



Finding God in the Dark: Faith, Disappointment, and the Struggle to Believe

Ted Kluck , Ronnie Martin

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This title provides an honest, hopedul look at Christian doubt and disappointment. Kluck and Martin walk readers through dark times in their own lives to reveal a God of love who never forsakes his children. Here is grace and hope for any believer struggling to believe.

Finding God in the Dark: Faith, Disappointment, and the Struggle to Believe Details

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From Reader Review Finding God in the Dark: Faith, Disappointment, and the Struggle to Believe for online ebook

Brian Condra says

This book was a wonderful read. I first thought it would be something akin to Os Guinness's "God in the Dark," but I realized soon it wasn't exactly an exploration into what doubt is, nor is it a book intended to prove the existence of God. Rather, Kluck and Martin give several accounts of their disappointment with god, whether or not he loves them at times, and how we as believers (not to mention human beings!) tend to respond. We get sad, hurt, become depressed, angry, and confused. How do we seek The Lord when we feel like we're being toyed with or just left out of His good, loving, and sovereign plan?

These are discussions in their book that I felt were handled with care and have a personal appreciation for since I am one who wrestles with loving God or feeling/knowing that God loves me. Their use of personal stories alongside biblical stories help to put the role of Christ and the role of self in a helpful perspective.

They have definitely given their readers much to hope for without handing us easy answers. I recommend this book to anyone who wants someone to wrestle with their own troubling times.

Suzanne McAfee says

Disappointment can bring about feelings of doubt. Doubt that the Good Lord, who made us, gave us life, knew us before we were even born, and will love us for eternity does not take care of our needs. In the Book Finding God in the Dark, by Ted Kluck and Ronnie Martin, they share some of their experiences; feelings of abandonment, anger, grief, and hopelessness in God. Its not just a book about despair, its the realisation, God loves us so much, he will sift us, to bring us closer to him. We may not always understand at the moments during lifes trials the whys, but later we may be grateful for those difficult moments.

Ted, Kluck, has written for ESPN, Sports Spectrum, and Christianity Today. Awarded book of the year for Christianity of Today. He is a husband and father of two adopted boys and has been in a Christian band. This author conveys emotion well through his writings. I was in literal tears at one point, when he described the heart ache of loosing his father and the adoption of the sister to one of his sons. He, according to this book, has gained much but also lost a lot in his life. Sharing his retrospect on the grace God has granted him during not just the good but also the bad areas in his life. Mr Kluck finds that to truly find the heart of God, we need to give up idols, some that are even hidden to us. Being sifted of his sins during the good, brought about his great relationship with the Lord.

I found this book at times to be heart breaking and inspirational. I also found it to be difficult to read at times, being two different writers, therefore two different forms of writing. I loved the way he did not sugar coat his feelings of anger, sadness, and utter loss. This book did well in relating the relationships of our idols versus the true relationship we gain with God, when we put them out of our lives. This is the second book I have read by this writer, and look forward to future writings in the future. I would like to thank netgalley, the authors Ted Kluck and Ronnie Martin, and also the publisher Baker Publishing Group, for allowing me to read and review this book. All of the opinions in this review, are mine and have not been influenced by any other source.

<http://heartsue-bookreviews.blogspot...>

David says

This book is a very personal, honest look at how life's problems can transform. Many of us live under an illusion that we are in control, and we spend much of our time and energy reinforcing that illusion. When events occur that cause us to face the reality that we are helpless and broken, it can be devastating.

Kluck and Martin simply share personal stories of how God has used events that hurt them personally - for example, the death of a parent, the disappointment of having an adoption process fall apart - to shape them and draw them closer. Both of these men have experienced some level of celebrity, and they honestly share how it affected them.

Overall, it is an easy read, but with profound insights. Both of the authors are Calvinists, and that belief system obviously impacts how they view God and the events that shape their lives. While I certainly believe in God's sovereignty, I don't necessarily view it in the same way Kluck and Martin do, but I still think the gist of this fine book is valid.

I would recommend this little book to anyone who has ever struggled with tragedy, doubt, or disappointment (and who hasn't?).

