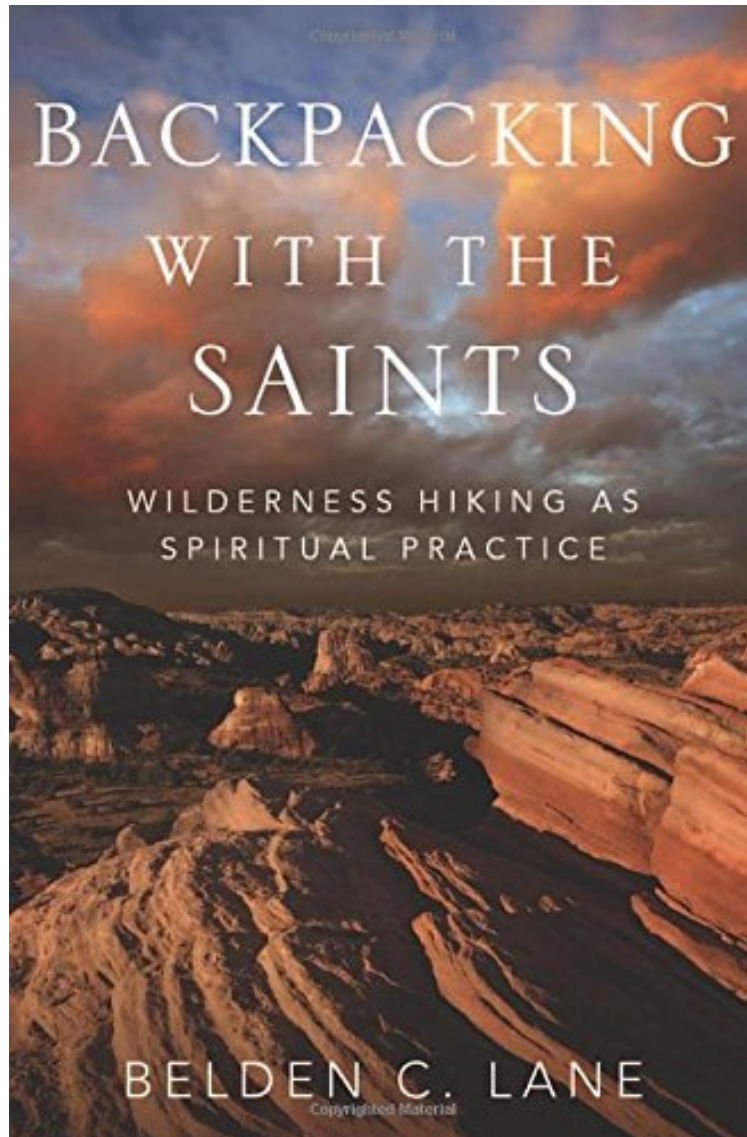


(Mobile pdf) Backpacking with the Saints: Wilderness Hiking as Spiritual Practice

Backpacking with the Saints: Wilderness Hiking as Spiritual Practice

Belden C. Lane

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Belden C. Lane : Backpacking with the Saints: Wilderness Hiking as Spiritual Practice before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Backpacking with the Saints: Wilderness Hiking as Spiritual Practice:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. An amazingly wise book and beautifully written. Very profound
By Mary Ann Seufert
A book for any Hard Core Outdoorsman/Woman who thrives in Nature, or for anyone else (like me) who wants to understand and appreciate how and why nature speaks to these adventurers. Surprisingly, it speaks more to everyone who is on a journey of the spirit. When the title refers to "Saints", it doesn't mean canonized Saints, it really means "every day saints" throughout history!. An amazingly wise book and beautifully written. Very profound. I bought 2 as birthday gifts for 2 of my "mountain children" because of their lifestyle, because I had read a couple of quotes from it. I ended up reading it myself and will purchase one for me. It is a treasure. A book I want to read over and over again and will underline. This is no made up review. I loved it!
2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. What a wonderful and impactful book
By Bill
It took this book to write my first review!
What a wonderful and impactful book. The author reminds us that going into wild places and reading great works of wisdom can be a dangerous thing and we may leave transformed. Belden is a wise and wonderful companion to have for the journey. My favorite line from the book is "The grandeur of nature is that it cares so little for that which consumes us so much."
The quality of prose is only matched by the powerful storytelling that transports the reader to new and wonderful places. Belden's practical approach and the disciplines he suggests are great practices to be present to our lives and to see the world and ourselves with new eyes. I've given 10 copies of this book to others and highly recommend it to those who want to approach their development in a practical and impactful way. Thanks Belden for giving us this great book!
3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. top of the list
By mmbrown
I'm currently reading this five star book, but already Belden Lane is at the top of my literary favorites along with Thornton Wilder, novelist, playwright, and Ellen Davis, theologian. Lane has shared so authentically and is quite skilled and creative in giving psychological understandings. I see all the reviews are five-star and how could it be otherwise?
Turn the pages slowly, yes, as one reviewer has suggested and as my favorite theologian says of good books. I found an enthusiastic review on Christian Century by Cindy Crosby and have recommended Backpacking myself both there and on VirtueOnline. And my next book to read is to be The Solace of Fierce Landscapes. How fortunate we are to have the work of Belden Lane.

