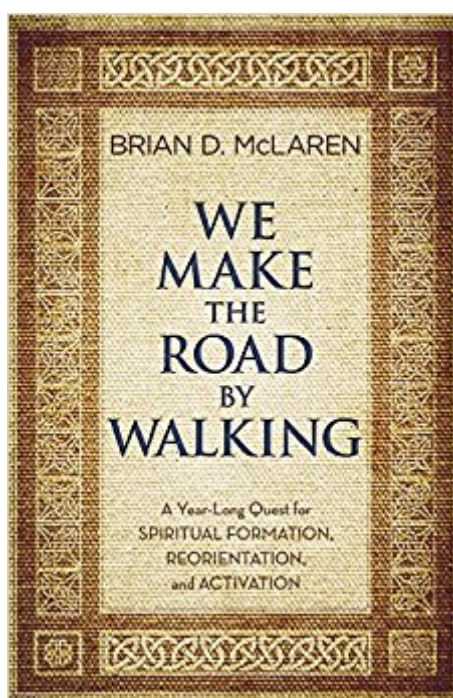


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# We Make The Road By Walking: A Year-Long Quest For Spiritual Formation, Reorientation, And Activation



## Synopsis

From critically acclaimed author Brian McLaren comes a brilliant retelling of the biblical story and a thrilling reintroduction to Christian faith. This book offers everything you need to explore what a difference an honest, living, growing faith can make in our world today. It also puts tools in your hands to create a life-changing learning community in any home, restaurant, or other welcoming space. The fifty-two (plus a few) weekly readings can each be read aloud in 10 to 12 minutes and offer a simple curriculum of insightful reflections and transformative practices. Organized around the traditional church year, these readings give an overview of the whole Bible and guide an individual or a group of friends through a year of rich study, interactive learning, and personal growth. Perfect for home churches, congregations, classes, or individual study, each reading invites you to

Cultivate an honest, intelligent understanding of the Bible and of Christian faith in 21st century

Engage with discussion questions designed to challenge, stimulate, and encourage

Reimagine what it means to live joyfully and responsibly in today's world as agents of God's justice, creativity, and peace

If you're seeking a fresh way to experience and practice your faith, if you're a long-term Christian seeking new vitality, or if you feel out of place in traditional church circles, this book will inspire and activate you in your spiritual journey.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"This is one of the most remarkable documents in recent Christian writings...There is no evangelizing here, and no preaching, only a sinewy, but orderly and open, presentation of the faith

that holds. The result is as startling as it is beautiful." — Phyllis Tickle, author, *The Age of the Spirit*

Brian McLaren has a talent for expressing theological viewpoints in a way that doesn't divide the camp. He gives everyone on the theological spectrum, from orthodox to progressive, something to chew on and contemplate. His new book, *WE MAKE THE ROAD BY WALKING*, doesn't disappoint." — Charles Toy, co-founder of The Christian Left

A ton of people have been waiting for this book—they just didn't know it! Brian has given us a clear and compelling guide to walking the Jesus path together, around the table, in the living room, discussing and learning and growing. This book is going to help so many people." — Rob Bell, author of *What We Talk About When We Talk About God*

It is at once inspiring and challenging, ancient and contemporary, intellectually rigorous and profoundly practical. It changed the way I engage Scripture, the way I pray, the way I experience communion, and the way I interact with my neighbors." — Rachel Held Evans, author, *A Year of Biblical Womanhood*

*WE MAKE THE ROAD BY WALKING* has given me the tools I needed to make sense of my friendships and weave them into something that makes our connections more meaningful; the community that I have always longed for, a community that accepts me for me, a community that faithfully lives out the gospel through its actions, treating all people with respect, value, and like they matter." — Romal Tune, author, *God's Graffiti: Inspiring Stories for Teens*

This is Brian McLaren at his best, and I think this is what so many readers want from him: Deeply rooted in scripture, yet offering fresh, even radical, readings. *WE MAKE THE ROAD BY WALKING* will surely be a benefit and blessing to many." — Tony Jones (tonyj.net), theologian-in-residence at Solomon's Porch, author of *The Church Is Flat*

"I love this book, because through each page you will hear the whisper of Jesus echo in your heart. You will find yourself taken on a journey that will make you more alive, more loving, and with a bigger vision for changing the world. I'm buying copies for all my friends!" — Canon Mark Russell, CEO, Church Army UK and Ireland

BRIAN D. McLAREN is an author, speaker, activist, and public theologian. He is a popular conference speaker and a frequent guest lecturer for denominational and ecumenical leadership gatherings in the U.S. and internationally, and is Theologian-in-Residence at Life in the Trinity Ministry. Brian's writing spans over a dozen books, including his acclaimed *Why Did Jesus, Moses, the Buddha, and Mohammed Cross the Road*, *A New Kind of Christian* trilogy, *A Generous Orthodoxy*, and *Naked Spirituality*. Learn more: [BrianMcLaren.net](http://BrianMcLaren.net)

