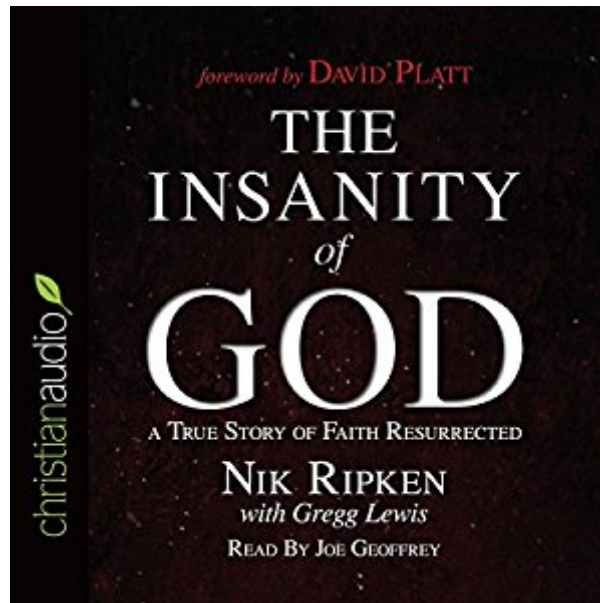




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The Insanity Of God: A True Story Of Faith Resurrected



Synopsis

The *Insanity of God* is the personal and lifelong journey of an ordinary couple from rural Kentucky who thought they were going on just your ordinary missionary pilgrimage but discovered it would be anything but. After spending over six hard years doing relief work in Somalia and experiencing life where it looked like God had turned away completely and he was clueless about the tragedies of life, the couple had a crisis of faith and left Africa asking God, "Does the Gospel work anywhere when it is really a hard place?" It sure didn't work in Somalia. Nik recalls, "God had always been so real to me, to Ruth, and to our boys. But was he enough for the utter weariness of soul I experienced at that time, in that place, under those circumstances?" It is a question that many have asked and one that, if answered, can lead us to a whole new world of faith. How does faith survive, let alone flourish, in a place like the Middle East? How can God truly overcome such evil? How do you maintain hope when all is darkness around you? How can we say "greater is he that is in me than he that is in the world" when it may not be visibly true in that place at that time? How does anyone live an abundant, victorious Christian life in our world's toughest places? Can Christianity even work outside of Western, dressed-up, ordered nations? If so, how? The *Insanity of God* tells a story - a remarkable and unique story to be sure, yet at heart a very human story - of the Ripkens' own spiritual and emotional odyssey. The gripping narrative account of a personal pilgrimage into some of the toughest places on Earth, combined with sobering and insightful stories of the remarkable people of faith Nik and Ruth encountered on their journeys, will serve as a powerful course of revelation, growth, and challenge for anyone who wants to know whether God truly is enough.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Someone recommended this book to me after I had shared something with him regarding the toll that some missionaries feel after living in a third world country for so long. We are missionaries in Uganda for 5 years now, and although we will be transitioning into the next assignment in another 4 months, we have loved deeply here but at the same time, are weary. This book was not at all what I expected. So many stories! It helped me recognize that it IS a MIRACLE that we, in the USA, can worship freely. It made me wonder how bold I would be if I were in a similar situation as these ones. I pray that I would remain true to the command of Jesus to GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES. That is our heartbeat. Disciple making and building. Thank you Nik for recording your journey so that we could, in a small way, live it with you.

Some books capture your attention. After several recommendations, participating in a couple interviews with the author (links below), and hearing the title, *The Insanity of God*, over and over again my curiosity was peaked and my attention was captured. The title may seem a little ostentatious, but Nik Ripken is wrestling with the very way in which God works in the world. After several years as a missionary in Africa, and after a particularly difficult stint in Somalia, Ripken found himself questioning the power of the Gospel to make a difference in this world. Can the Gospel actually make a difference in places of immense suffering? Can the Gospel survive and even spread under intense persecution? Is Jesus worth it? Ripken wrestles through his questions as he begins a journey around the world to study the growth of faith in the midst of persecution. What he finds is a flourishing movement of believers that boldly believe and share the Gospel while facing the direst of circumstances and consequences. These believers have found true life in Christ. If you are wrestling with similar questions to Ripken, this is a great book to read. After some introductory material, the book is a collection of stories of faith from around the world as Nik experienced them first hand. The book is broken up into thirty-four short chapters around ten pages each. I suggest reading this book devotionally alongside your regular Bible reading. I read two chapters a day after my devotion and deeply considered the implications from Ripken's experiences and stories of faith amidst persecution. I found Ripken's book to be deeply motivating to engage in God's mission to bring the Gospel to the nations. Though motivating, Ripken's book uses clichéd Christian terms at times (even trademarking one!),

