



The Irresistible Revolution: Living as an Ordinary Radical

By *Shane Claiborne*

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Living as an Ordinary Radical Many of us find ourselves caught somewhere between unbelieving activists and inactive believers. We can write a check to feed starving children or hold signs in the streets and feel like we've made a difference without ever encountering the faces of the suffering masses. In this book, Shane Claiborne describes an authentic faith rooted in belief, action, and love, inviting us into a movement of the Spirit that begins inside each of us and extends into a broken world. Shane's faith led him to dress the wounds of lepers with Mother Teresa, visit families in Iraq amidst bombings, and dump \$10,000 in coins and bills on Wall Street to redistribute wealth. Shane lives out this revolution each day in his local neighborhood, an impoverished community in North Philadelphia, by living among the homeless, helping local kids with homework, and "practicing resurrection" in the forgotten places of our world. Shane's message will comfort the disturbed, and disturb the comfortable . . . but will also invite us into an irresistible revolution. His is a vision for ordinary radicals ready to change the world with little acts of love.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. If there is such a thing as a disarming radical, 30-year-old Claiborne is it. A former Tennessee Methodist and born-again, high school prom king, Claiborne is now a founding member of one of a growing number of radical faith communities. His is called the Simple Way, located in a destitute neighborhood of Philadelphia. It is a house of young believers, some single, some married, who live among the poor and homeless. They call themselves "ordinary radicals" because they attempt to live like Christ and the earliest converts to Christianity, ignoring social status and unencumbered by material comforts. Claiborne's chatty and compelling narrative is magnetic—his stories (from galvanizing a student movement that saved a group of homeless families from eviction to reaching Mother Teresa herself from a dorm phone at 2 a.m.) draw the reader in with humor and intimacy, only to turn the most common ways of practicing religion upside down. He somehow skewers the insulation of suburban living and the hypocrisy of wealthy churches without any self-righteous finger pointing. "The world," he says, "cannot afford the American dream." Claiborne's conviction, personal experience and description of others like him are a clarion call to rethink the meaning of church, conversion and Christianity; no reader will go away unshaken. (Feb.)

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From [Booklist](#)

Starred Review From dressing the wounds of lepers in Calcutta to living among the homeless in Philadelphia to visiting families in Iraq, social activist Claiborne strives to live an authentic Christian life. In his view, he is a radical in the truest sense of the word, returning to the roots of Christianity by living as Jesus did and doing "small things with great love." A partner-founder of the Philadelphia-based faith community Simple Way, he presents an evangelical Christianity gentler and more inclusive than is usually seen, especially in the mass media. He describes Simple Way as a new culture that relies on radical interdependence and consists of grassroots organizations, intentional communities, and hospitality houses. Although the book isn't an autobiography, in it Claiborne reports much about his life: growing up in the Bible Belt, becoming a Jesus freak, moving to Philadelphia despite his family's misgivings, and helping the homeless there. Then he boldly requested an internship with Mother Teresa in Calcutta. She simply responded, "Come." Besides illuminating his own faith journey, Claiborne is insightful on the huge U.S. cultural and economic divide: the problem isn't that wealthy Christians don't care about the poor, he says, it's that they simply don't know the poor. A moving, often humorous account of a life of faith lived to the fullest.

June Sawyers

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Review

'Shane dares readers to evaluate their lives and reimagine a first-century posture to following Jesus in the 21st century....If you want a comfy Christian life, this book is not for you. But if you want to be challenged, uncomfortable, and even changed, it is a must read.' (*YouthWorker Journal*)

'Editor's Pick!...Inspiring. Fascinating. Challenging. Convicting. Loving. These are just a few of the words that describe the extraordinary story of Claiborne's journey from middle-class Christianity in east Tennessee to radical incarnational faith among the poor in inner-city Philadelphia.' (*ePistle (Evangelicals for Social Action)*)

'This is the book that will not let me go....this book has called me, and many others, to action, to a different

kind of life....if you read it seriously, it may mess with your mind, heart and even your life.' (*Youthworker Journal*)

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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