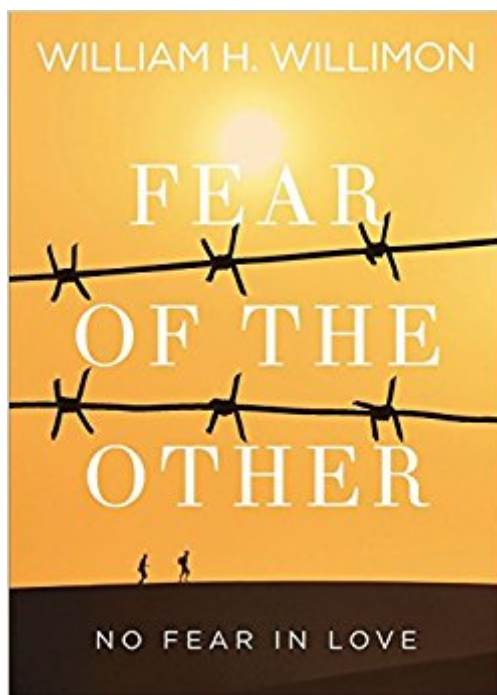


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# Fear Of The Other: No Fear In Love



## Synopsis

In this no non-sense book, reliable spiritual guide, Will Willimon, invites readers to consider the gospel command to love (and not merely tolerate) those considered to be "Other" or outside mainstream Christian culture. Rooted in the faith of Israel and the Christian story and vision, Willimon brings a Wesleyan perspective to bear on what may be the hardest thing for people of faith to do: keeping and loving the "Other" as they are - without any need for them to become like us. Emphasizing biblical teaching to receive Others for who they are and their differences as gifts and mysteries bearing the grace of God, Willimon also offers a strong critique of the privileged who all too often rush to speak of reconciliation and evade the injustice of huge inequalities faced by foreigners and strangers - as well as the antagonism the stranger experiences. He identifies concrete, everyday ways persons are formed in welcoming others without annihilating their differences. Rooted in the New Testament understanding of Gentile outsiders grafted into the covenant community, Willimon invites readers to an on-the-ground faith that remembers the God who comes to us again and again through so-called outsiders, strangers, immigrants, and those without status. Beyond welcome, Christians must become "other" to the world, shaking off the dominant culture's identity and privilege through practices of listening, humility, and understanding. "I love Will Willimon, and I love this book. Will writes with prophetic sarcasm, a touch of humor, plenty of self-effacement, and a pastor's heart. And his words will make you laugh, cringe, cry, confess, and repent. This is a very timely book. I urge you, prospective reader, as you read this blurb on the back cover: buy and read it! You'll be grateful you did." Adam Hamilton, senior pastor, The United Methodist Church of the Resurrection, Leawood, KS; author of *Half Truths* "This gutsy, biblically rich, theologically searing book by Willimon gigs everybody's sacred cow. Not only is the one whom Christ loves Other but God is Other. The ground beneath us shakes the walls that divide us. If you are holed-up happy with people who look like you, don't read this thing. It will screw up your world." Tex Sample, Robert B. and Kathleen Rogers Professor Emeritus of Church and Society, Saint Paul School of Theology, Leawood, KS "Timely and prophetic, Willimon's call to love the Other will quickly take hold of your soul, changing your preaching and your life. This book is not just a reminder of our Christian calling to welcome the Other but a call to conversion, a new way of seeing the neighbor and a new way of being in the world God desperately loves." Karoline M. Lewis, Marbury E. Anderson Chair of Biblical Preaching, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN "Bishop Willimon's new book should come with a warning: Do not read unless you are ready to be changed and want to change

the world! O. Wesley Allen Jr., Lois Craddock Perkins Professor of Homiletics, Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX Now with a New Introduction!

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Feeling most at home behind a pulpit, Will Willimon's deepest calling is to be a preacher and truth-teller of Jesus Christ. He is Professor of the Practice of Christian Ministry at Duke University Divinity School and retired Bishop of the North Alabama Conference of The United Methodist Church, after serving for 20 years as faculty member and Dean of the Chapel at Duke University. He lives in Durham, North Carolina. Will Willimon has published many books, including his preaching subscription service on MinistryMatters.com, Pulpit Resource, and Fear of the Other: No Fear in Love, both published by Abingdon Press.

Bishop Willimon has a reputation among his fans and non-fans for being a Wesleyan curmudgeon, if not a tad sarcastic curmudgeon. That is once more the case in his newest book, Fear Of The Other. Of course, it's that curmudgeonly approach that draws you to his writing - the reader knows that he/she will be irked and/or pricked by something he says. He thanks Donald Trump, Dr. Ben Carson, and Sen. Ted Cruz for providing the rationale for writing this book. Already with the sarcasm/irony! In this short book, the Bishop, now retired, and back teaching at Duke Divinity School, enters into the conversation (!!?) about the impact of fear, especially of those most unlike

me (I'm white, protestant, 65+), is driving American culture in 2016. Over against that driver of our culture, Willimon sets the message of Jesus of Nazareth, the one Christians call Savior and Lord, the consummate Stranger, or Other. Jesus, Willimon asserts (rightly, I think), calls us to love, embrace, those who are other than we. That's because Jesus shows us that God embraces and loves those who are most unlike God - us. And then issues orders to Christians to go and do likewise. - love the Other, even especially the Other. This is a timely reminder to Christians that our Lord's first words to his fearful disciples, "Don't be afraid!" are a summons to live unafraid of anything or anyone save disappointing God. With questions after each chapter for group discussion, this short volume would be an excellent small group or Sunday School study between now and Election Day 2016. But be prepared to be irritated, challenged, made uncomfortable, chastened. It's what Bishop Willimon does best. And I'm grateful.

Bishop Willimon was my bishop, and although he'd not remember me, he was and is a mentor and friend. This book should be required reading for all people of any faith, and for the wall-builders and gate-shutters who've never had the intellectual capacity or care of fellow man to sit down and break bread and listen to someone DIFFERENT. It helped ME a lot. Heaven ain't made of gated communities, and we ought all do more preparing for that. Respectfully, Will's open letter to Trump's pastor-guy was overbearing and arrogant. This book hits the right tone of love, of courage, of humility, and -- did I say -- love. As in "love thy neighbor," wherein "love" is an active verb, one that requires stepping out fearlessly to meet, to hear, to embrace. 5-star effort.

Bishop Willimon is always insightful and encouraging in his writings. This book is an affirmation that through faith in the faithfulness and love we can find the courage and hope to overcome our fear of others.

This book is an easy but incredibly worthwhile read. If you are looking for a path to understand people who are different than you there is immense wisdom, no judgementalism, just a path to love rather than fear.

This short, timely book challenged me to move out of my sphere of comfort and think (and more importantly act) in a manner that honestly recognizes that to Christ, I am the "other" who is alien to his message and ministry of love. Written as five essays, the book is effective in persuading the reader to examine their own commitment to loving their neighbor and what that means in practice in

the contemporary world.

A small but powerful book that encourages us to step outside of our inherited habit of seeing ourselves as the accepted and the chosen (whoever we are and to whatever group we belong) and to move forward "fearlessly" with the love, compassion and acceptance of all that Christ demonstrated.

everyone should read this

In late 2016, this book is needed more than ever. Many Christians may need a refresher course such as this. The last chapter, "Jesus, The Other" is a deeply thought provoking discussion of the Good Samaritan and is worth the cost of the book.

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