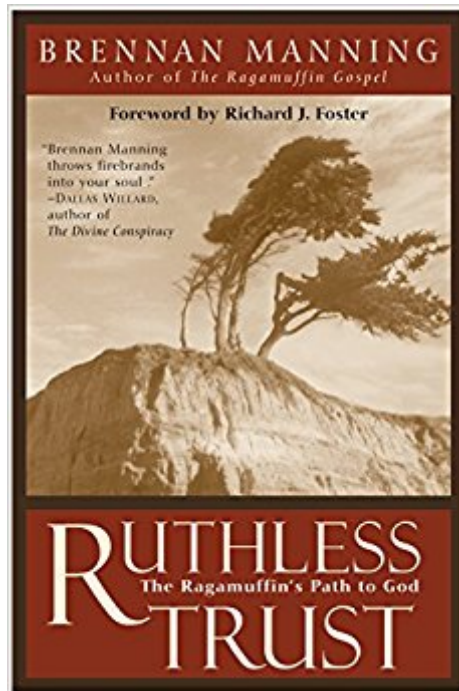




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Ruthless Trust: The Ragamuffin's Path To God



Synopsis

In his sequel to *The Ragamuffin Gospel*, bestselling author Brennan Manning shows how true and radical trust in God can transform our lives. Manning, beloved author and spiritual teacher, shows us how trust in God can transform our lives and open us up to deeper experiences of grace and love. In *Ruthless Trust*, he turns his focus from furious love to radical trust, revealing the ways in which trust renews our faith and help us grow.

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Customer Reviews

We suffer from the disease of melancholy, the sickness of self-hatred, the darkness of doubt. Yet, author Brennan Manning sees the place of our worst despair as a tangible starting point for the remedy: a ruthless trust in God. In his sequel to *The Ragamuffin Gospel*, Manning pries us loose from our shame, our mistakes, and our doubts and encourages us to let go and trust God--ruthlessly. It's been 40 years since author Brennan Manning was "ambushed by God" and on the far side of despair himself. As a gutter-alcoholic who was completely broken, he found an unshakable trust in the love of Christ for him as he was then, not as he could be or is now. Authenticity with God is critical in developing this trust relationship. In his own inimitable voice, Manning tells us, "Raw honesty with Jesus about our doubts and anxieties, our lust and laziness, our shabby prayer life and stale religiosity, our mixed motives and divided hearts, is the risk we take in the certainty of being acceptable and accepted. It is the full and mature expression of invincible trust." Over the years, this trust ripens into confidence and bears certain fruit, such as gratitude to

God. But it's not always easy, he admits. "Ruthless trust is hanging tough in the dark nights, when we are plunged into desolation but know that absence of God is only apparent." For author Brennan Manning--and for us, if we choose--ruthless trust is not just a concept, it's a way of life. As Manning observes, "Ill winds may blow, more character defects may surface, sickness may visit, and friends will surely die, but a stubborn irrefutable certainty persists that God is with us and loves us in our struggle to be faithful." Now, that's ruthless trust. You won't fail to be moved. --Cindy Crosby --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Manning, the Catholic-priest-turned-itinerant-evangelist who penned *The Ragamuffin Gospel*, perceptively addresses the intricacies of trusting God, arguing that to trust in God is to bring God joy. He distinguishes this from intellectual assent to Christian teachings and proposes that when Christians add hopeAthe belief that God will do them goodAto faith, then they trust. He acknowledges the problems of evil and pain that make trust difficult, but calls readers to trust God despite these circumstances. The God in whom Manning urges trust is both transcendent in glory and immanent in Christ. Manning suggests that gratitude is the prerequisite to trust, and grateful trust becomes the antidote to both self-flagellation and self-pity. Because the trust he proclaims is so complete, so perfect, Manning calls it "ruthless." The term ragamuffin, made famous in his earlier title, refers to the brokenness and spiritual poverty of people who need God. Although the titular word threatens a too-precious approach, Manning is in fact intellectually strenuous, and the book highly readable; he tells stories and draws upon religious writers from medieval saints down to such present-day authors as Philip Yancey, Dallas Willard, Frederick Buechner and Richard Foster. (Foster provides the foreword.) Fans of those authors should also appreciate Manning's work, finding his call to ruthless trust both commanding and challenging. (Oct.) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I would recommend this book to anyone who is serious about his/her spirituality, particularly those who find trust in God not always at the level he/she would like. Brennan Manning lays it all out there, from ordinary doubtfulness to serious sinfulness and how we can still learn to trust through them. He does this using his own life story as well as the marvelous stories of others. (Some of these stories he has related in former talks and books but, for me, each time I hear one, it seems to reach a deeper place.) I found all of the stories insightful and I feel fortunate for having read them. I found the chapters so thought provoking I decided to read only one per day and then, at times, I reread and reread some portions of them. It is not a book I could skim through. Rather, even now, there are

at least three chapters I want to read again. Once again I offer my gratitude to Brennan Manning. He does not hide who he is but rather reveals himself and his wisdom so we may better know the relationship God wants and offers each of us now, as we are.