Carrying only basic camping equipment and a collection of the world's great spiritual writings, Belden C. Lane embarks on solitary spiritual treks through the Ozarks and across the American Southwest. For companions, he has only such teachers as Rumi, John of the Cross, Hildegard of Bingen, Dag Hammarskjöld, and Thomas Merton, and as he walks, he engages their writings with the natural wonders he encounters--Bell Mountain Wilderness with Sren Kierkegaard, Moonshine Hollow with Thich Nhat Hanh--demonstrating how being alone in the wild opens a rare view onto one's interior landscape, and how the saints' writings reveal the divine in nature. The discipline of backpacking, Lane shows, is a metaphor for a spiritual journey. Just as the wilderness offered revelations to the early Desert Christians, backpacking hones crucial spiritual skills: paying attention, traveling light, practicing silence, and exercising wonder. Lane engages the practice not only with a wide range of spiritual writings--Celtic, Catholic, Protestant, Buddhist, Hindu, and Sufi Muslim--but with the fascination of other lovers of the backcountry, from John Muir and Ed Abbey to Bill Plotkin and Cheryl Strayed. In this intimate and down-to-earth narrative, backpacking is shown to be a spiritual practice that allows the discovery of God amidst the beauty and unexpected terrors of nature. Adoration, Lane suggests, is the most appropriate human response to what we cannot explain, but have nonetheless learned to love. An enchanting narrative for Christians of all denominations, Backpacking with the Saints is an inspiring exploration of how solitude, simplicity, and mindfulness are illuminated and encouraged by the discipline of backcountry wandering, and of how the wilderness itself becomes a way of knowing--an ecology of the soul.

"This is a wise and helpful book, probably best read by reconnoitering the terrain quickly, then lingering over sections that seem inviting. The real point, though, is to engage in the contemplative practice that Lane models so well. If backpacking seems out of the question, adopting the practice of spending time in quiet contemplation of nature while reading the book offers a less intense alternative that can still offer rich rewards."--*Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology*
"Belden C. Lane has written a lovely book that seamlessly brings together two rich genres: travel narrative and spiritual memoir. The notion of a spiritual journey, of course, is central to almost every religious tradition, but the author enlivens that tradition as he shares personal and heartfelt stories about his own peregrinations and muses on topics as varied as solitude, ecology, backpacking, beauty, and prayer; and on people as varied as St. Threse of Lisieux, Dag Hammarskjöld, John Muir, and Bruce Springsteen. A thoroughly delightful book." --James Martin, SJ, author of *Jesus: A Pilgrimage*
"If the earlier centuries of Christianity had been as honest, emotionally descriptive, and spiritually helpful as Belden Lane is here, we would have a very different notion of religion today. Such wisdom as this will literally 'save the soul' of many a spiritual seeker." --Fr. Richard Rohr, O.F.M., Founder, Center for Action and Contemplation, Albuquerque, New Mexico
"The only problem with this remarkable book is that it cannot be read rightly from a comfortable chair. As Lane and the rest of the saints in these pages insist, what the soul most needs is not found in safe places but in wild ones, where the dangers are as real as the courage they call forth. So find a high rock, a far hill, or a patch of desert that scares you a little and let this book persuade you that you are

exactly where you need to be." --Barbara Brown Taylor, author of *Learning to Walk in the Dark*"The carefully balanced writing about landscape, physical demands, spiritual awakening and literary companionship allows the reader to see, feel, and join in the meditation." --Booklist "Lane's work blends genres, combining the literature of the outdoors with the formal literature of the spiritual as he reviews the work of the world's prominent religious and spiritual writers and ties their insights to the features and experiences of exploring the natural world." --Publishers Weekly

About the Author
Belden C. Lane is Professor of Theological Studies, American Religion, and History of Spirituality at Saint Louis University. He is the author of *The Solace of Fierce Landscapes: Exploring Desert and Mountain Spirituality* and *Ravished by Beauty: The Surprising Legacy of Reformed Spirituality*.