on, I was able to walk out of the bathroom with a new attitude believing and trusting that God would show me what to do with this devotional book I so dearly loved. And boy, did He ever!!

Before we left that night, [our friends] gave me the website address I could go to so I could listen to the radio interview for myself. John and I got home and put the kids to bed, and I headed straight to our computer. After starting the interview and listening for a few minutes, I quickly realized that this guy had some pretty legitimate concerns as to why he thought this book was filled with deception. But I still wasn’t convinced enough

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to say that I didn't need to read the book anymore. I would occasionally pause the interview to write down different statements that he made along with lots and lots of Scriptures he had to back up just about everything he said.

Slowly, I was becoming more aware that this man may actually be right about this book. I didn't want to believe it, but it was all there, plain as day. He was using the Bible as his reference, so what could I say? What could anyone say? The Bible is the Word of God, it is the Truth. And so, if I believe that, then this devotional book is absolutely deceptive because in the interview he pointed out numerous, obvious contradictions to the Holy Word of God. But wait a minute, was I willing to chuck the book just yet? Believe it or not, no I wasn't. I'm about to get to that. Before I do though, I just want to go into a little more detail about why I loved this book so much,—what it was about it that made me feel so drawn to it:

Here's a few reasons:

1. It's a daily devotional—it has a small entry for each day out of the year. Hence, it's short, doesn't take much of my time, easy to read.
2. Very comforting, makes me feel good inside, good about myself, no conviction, ever!
3. Makes me feel special, like Jesus is just a good 'ole buddy that walks around with me all day!
4. Sadly, this fourth reason I am not proud to mention, but it is a HUGE part of why I am convinced this book is dangerous. I found myself using *Jesus Calling* as my "Bible."

I remember seeing my Bible and my *Jesus Calling* devotional sitting side by side on my coffee table. Guess which one I was more eager to pick up? It wasn't that I didn't believe the Bible was full of Truth or that I didn't "want" to read it. I knew that I desperately needed to be in the Word. There are a lot of excuses I told myself as to why I just couldn't read the Bible today. One of those excuses being TIME—just not having enough time to read the Bible, it's too big. Or "I just don't know where to start?" I know the Bible in part, but I am by no means an expert on where to find this and that. The Bible isn't always fun to read. By this I mean, a lot of the time when I read my Bible, the Holy Spirit will point out something in my life that I might not want to look at or deal with. I'd much rather be told how much I am loved and thought of and cared for and needed. So, you get the point—I chose *Jesus Calling* day after day over the Bible because it was all nicely packaged in short, daily message to me straight from Jesus' mouth, so what's wrong with that?

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Well, back to my “tipping point,” if you will, on what caused me to decide that *Jesus Calling* was dangerous and deceitful and that it needed to get thrown out. The night I listened to [that radio interview](#), I was pausing often to take notes or go back and rewind to listen again to something that was said. I happened to pause it as one point when John walked in to tell me good night. We talked a minute about it, and I confessed that I was very aware now of how I had been choosing this book over my Bible and how wrong it was. He and I talked about this for a few minutes and when he went to bed, I resumed the interview. What I heard next literally cause my jaw to fall open! As soon as I hit play, Warren Smith mentions a woman who basically said everything I had just finished sharing with John moments before! In his words from the interview, he says, “One woman in particular said that she was so taken by *Jesus Calling* that finally one day she realized that she wasn’t reading her Bible. She was going back and reading her *Jesus Calling* as much as possible.” For me, I knew that God was making it very clear to me — get rid of the book! Read MY WORD!! I was excited by this and all hesitations I had about it were out the window. I knew what God expected of me at that moment. It was like God opened my eyes to see something for the very first time. He literally changed my mind. Romans 12:2 says, “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove, what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.”

I give all the praise and glory to God for what he has done in my life over the past few weeks. It is not anything I have done on my own. God has brought to my attention many things that I need to look at and test according to His Word. One of those being the music I listen to. I gave up secular music some time ago and have been listening exclusively to Christian music for years, but I have to admit that some of the more popular Christian tunes that are out now a days,



I’m just not sure about. And that’s all I can say; I’m just not sure about it. Along with the music, I would add authors, well-known speakers/pastors, books, so many things I am not sure about. It sounds so overwhelming at times, all the things out there that I thought were good and true. It’s like, trust the Bible and the Truths that are found within. 2 Timothy 3:16 & 17 says:

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

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This last month, I have grown a lot, and I have a deep hunger for the Living Word of God that I can honestly say I did not have prior to eating supper at Shawn and Shirley's house one month ago.

A.R. (Texas)

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