and can be a little cheeky in its presentation, but don't miss the message. God is working out his plan of salvation for the world today and there is power in the Gospel to have a flourishing, empowered faith even under the cover of the darkest suffering and persecution. Furthermore, Ripken's theology will vary from that of some readers, but again don't miss the point, the Gospel is flourishing and we need to jump in with both feet finding power in the resurrection. If you want to be motivated to share the Gospel, if you want to be convicted of a lethargic faith, if you want to wrestle with the seeming insanity of God's plan to advance and grow the Gospel in the midst of persecution, I highly recommend this book. This is a great book to jumpstart your heart in the area of evangelism and daily living for God no matter what comes your way. You too can participate in the insanity of God every day when you set foot out into our world with the Gospel in your heart and on the tip of your tongue for those in need of salvation. I have also included links below to the interviews that Bryan Catherman, Brett Ricley, and myself conducted with Nik Ripken on our podcast Salty Believer Unscripted. (find links at (...)) Podcast 1, Awakenings Around the World audio Podcast 2, Nik Ripken audio. In addition, the book is being made into a movie that you can investigate here: The Insanity of God Movie (...)*This post originally appeared on (...)

Nik Ripken truly experienced what believers know intellectually but often do not understand experientially. He saw God leading in unexpected ways in places where he thought Christianity could not possibly thrive. Dr. Ripken did not always go on these dangerous journeys willingly or easily; but he did submit in obedience. That obedience led he and his wife on a journey that lasted more than fifteen years; a journey that showed them God and His salvation in ways they never would have expected. I have been putting off the writing of this review for quite some time. Many notes were jotted down in preparation. After referring back to them a number of times I failed at writing one. I now understand that I just cannot give Insanity of God the justice it deserves. The best thing that I can do is leave you with a couple of quotes from the book and strongly urge all believers to pick it up and spend some prayerful time experiencing the justice, might, power, and glory of God. "You don't have to come back. You just have to go." "Persecution is the crucible of faith." "Despite decades of extreme hardship, Stoyan's stories were joyful and hopeful. He was convinced that people flocked to Christ in greater numbers during difficult days of persecution because when they could recognize how God sustains and strengthens His followers through times of trouble. He said that he had learned that family is the believer's

greatest reservoir of faith and resistance in the face of persecution. And he explained that, surprisingly, freedom had brought a new set of challenges that had blurred spiritual battle lines. "Don't ever give up in freedom what we would never have given up in persecution! That is our witness to the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ!" "Multitudes of people were eager to bear witness to a faith that had not only survived persecution, but had thrived because of it." "What I learned during my time in Somalia was that I never wanted my words, my actions, or my work to be the cause of anyone's suffering. Being persecuted for my sake is NOT the same as being persecuted for Jesus' sake. Causing suffering for my sake, especially if that suffering is the result of a thoughtless, uninformed, or downright stupid decision or action on my part, would be sad and unnecessary. It would be wrong. It might even be a sin." Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.' Matthew 28:18-20 ESV Go, serve, and do so with wisdom from your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. For all of my reviews visit my blog at[...]

A challenging and enlightening book. Following Jesus Christ is not always a bed of roses, or maybe it is, roses with a lot of thorns. This book is not about how God makes everything perfect in this life. It is about those who find following Jesus Christ worth it even through the trials and the suffering of God's people. I was remembering Romans 8 - "We are like sheep for the slaughter all day long." If your life is not always being viewed from rose colored glasses but you struggle every day to keep your faith through your pain and your suffering, this is a book that will make a lot of sense to you and maybe even encourage your faith. At least, it might inspire you to keep the faith during the hardest of times.

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