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A Book

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A Book

A book, no matter how much a specific piece of writing might be praised or recommended to us, is only a series of printed words. Without our participation through thoughts, feelings and personal responses, a book is just paper with printing on the pages. Though we might stay up half the night reading an engrossing novel, most of us read a book over time, setting it aside, and returning to it for further reading, especially if we look forward to continuing our experience with reading it.

A book that we want to read is, for us, worth more than many books that we "should" read, or believe that we need to read for the information they contain. However we find a book, or a book "finds" us, when we have one in hand that speaks to our hearts, lifts our spirits, or gives us words that explain or describe our experiences to us, that book is for then, our book. If a book could be magical, it would help explain how mere printed words can at times reveal us to ourselves and at the same time draw us into communion with God, our fellow humans and creation.

We learned to read when we were young, starting with letters, then words, on to sentences and so on to our capability for understanding thoughts and ideas, and finally into the full integration of using memory, imagination and all our interior senses all at the same time. Reflecting on the process by which we are now able to gain so much from a book is itself a cause for gratitude. Reading a book, most especially the one that we want to read not just for entertainment, but to satisfy our deepest longing for "something more," is never a chore, and almost always gives us cause for gratitude. If we have come to a time in our lives when we can feed our souls from a book, we intuitively know that we are in contact with gift, and the reception of such a gift spontaneously evokes gratefulness.

Some books speak to us again and again, or at least some parts of them. Who has ever finished with reading Scriptures as one would be finished with a paper-back novel, and then be done with it? Other books provide treasured insights into ourselves, or life, or relationships with God and others, and they are special for us only at a particular time in our lives. How then, does it happen that a book comes to our hands at the time we most need it, especially when we could not even specify or articulate our need? There are libraries and stores filled with hard-bound and paper-back books, but we often come across a book that seems to be written precisely for us. It might have been on a shelf at home, or be given to us, or we might have found it when we were looking for something to read, but once we have it, is as though a dear friend who understood us very well had suddenly come to be with us. When we have such an experience, and accept it is as a gift, we

can reasonably and "faith-fully" expect that something similar will happen at other times when we are ready for growth of spirit, whether or not we recognize that we are at such a moment in our lives.

Every book has an author, but the one that becomes for a time "our" book is brought to us courtesy of The Author.