

SF 770 - SOUL CARE

Alliance Theological Seminary

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Date: 5-25-20

READING REPORT

“The Gift of Being Yourself” By: David Benner

- **Summary of three main points of the author that impacted you.**

I was totally impacted by the concept of the false self in-which the author explained, how we adopt this self and think that it is good for our image when it actually not us at all. When the author identified defensiveness as one of the traits to help one identify their false self it made so much sense to me. I begin to ponder how I see that attribute in others and then I realized that at times I too have become easily offended at times but actually guarded my defensiveness knowing it was actually present. I felt in my heart that when he gave remedies to come out of the false self it was like providing us with a deliverance of the the old self so we can welcome the new self. Seeking God to assist to identify the issues that has made one take on their first identity was really helpful for me. I personally have triggers that tend to make me shut down. I become quiet with my poker face which has always been my false self. I think for me I have carried too much pain and I have found some form of solace by being still. When the true me can be very vocal yet in a mild manner when need be, instead of speaking out I refrain. Seeking God in prayer to assist one in their weaknesses is an option I know to do but hardly do. I have just been living in recycled turmoil time after time. This book will surely help me shift toward the better. Chapter six David Benner discusses the becoming your true self. I personally thought it was so needed for me as well as others. I need to operate not in my wounded self, not in my old self but in my true authentic identity. I am looking forward to becoming a better me so I can serve God in the manner in which is absolutely pleasing to him and his people. I know in my heart there is a lot of weight to shed not just in my physical body but in my soul and I am willing to work on me and accept fully the purpose that God has for me. Most of my work is in the

fields which is the streets. I encounter people daily and I need to be able to hear God and not myself guiding me on what to say.

- **Interaction - how does the reading interact with your present or anticipated ministry context?**

After reading this book, I realized that although I have always been transparent regarding things in my life. I have not been my true self when I was hurting while ministering to others. I stood before them as a strong woman who was severely wounded on the inside. I have shared my pain before when ministering and or speaking but it was my past pain not what I was going through at the present. Maybe in my mindset I felt a simple testimony of something God brought me through was enough. I now realize I was not fully transparent as I stood in front of women and spoke about my abuse but never shared at that moment that I was still conflicted, still hurting badly and that I have not been fully healed. This book has made me re-examine myself and to not stand before God's people as just a spokesperson but I must in deed bring the true person not the one that appears to have overcome her own personal crisis.

Answer the following questions within your reading report:

- **How will this book impact your theology and praxis of soul care?**

David Benner packed so much useful insight for the christian and non-believer. We as followers of Christ spend so much time trying to get things right according to the Bible that we at times neglect to examine ourselves. This book has allowed me to take inventory of my actions and ways. It has opened my eyes to more than I was able to see. I was so busy serving others

and the Lord within a place that I was not fully true. The author was able to pull from his acumen utilizing his profession as a psychotherapist and as a religious leader which enlightened me. We are reminded throughout his writings that God desires more from us, but many of us are not operating in our full potential for kingdom purposes. We can serve so much effectively when we allow our true self to be that servant that God has called us to be. Many of us are stuck on being christlike, he can use us better if we take care of the inner self. Once the true self is unearthed within me I know that I can serves others more effectively. I desire to know God better and I know this will be a journey that I will trek for the rest of my life. I look forward to a authentic self as well how I will impact others. My soul is ready for the transformation that has begun to take place. I would recommend this book to anyone who is truly serious about their ministry.

- **How has the book impacted your life personally?**

Personally this book was a very great read and a book that I shall reference in my lifetime. There is a saying “fake it until you make it” I never want to stand before God’s people not being true nor utilizing the authentic gifts that he has given me. I know fear has always been a problem for me. I was afraid of how folk would respond to my message, I was relying on my self not my true self nor allowing the holy spirit to assist me in bringing forth the word. I have always been pretty comfortable evangelizing, I look forward to my new found self...

With integrity, I have read this book
Thoroughly and Entirely—____%
Quickly but Completely 85%
Thoroughly but NOT Entirely—____%
Quickly and NOT Completely—____%
Not at all—____%
Signature: Saundra Coleman