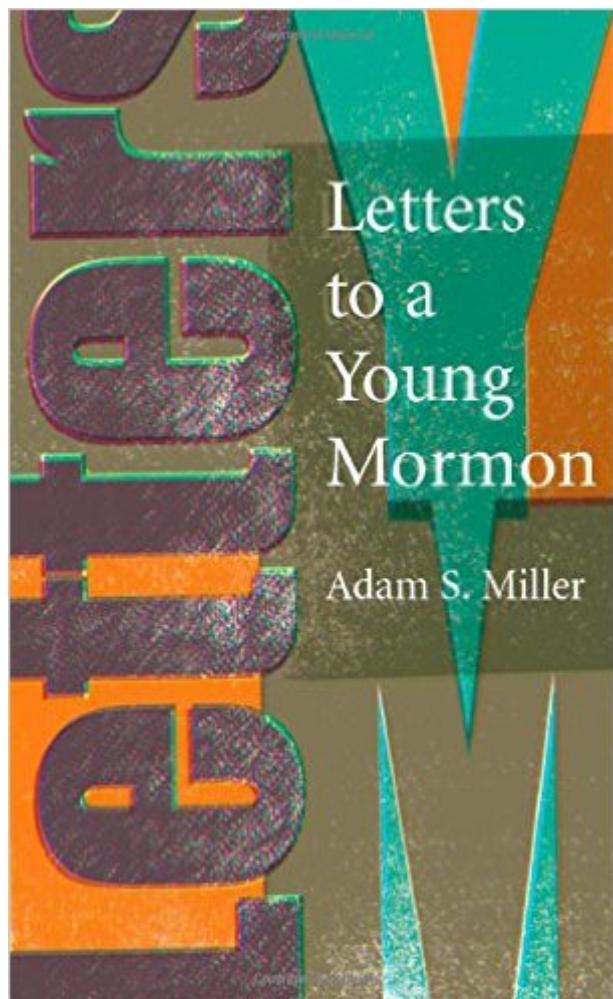


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Letters To A Young Mormon



Synopsis

This book is composed as a series of letters. The letters are meant for a young Mormon who is familiar with Mormon life but green in their faith. I imagined myself writing these letters to my own children and struggled, in relation to how we talk about things at church, to say my own piece about what it means to be as a Mormon free, ambitious, repentant, faithful, informed, prayerful, selfless, hungry, chaste, and sealed. The letters do little to benchmark a Mormon orthodoxy. That work belongs to those called to it. Here, my work is personal. I mean only to address the real beauty and real costs of trying to live a Mormon life. And I hope only to show something of what it means to live in a way that refuses to abandon either life or Mormonism.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In this tiny book (about 70 pages of actual text in a book that will actually fit in my pocket), Miller provides 12 short, thought provoking, eminently readable essays on core topics of a religious life. He discusses agency, work, sin, faith, scripture, prayer, history, science, hunger, sex, temples, and eternal life. While each essay could stand alone, there are arcs: The essays on sin and faith work well together, as do the essays on hunger and sex. This book offers alternative ways to think about many of these well-worn concepts. Miller likens our work of studying the scriptures to Joseph Smithâ™s lifelong work of translating scripture. âœYou and I must translate these books again. Word by word, line by line, verse by verse, chapter by chapter, God wants the whole thing translated once more, and this time he wants it translated into your native tongue, inflected by your native concerns, and written in your native flesh.â •In his chapter on sin, he employs an extended

metaphor that has stayed with me: We have stories we want to tell about our lives, and sin happens when we focus on our story rather than centering our lives on Jesus Christ and His fabulous will for us. In this telling, guilt and shame have no place; they're both still centered on us, on how we're measuring up, instead of refocusing towards the Savior. Many passages of the book are heady and inspiring, rousing calls to action. The essay on scripture is like that: "Get close to the scriptures. Do anything you can. God is in there." | Underline everything. Pack your margins with notes. Read Paul out loud like poetry | Squeeze their verses like oranges. Know Isaiah by heart. Love Matthew like a brother. Sing the psalms as your prayers.

At some point, every Latter-day Saint (or anyone of any religious persuasion, really) has to "put away childish things" and experience the growing pains of developing a more mature faith. Just as with physical maturation, spiritual maturation can be different for everyone. For some it will not be too difficult, while for others, it can be a very painful process indeed. Regardless of which kind of person you are, this is a book that can help. Written as a series of letters, this little booklet explores various topics related to gospel and how to live it in this fallen world. Throughout it all, Miller talks about how important it is that we abandon the "stories" we tell ourselves and instead seek the life that God has to offer. No easy task, to be sure, and Miller in no way makes it seem like it will be simple. But it is something which can be achieved if we seek God through faith, prayer, and scripture study, all of which are talked about by Miller in ways that will likely give readers a new perspective. Miller doesn't try to shove answers down your throat, or resolve everything for you (not to suggest that books that seek to answer difficult questions are necessarily force feeding you--I think such books are important aids to the process of finding our own answers). Rather, Miller just offers his personal reflections from a life of seeking answers, as a means of offering a little guidance. Miller recognizes that we all, ultimately, must find our own answers, and that they must come through a "working out" between ourselves and God. There is certain vagueness to the book that can be both a strength and a weakness. On the one hand, it allows the reader to more freely find themselves in the text, and apply the council to their unique situations.

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