'Ruthless Trust' picks up where 'Ragamuffin' and 'Abba's Child' left off, describing our "second conversion" from mistrust to trust. Faith in God's existence and love is good, but Abba wants us to move from mere faith to ruthless trust. Just as Jesus discovered after his Baptism, once our heart is truly convinced of God's unfailing love, the next step on our spiritual journey is not euphoria but wilderness. "THE BASIC PREMISE of biblical trust is the conviction that God wants us to grow, to unfold, and to experience fullness of life. However, this kind of trust is acquired only gradually and most often through a series of crises and trials... Against insurmountable obstacles and without a clue as to the outcome, the trusting heart says, 'Abba, I surrender my will and my life to you without reservation and with boundless confidence, for you are my loving Father" (pp. 9, 155). A profound, well-written, and deeply moving road map for this most difficult stage on the journey to spiritual maturity.

"To live without risk is to risk not living". This book was recommended to me by a seatmate on a flight. Not an overtly in your face religious zealot but a person who had claimed to have released all fear of the future and accepted the path of the unknown. A path this person had embarked on five years ago, he seemed at peace with the unknowns of life and highly recommended this book. This book is a book of faith scattered with quotes from the bible and quotes from real life. Even if you are not a religious person I think you will enjoy this book. This book is about "trust", trust in the unknown, faith that there is a purpose in life, something we all can gain a source of strength from.

There is simple beauty in the raw and unfettered honesty of Brennan Manning's words. He is a artful wordsmith, and the way he turns a phrase provides many poignant moments of reflection, no, more than that... The way that he communicates in this book is a means of grace through which you encounter the living God. His ruthless transparency, to borrow his word, gathers the reader up and invites you to lay down the shields and protective veneer and to stand before the raging flame of God's grace and love. In that space, the beauty of Jesus is revealed, a beauty that compels and demands the very ruthless trust of which Manning speaks. I can say with total candor that as I read through this book for the second time, that once again it stirred my soul and resonated with the deep ache within me to walk with Jesus in sublime intimacy. Highly, highly recommended.

Most people who are acquainted with Brennan Manning have read *The Ragamuffin Gospel*. The *Ragamuffin Gospel* showers us with the love of God, in ways that most of us have never experienced before. In the *Ragamuffin Gospel*, we begin to accept ourselves, but more importantly, to accept that God truly does love and accept us as we are. But then what? I know that I am loved by God, and I am beginning to love myself a little because of that fact. But what do I do when darkness overtakes my life, when unjust things happen, or when I become apathetic about the Christian life? This book sends us deeper into the world of a loving God, deeper into the involvement of that God in our lives. One of the main lessons I have taken from it is that if I am to trust God when things get difficult, I need to focus on His attributes daily when things are going well. The Word tells us in so many ways that God loves, protects, and sustains us, that He is attentive and aware of our needs and hardships. This book will get you thinking more about the attributes of your God. Manning writes that we cannot will ourselves to trust God. Trusting God comes from years of learning of Him, of seeing Him act, and of reading His Word. This kind of trust is ruthless, because we begin to trust God even when the storms overtake us. It's ruthless because it appears to be crazy, and we may even feel crazy when we trust God radically. It took me a while to get into this book. Some points seem overemphasized and go on for pages, but they are effective in the end. The concepts in this book will ring true in your spirit. You probably know them, but have never put them into words. Most of us have never been challenged to develop this kind of trust, but we have been slowly developing it as a result of our relationship with God. This book shows us what it looks like to have a living, active trust in loving Abba. It challenges us to grow faster and deeper towards abandon to that "reckless raging fury" of which Rich Mullins sings.

What a great book to help anyone come to a place of trusting God to love us beyond the brokenness of our sinful nature. Trusting that God's attribute of unconditional love for a sin sick sinner, saved by grace (Manning uses the word *Raggamuffin*) never changes. This book has helped me as a Pastor to come to a place and always find Jesus, instead of the enemy who plays a dual role of tempter, than accuser. Glory be to God for His son Jesus and His Holy Spirit!

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