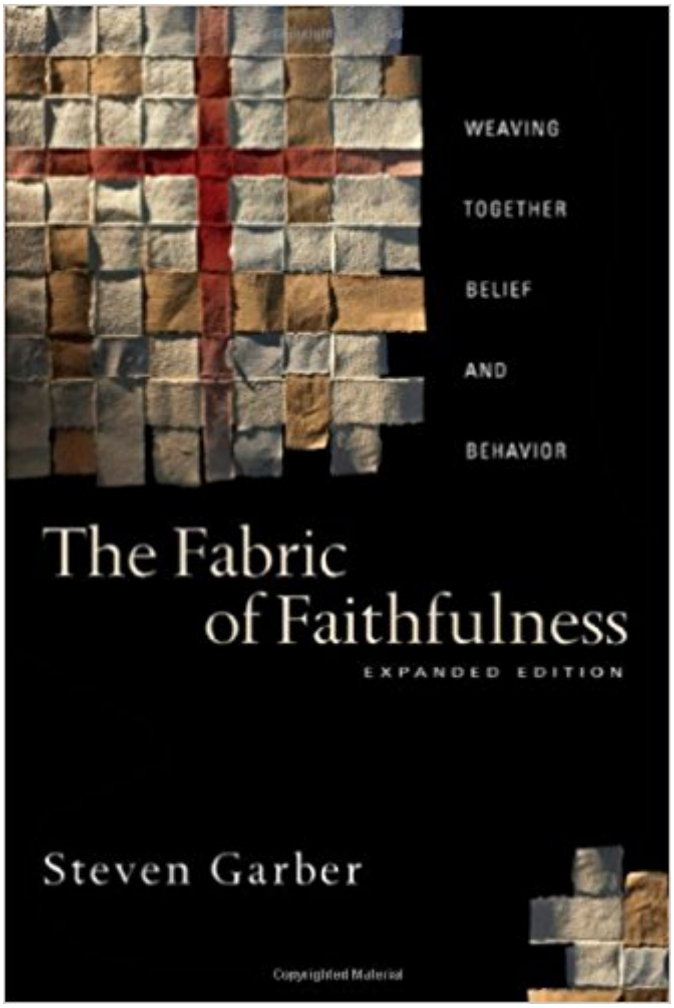
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The Fabric Of Faithfulness: Weaving Together Belief And Behavior



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Synopsis

Voted one of Christianity Today's 1998 Books of the Year! All kinds of important choices are made during the college years. Young men and women explore what they really believe about the nature of the world and the purpose of life. They choose their work. They build friendships and often choose to marry. They develop goals and adopt habits that may last a lifetime. Yet late modernity is not a welcome environment for emotional, intellectual and spiritual formation. Society is increasingly fragmented. And the educational system itself, fragmented and specialized, may disintegrate more than it integrates. How do parents, professors, campus ministers, youth pastors and others help students, during one of the most eventful and intense periods of life, learn to connect what they believe about the world with how they live in it? Steven Garber vigorously engages just that question in this revised edition that includes a new chapter on what he has learned about lifelong formation in the years since the book first appeared. Drawing on the history of ideas, ethics, sociology and popular culture, he offers must-reading on the critical lifework of making sense of life.

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Customer Reviews

Steven Garber is the principal of The Washington Institute for Faith, Vocation & Culture, which is focused on reframing the way people understand life, especially the meaning of vocation and the common good. A consultant to foundations, corporations and schools, he is a teacher of many people in many places. The author of The Fabric of Faithfulness, he is also a contributor to the books Faith Goes to Work: Reflections from the Marketplace and Get Up Off Your Knees: Preaching

the U2 Catalogue. He lives with his wife, Meg, in Virginia.