Holly says

Why even put Mark Driscoll's name in here? At first I didn't think I would like this book as much as I did. To be honest, it was mostly because of the mention of Driscoll who has become the biggest disgrace there is in ruining the perspective people have of Reformed theology. It doesn't seem the authors go very far to endorse anything he has to say, so I was able to let it go a bit. The book may be a bit different than people expect though because it doesn't necessarily provide an in depth perspective at doubt, but more so one that comes from the author's personal struggles and the Biblical verses that provide some Biblical context and guidance for doubt.

Summary: Ted felt that his life was falling apart after losing an adoption, and finding difficulty in publishing a book. Ronnie felt that he was losing touch with his faith after finding that his music career was fizzling out after aspiring to be a musician for so long. Both share their own stories in chapters that swap back and forth between the two narrators. Whether it's children or money they discuss the many ways that doubt can be brought on.

Characters: If there are any two lives that get the full disclosure so the reader can relate it's the two authors. The guys don't avoid going the extra mile to try to make the book more impacting. Instead of referring to how others struggled they instead of trying to put it off on someone's story who isn't even apart of writing the book, and they've had to go through a name change to even be included. Their struggles are highly easy to relate to as well. Even if you're someone who hasn't struggled with having children, most can relate to how money issues and not having a job you wanted can affect you.

Writing: The writing is a little choppy at times, but I think overall the guys do a good job of at least making

their point known by the end of each chapter. The book is the complete opposite of the prosperity gospel, and doesn't try to use language or stories that will butter you up. Instead it goes with the very hardcore truth that facing up to the fact that life is going to deal you hard circumstances. I even like how the writing makes it a point to not avoid Biblical passages on the subject itself, and even verses regarding when Jesus asked God if there was a way he could pass over the suffering he would endure.

Plot: The men do advance their own stories well. I think that switching the stories gets a little disjointed in making the book flow, but also the guys may have not had enough to discuss on their own to make out a whole book. Even with two people authoring this book turned out really short. And I can't help, but I did like how this book did lean more toward Calvinism. It makes the book something more rare to come across reading and more easy to relate to in reading.

Finding God in the Dark may not be as in depth as some are expecting, but I think it gives something a little better than that approach. It delves into something more personal, with people who have had to overcome some serious obstacles. Along with that the passages they use coincide well with the topic, and it makes the book something that was a rare motivational read for me.

Rating 8 of 10.

This book was provided by Bethany House in exchange for a review.

Shawna Sparrow says

I guess my main problem with this book is that it isn't about what it's supposed to be about. Both authors share examples of personal loss and disappointment and then attribute these problems to the sin of pride. The book doesn't offer help to people dealing with heartache and loss through no fault of their own. I also found the format of alternating chapters by the two authors didn't work well as it interrupted each narrative. The book doesn't seem like a complete work, but more like a collection of blog posts. Not to diminish the trials of the authors, but I'm not sure that problems like failed adoptions and career setbacks warranted a book on this topic. Ted laments his failed adoption without showing any gratitude for the two children he was able to adopt. He rants (that is the appropriate word) about a lucrative book deal that falls through without celebrating the fact that he has had several well-received books published. Again, I am not diminishing his disappointments, but this book doesn't have the same authority as those written by people who have survived more harrowing ordeals with their faith still intact. I also felt that both authors used the early chapters to set up their disappointment and bewilderment about what God allowed to happen in their lives, but neither really did a great job of acquitting Him.

Carla Freeman says

Two great stories of God's sovereignty in the lives of talented men who found blessing in the dark times of life by learning to more fully trust in the Lord. Both writers had a beautiful way of weaving in scripture, quotes from heroes of the faith, and words of truth that made the book a blessing. It was very accessible and yet carried a healthy, sanctifying weight in its message of finding joy by focusing on God instead of self. A quick read but a mighty encouragement.

Tina says

I received this book free from Bethany House in exchange for an honest review. I have to admit, I was disappointed with this book. I went in to it hoping that I would be able to explore my faith (or lack thereof), but it's not what I found. Truthfully, I've been struggling with my faith since I was in high school, about 6-7 years ago. It took me a long time to stop believing in God, but then I met my boyfriend and his family is very religious (his dad is a part-time minister after all). He asked me to explore my faith a little with him, but thankfully never pushed anything on me. His family is the same way. They welcome me to go to church with them, but they never push anything on me. So I decided I would read this book to see if it helped me figure out my beliefs. Unfortunately, it didn't. I enjoyed the beginning, but then about halfway through it, I kind of lost interest. I forced myself to keep reading in hopes that it would get better, but it didn't happen for me. I'm not saying this isn't a good book; I'm sure many people will like and really get a lot out of it. It just didn't do much for me, though I'm still glad to have read it. I think this book might be more appropriate for those who may be unsure or are struggling with their beliefs but have not completely stopped believing.

