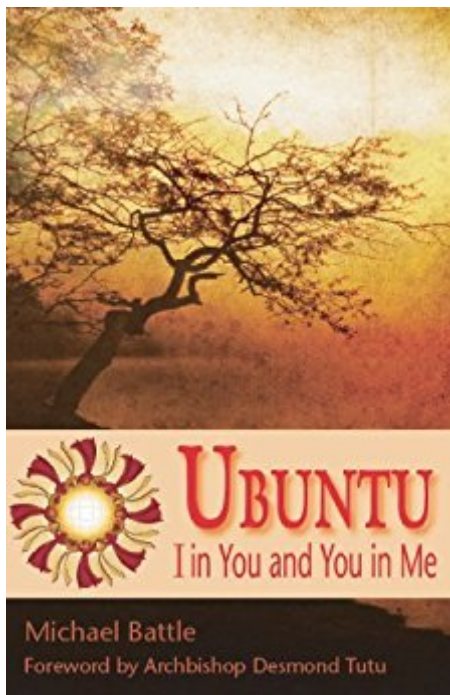


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Ubuntu: I In You And You In Me



Synopsis

As defined by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, a person with Ubuntu is open and available to others, affirming of others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good, for he or she has a proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that he or she belongs in a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished, when others are tortured or oppressed. The African spiritual principle of Ubuntu offers believers a new and radical way of reading the Gospel and understanding the heart of the Christian faith, and this new book explores the meaning and utility of Ubuntu as applied to Western philosophies, faith, and lifestyles. Ubuntu is an African way of seeing self-identity formed -through community. This is a difficult worldview for many Western people, who understand self as over, against, or in competition with others. In the Western viewpoint, Ubuntu becomes something to avoid – a kind of co-dependency. As a Christian leader who understands the need, intricacies, and delicate workings of global interdependency, Battle offers here both a refreshing worldview and a new perspective of self-identity for people across cultures, and of all faiths.

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Customer Reviews

Michael Battle, a theologian and a former protégé of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, explores the fascinating African concept of Ubuntu and its adaptation by Archbishop Tutu in the anti-apartheid movement. In this book, Battle delineates how he believes it can be a "gift to the West." Ubuntu is a difficult word to translate. It is a simple yet incredibly profound concept - that I am a person because I recognize others as persons, that we are all inextricably linked to one another and share a common humanity. Although it may ostensibly appear that there is some dissonance between Ubuntu and Western individualism, Battle argues that Ubuntu, which demands interdependence, paradoxically helps us express true individuality because "each individual's humanity is ideally expressed in relationship with others." So why is Ubuntu important? Battle argues that it "reorients our vision." He writes, "[w]e cannot see ourselves as primarily white people, black people, Irish people, women, men, low income, gay, conservative...we must learn to see self in the other." The paradigm of excessive narcissism, which appears pervasive in the West, is broken by Ubuntu. Ubuntu helps us see our own flaws and not merely the flaws of others. To substantiate these arguments, Battle retells Tutu's struggle against apartheid ("South Africa - black and white - can be human together and will defy tyranny only by first living together"). Overall, I wholeheartedly recommend Battle's book, but I should warn readers that it does come with one caveat: strong Anglo-Christian undertones. Although I myself am an Episcopalian, I found this to be a slight distraction. Readers who want to read a more secular and academic assessment of Ubuntu should read Battle's other book, *Reconciliation: The Ubuntu Theology of Desmond Tutu*.

It is an easy read with deep provoking self reflections

This was an interesting book that was unnecessarily infused with the author's own religious viewpoint.

Very informative and interesting read. Wish more people would think like this.

Powerful

Would Thayer all had this mind set.

good book

Great book. Love it. I really enjoyed reading it for my Spirituality class. I recommended this book to other social workers in my work place.

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