Our post-modern world is marked by a growing cynicism about the authenticity and relevance of faith to public life. As research from the Pew Forum indicates, young people make up a core group in the so-called "nones" and "spiritual but not religious" demographic, who are at best apathetic about the role and place of faith in the real world. From my own observations and interactions with young Christians, I think one reason for this rising phenomenon is that young people have often not been sufficiently exposed to a sustainable worldview or mentoring model that helps them to reconcile what they believe with what they do and how they live.In this classic, Dr. Steve Garber masterfully fills this void by presenting a compelling framework about how young people, a demographic that his life's work has revolved around, can bridge the seeming chasm between belief and behavior. Drawing from thousands of hours of research and comprehensive interviews, as well as from familiar cultural and social icons and trends, from Bob Dylan to the erstwhile Smashing Pumpkins, Dr. Garber presents a integrated three-strand model that focuses on the importance of worldview, mentoring and community in weaving a Fabric of Faithfulness:"Over the course of hours of listening to people who still believe in the vision of a coherent faith, one that meaningfully connects personal disciplines with public duties, again and again I saw that they were people (1) Who had formed a worldview sufficient for the challenges of the modern world, (2) Who had found a teacher who incarnated that worldview,(3) Who had forged friendships with folk whose common life was embedded in that worldview. There were no exceptions."Dr. Garber's approach is not abstract or purely empirical research driven either, as the Fabric of Faithfulness is enriched from the well of his personal experience. This work is partly a product of him wresting with the same issues about how to reconcile belief with behavior and purpose, a journey that involved temporarily dropping out of college. His quest for understanding the interaction of belief with behavior was also intensified early on as he observed how many young people, in the course of their college education and post-college careers, "began to disconnect what they said they believed from how they lived."I think this book will be very helpful for young people who are trying to find their purpose and way in life, especially those who have lingering questions about the role and place of faith in forming educational and workplace identities. It will also be helpful for those who, either through their work roles (career advisors, campus ministers, etc), or personal connections (parents) are in a position to serve as a positive influence in the lives of young people. In general, the book will be helpful for anyone who is confused, discouraged or unsure about how to incorporate a faith-based worldview into what they do and how they work.

Without a doubt, Garber is on the of most profound, thought-provoking, and inspiring authors IÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ve ever encountered. I find myself unable to go more than 2 pages without having to delve off into a sidebar to see the implications of what heÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s talking about and think about the questions he raises. This should be required reading for any Christian Intellectual.

Steven Garber is a remarkable author and theologian. This is the second book I have read by this Biblical scholar and writer. I was not disappointed in the least by this book of Garber's. His thoughtful approach to the Christian life, combined with the poetry of his prose makes this a book well-worth reading! His theme is a challenge to live and behave in a way that confirms the genuineness of our faith and belief. His use of stories of students and more mature adults and how they live out their faith in their vocations and careers is inspiring. Any serious-minded Christian who reads this book will be challenged to examine his or her Christian walk, and to seek God's wisdom for how he or she should continue to live for Christ in a world full of distractions.

Too tired at the moment for a decent review, and, admittedly have not read this book in years. However, I read it several times in my late-twenties and it deeply impacted me. Even now, I can recall so many of Garber's ideas, which were original to me at the time--ideas which have been welded to my heart, affecting my worldview, no doubt for the better. Garber is wise and right on, with a compassionate and empathetic heart for those in that age range, or, for anyone who is concerned or working with that population.I certainly wish I had read this book at 18 rather than 28. Perhaps I would have had a more appropriate take on life and my place in it. Perhaps I would have been spared lots of academic, philosophical and spiritual pain...in exchange for more of a joy in the journey during the university years in a more realistic, grounded, yet truly exciting way.

This book seeks to combine belief with behavior through establishing certain disciplines within Christian faith. However, the information conveyed by the author is done via a compilation of short stories to illustrate his points. Clarity and brevity are lacking in this text.

Every time I hear Steve Garber speak I hear echoes of the brilliant theme of this book "To know is to love." The implications from his thoughts on knowledge, faith and relationships go way beyond keeping your faith in college, which is why I initially read the book. These ideas affect how we relate to people and are becoming more and more pertinent in a information-saturated age.

As both a person who is wrestling with how to live faithfully and with integrity -- and someone wanting to help college students to do the same--I found Garber's book a rewarding read. His identification of the absolute need for true and deep convictions, mentors whose characters embody these convictions, and life in a community of others wanting to live out these convictions have given me a good starting point in my current thinking on how to knit together thought and action. Garber could have made his book more accessible if he had given more practical ways in which his excellent material could be addressed to average undergraduate students, who on the whole, are not able to absorb Garber's theoretical meditations. Perhaps something for the next edition!

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