Ashton says

This book was provided to me for free in exchange for my honest review. The opinions that follow are my own.

I was a little wary about how much insight I could really get out of this book when I received it because it was so thin. Finding God in dark places and in life's struggles seems an issue that would take considerable time to go through and develop any kind of conclusion about this issue. As it was, I was right. While this book is a decent little book in its own right and it does provide some decent insights, I felt that it stopped just short of really developing anything like the title suggests.

I found the chapters by Ted Kluck were less informative than the chapters by Ronnie Martin. I felt the former were more stories about what had happened in his life whereas the latter did the same thing but then drew general conclusions about God and what he learned during those difficult times and how we can apply those lessons to our own lives. Similarly, I feel the book had a lot to say about the struggles in these men's lives but it never really went anywhere for the reader. It was more like a personal memoir than a book to teach people about how to hang on to their faith and find God through it.

The book was decent but I think there are probably better books out there that supplement what they say with more Biblical examples and application to the readers life. For someone looking to wet their feet in this subject, I think this would be a great starting place but for anyone looking to delve into the subject deeply, another book would be better.

Christina says

I needed this book because I'm struggling so very much right now with doubt and unbelief.

It's an excellent book, because here are two other men, sharing their very own experiences with the same thing, and citing countless examples in the bible where the same thing happens. That shouldn't make me feel good, but it does. I guess because I felt like such a horrible person before. "Doubter!! Unbeliever!! Blasphemer!!" And now I know that questioning one's faith is usually pretty normal, especially when going through a trying time. There's a C.S. Lewis quote that talks about this specifically but I don't have the book in front of me right now, sorry.

Anyway, if you are struggling, it wouldn't hurt, and would actually do you some good, to reach for this little black book. It has relevant scripture verses all throughout. And it's relatively short. It only took me a while because, in my manic state I'm reading six other books at the same time. LOL

James says

Having come through a time of darkness myself, and seeing many friends struggle, I thought it would be a good book to read. However, I was disappointed. The only reason why I finished the book at all was because of the fact that I received a free copy of this book from the publisher (Bethany House) in exchange for an honest review.

I'm sure the examples that were given by the authors of their own disappointments and struggles deeply painful for them, but it only added to my frustration with "white picket fence" Christians who can't get out of the proverbial "Christian ghetto" or "the Christian bubble," to see the "real world."

As some of the reviewers of this book has mentioned, Ted Kluck is especially egregious. His sections feel as if he's trying to convince people that he is "all that," rather than truly processing his "darkness." I have not read other works by him, but if this is a sample of his writing, I'm not sure that I would read anything by him. The only reason why I didn't give this book one star is because Ronnie Martin seems to understand this subject, and his writing is, just a little better (notice I said, "just a little" - at least he doesn't keep pointing out how great of a writer he is).

As I re-read this review, I find myself wanting to erase it all, because I don't want to be negative. But I did promise to be "honest" in my review to the publisher. Also, I recently had a conversation with my young girls about self-esteem. When I said something negative to one of them, they all jumped at me to say, "Dad, you're hurting her self-esteem!" To that I answered, "I would rather hurt your self-esteem now than have you be crushed by disappointment later that you really are not all that good, and people have been lying to you."

*** I received a free copy of this book from the publisher (Bethany House) in exchange for an honest review.

Brent Soderstrum says

I won this book through GoodReads First Read program.

Kluck and Martin write about what every Christian will experience at one or more times in their lives. Things aren't going well for them despite them being a Christian. God appears to not love them or is ignoring

them. The authors tell about their own experiences resulting in them questioning God and looking for Him in their lives. Their examples include infertility, adoption failure, book deals falling apart (Tim Tebow backs out at the last minute), music evaporates, financial problems etc. You can throw in your own problems in this world. We are reminded though that God loves us and let these things happen for a reason though we may not see it at the time.