I gave this review a lot of thought. At first, I was going to rate this book three stars, but after much

consideration I think four stars is more accurate. I want to point out at the outset that I am not a liberal Christian, but I think a lot of great ideas have come out of that camp, and a lot of good ideas have come out of the conservative camp as well. The risks of both are essentially that extreme liberalism says there is nothing sacred enough that deserves our defense, and extreme conservatism says nothing we have done in the past is worth changing. I went into this book knowing it was more on the liberal side of things because I like to hear everyone's perspectives. With that being said, McLaren and I agree on most of his talking points. I found his assessment of the poor in our societies, the gross injustices and abuses that we as Christians should be taking an honest look at, to be valuable. He obviously is a thoughtful and deeply engaged Christian man. The points I disagreed with him on are centered mostly around his uncompromising adherence to liberation theology and nonviolence. Again, much good has come from liberation theology and nonviolence, but I find that the constant, unrelenting use of liberation theology as a filter to promote a heavily politicized (read: polarized) Christianity to be unpalatable. Such filtering feels, at times, like a hijacking, as if liberation theology's proponents would like to force their brand of Christianity. I tend to be simplistic in my own personal faith, avoiding dogma and doctrines, preferring to do Greek and Hebrew close word studies, and prayerfully come to my own conclusions about things. Along that vein, I don't think Jesus was a socialist or a Democrat, nor was he a capitalist or a Republican. To try to make his actions and words fit into such a limited and polarized viewpoint just seems... unethical. Of course, liberal and conservative Christians hate to hear this, and are generally fairly defensive of their worldview, as many of us can be. Still, I understand and appreciate why many of the ideas in liberation theology, nonviolence, and Christian environmentalism developed. As Christians, we should be supremely concerned with compassionate service and reaching out to the poor and lost, as Jesus did. We should be responsible citizens of the earth, acknowledging the sacredness of it and not exploiting it to feed the sickness of our greed. And peace should be our highest ideal, constantly pursued, choosing more effective and skillful means to resolve conflicts than with violence. And yet, \*everything\* in Christianity doesn't have to be framed around liberation theology, as if Christianity were just the faith wing of socialist politics. And I think a solid argument could be biblically made to support an idea of reasonable self-defense too. The fact that Peter even had a sword on his side while he was with Jesus shows that self-defense is sometimes just a normal part of living around crazy people. That doesn't undermine or lessen Christ's pointing out to Peter that those who live by the sword, die by the sword. So at times, I think McLaren was a bit over the top about nonviolence and liberation theology, and for me it became, well, annoying. But that has nothing to do with my opinion of him, which is high, or the value of his writing, which is

refreshing. Discourse is a good thing, as well as thinking for yourself and not getting lured into the intoxication of groupthink, and I would venture to say McLaren would probably be supportive of me dissenting with some of his ideas. All in all, good read, and worth the purchase.

My wife and I used this book for our weekly devotions over an extended year. Most chapters inspired us; some that particularly spoke to my heart were on Love, the Holy Spirit and Death. This book would be an excellent resource as a basis for discussions in an open-hearted, serious-minded group of spiritual seekers, whether or not they are believers in Jesus. I took part in a German-speaking small group which used a few chapters in this way.

This was my first McLaren book and I found it very thought-provoking. He leads you through a survey of Scriptures from what was to me a new perspective on the story of how God wants to relate to us. It makes total sense, but his approach is not the traditional and familiar evangelical perspective. There's a significant focus on the role we play in partnering with God to impact the world here and now.

This book has 52 chapters in it and is divided into quarters, 13 chapters for each quarter. Even if you only read one chapter a week it would really give you time to study the chapter with the bible. Great book for Sunday School and class study. Brian McLaren writes so anyone can follow his thoughts and he's very good at helping you to see things that you might otherwise miss.

I have just finished using this book for the last year with a small group. We felt that McLaren does an amazing job of being relevant to us personally, and in the larger context of our immediate community and the world community. His writing style is very readable and good!

An interesting journey with varying perspectives and some fresh understandings. One chapter per week. The chapters take only a few minutes to read and are easily understood. Scripture references keep the subject matter grounded appropriately. Did not challenge but did enlighten several areas. Best read over time.

I am using this book in a small female clergy group; with a male/female adult bible study and for personal reflection. I am enjoying it very much. In some areas it moves me beyond my comfort zone, but in all areas it makes me think.

I am using it in a study group and it is generating good conversations and insights.

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