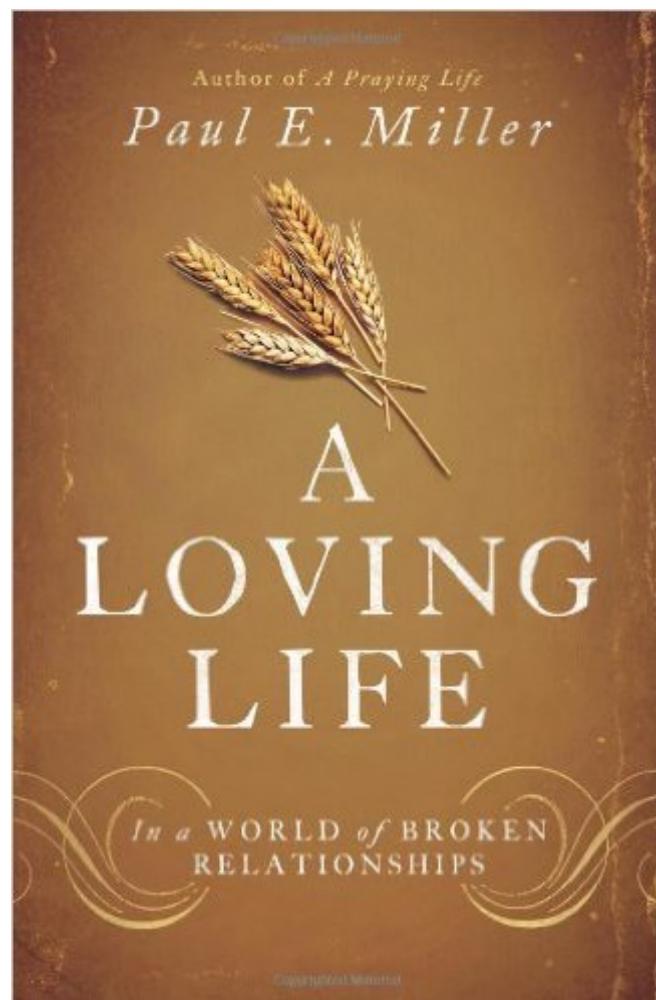


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A Loving Life: In A World Of Broken Relationships



Synopsis

How do you love with no love in return? How do you love when no one notices or cares? Best-selling author Paul Miller tackles these tough questions at the heart of our struggle to love head-on. Drawing from the book of Ruth, *A Loving Life* offers the help we need to embrace relationship, endure rejection, cultivate community, and reach out to even the most unlovable around us as we discover the power to live a loving life.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A Loving Life: In a World of Broken Relationships by Paul Miller is a journey through the book of Ruth that examines the following themes: Love, Gospel, Community, Lament, Prayer, Femininity, and Masculinity. Paul Miller walks through the book of Ruth in a way that is part exposition, part practical commentary and fully focused on Hesed love. The first thing that we must understand is what hinders love. "The great barrier to love is ego, the life of the self. In long-term suffering, if you don't give in to self-pity, slowly, almost imperceptibly, self-dies. This death of self offers ideal growing conditions for love." When we look at Ruth's sacrificial love we see this dying of self that naturally produces Hesed love. We see this love on display when Ruth refuses to leave Naomi. Miller makes Ruth's example to us very practical when he says, "hesed is one-way love. Love without an exit strategy. When you love with hesed love, you bind yourself to the object of your love, no matter what the response is. So if the object of your love snaps at you, you still love that person. If you've had an argument with your spouse in which you were slighted or not heard, you refuse to

retaliate through silence or withholding your affection. Your response to the other person is entirely independent of how that person has treated you. Hesed is stubborn love." Miller focuses on the fact that dying to self is at the center of this type of love. "In order to give Naomi comfort, companionship, and food. Ruth gives up friends, family, and the possibility of a husband and children - in fact, her entire future. Ruth embraces hopelessness in order to give Naomi a measure of hope. She out-heseds Naomi. Death is at the center of Ruth's love.

In Paul Miller's follow-up book to "A Praying Life," he illuminates the costly and redeeming nature of love. His description of love wraps itself in humility, death-to-self, and serious commitment to follow-through in the harshest of circumstances. This counter-intuitive and costly type of love is described by the word "hesed," and encapsulated in the lives of Naomi and Ruth. Through stories and anecdotes that convey his own experiences with the resurrective and redemptive qualities of Biblical love--including his experiences with his disabled daughter, Kim, Paul paints a compelling picture of the type of life we can expect to live when we encounter and participate in authentic love. When we, in effect, die to ourselves to live what Miller likes to call "the story" in his previous book. What is truly engaging about Miller's book is the level of detail he is able to achieve, while simultaneously engaging the reader and incorporating an easy reading style. After reading Miller's previous book, A Praying Life, I had come to expect that A Loving Life would ask the hard questions and refuse to flinch away from the depth of the Bible's teachings. This was true of this book. Unlike other popular Christian books self-help books today, which often seem to "insert-Bible-verse-here" and then go on to describe the author's opinions on becoming a better Christian, this book takes the Christian call to discipleship seriously and refuses to ignore the pain inherent in that calling. At points, heart-wrenching and reminiscent of real life--full of the valleys of suffering that characterize the life of a Christian--Miller always allows for the hope that is in Christ alone. Don't read this book if you aren't interested in an encounter with the Christ of the Scripture.

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