Good book to bring out and read again the next time I am walking through the valley. The authors alternate chapters which isn't smooth at all times. Still an enjoyable read that we all need to examine at times in our lives before we get to go home.

Callie Glorioso-Mays says

Finding God in the Dark: Faith, Disappointment and the Struggle to Believe is written by Ted Kluck and Ronnie Martin. When reading my options of books to review, this one stuck out to me because I've been having many conversations lately that revolve around doubting. I've read a few other books on similar topic and I have studied this subject on my own so I had high expectations.

This is a book I would recommend to others and will no doubt be re-reading in the future. Kluck and Martin shared their own stories of disappointment and, I thought, were transparent with their feelings even though they had some very "unchristian" thoughts. Kluck writes about the sorrow (and anger) over a failed adoption which seemed to be the last straw in ongoing disappointments over infertility, tight finances and an unpredictable freelance writing career. Martin writes from the perspective of a Christian musician whose career never really took off as others did.

Other reviews I have read of this book acted as though Kluck and Martin's trials weren't difficult enough and they have given the book poor ratings as a result. This confused me. Perhaps this book wasn't filled with tantalizing stories, but the authors were honest about their troubles and their feelings. It seems odd to imply that their struggles weren't "hard enough" to write a book on disappointment. I don't think we can really compare. We all have different events that take us to our lowest point in life and these men were simply honest about theirs.

If you're looking for normal Christian niceties about how the authors are soooo godly and how they respond perfectly to all hard circumstances, this is not the book for you. The authors are very honest about how they felt in circumstances, even when it paints them in a selfish light. But, in my mind, that's part of what makes the authors relatable. Over and over again I found myself nodding my head, reading bits aloud to my husband and annotating with fury. In addition to sharing their own wisdom, both authors quoted from other theologians (e.g. C.S. Lewis, Tim Keller, A.W. Tozer) and included Scripture verses as well.

The chapters alternate between authors, which could feel a bit choppy at points. I found myself looking forward to chapter changes because I resonated with one author more than another. I can foresee some readers being frustrated as both authors write from a (very) Reformed perspective. If you come from a less Reformed background, be prepared for many, many references to God's sovereignty. ;) This could have come across as a flippant answer to disappointment and suffering (i.e. "Oh, just trust that God is sovereign and move on!"), but I really felt like the authors didn't use that as a cop-out, but continued to wrestle through the issues.

Overall, I really liked the book and am going to recommend it whenever I have the chance. I know many

people who have experienced disappointment that has left them doubting and I think this would be a good guide for them as it encouraged me in my own doubting. Much of what Kluck and Martin wrote I had heard before, but I thought they did an exceptional job at intertwining stories, quotes and verses to make the information especially poignant.

****Disclaimer:** I received a free copy of this book from the publisher (Bethany House) in exchange for an honest review.

James Wilson says

A quick read filled with inspiring stories to help believers during times of struggle and doubt. I would recommend this book to anyone who suffers with loss or doubts God's existence at times; those who feel abandoned and/or alone.

Mark says

Good book if you are doubting God. Short stories followed by scripture and more in depth as to how it could pertain to your life.

Alexis Neal says

An excerpt of a review recently posted on Schaeffer's Ghost:

Indeed, both men are extremely open and frank about the sin issues they confronted—so much so that Kluck, at least, sounds at times like, well, kind of a jerk. But then, I don't know that that's a bad thing. All Christians are jerks at one time or another, and a book written exclusively for non-jerks would be of extremely limited use. So I applaud the transparency with which Kluck and Martin discuss their sin, even though I was slightly discomfited in reading about it. (Honestly, I think some of the 'jerk factor' was a simple result of writing 'too soon'. Given more time and distance and the benefit of additional reflection and processing, I don't think Kluck would have included, say, the full text of the rather unpleasant letter he wrote to the adoptive parents who 'stole' the kid he and his wife planned to adopt. I also think Kluck would omit the detailed account of the book contract he was denied. I suspect he would focus more on his own pain and disappointment and less on the perceived wrongs committed by others. At the very least, there would have been less heat behind his words. Though I suppose there may be some merit to writing in the midst of the pain—it certainly gives the hurting reader something to relate to.)

Full review available [here](#).
