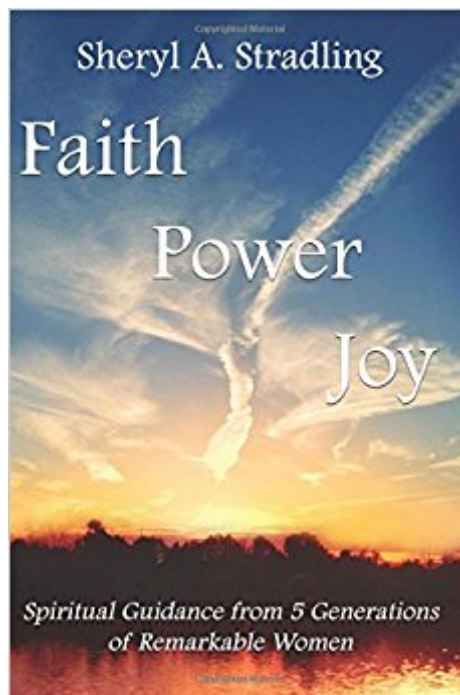




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Faith, Power, Joy: Spiritual Guidance From 5 Generations Of Remarkable Women



Synopsis

Faith, Power, Joy tells the multi-generational saga of a family of women who followed their intuition, demonstrated their faith, and transformed the challenges in their lives into opportunities for service and joy. At sixteen, Lottie won her husband-to-be in a daring bet and overcame his untimely death through prayer and love. Power Her daughter, Minnie, broke the glass ceiling in the 1930's by becoming a well-known educator. Joy Sheryl, Minnie's granddaughter, shares the family saga of five generations of women who reveal their secrets for following spiritual principles, living passionately and transforming adversity into resilience. The women's stories begin in 1890, when the author's great grandmother challenged a family friend in a bet and went on to overcome unexpected tragedy, grief and loss. She learned to share her faith through love and helping others heal. The family chronicle traverses time through the next generation when the author's grandmother had a stellar career as an educator in the public schools, which she achieved by her determination and challenging the social norms of her times. Her daughter, the author's mother, confronted lifetime illness and personal loss with courage and determination. The author expanded her own self-acceptance and understanding through spiritual practice, meditation and holistic healing, while her daughter shares the source of her strength through her devotionals and Christ-centered living. Each woman lived by her principles of love, faith, courage and determination. They each found their path in life by learning to trust themselves and follow their guidance. Their stories are both joyful and heartbreaking as each reveals her methods for overcoming adversity and transforming obstacles into opportunities. Each woman learned to embrace life with enthusiasm and share what she learned to help others. These remarkable women built on the spiritual growth of their foremothers. The author now shares their secrets for creating the lives they wanted through spiritual principles that apply today: faith, gratitude, giving, love, courage. They inspire us and provide guidance to harness our inner power, live by our faith, and share our joy with others.

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Customer Reviews

A beautiful and unique book about five generations of the author's family, with amazing insight about why family members do what they do, how they handled adversity and change and navigated the trials and joys of their amazing and sometimes heart-breaking experiences. The quotes and references are excellent.

— Anne Puryear, D.D., Author of *Stephen Lives! My Son Stephen, His Life, Suicide and Afterlife and Messages from God*

A deep perspective on family dynamics that inspires readers to better navigate their own lives. The author shares the stories and techniques of five generations of women who confront personal challenges and outmoded social norms with courage and determination as they grow spiritually and personally. Their transformation serves as a light, as they turn challenges into opportunities, deepen their faith, empower themselves, and share their joy!

— Peter Kane, Counselor, Relationship Theorist and author of *The Monogamy Challenge: Creating and Keeping Intimacy*

Sheryl A Stradling's writing is purposeful, crafted to inspire and empower women and anyone who wants to experience genuine growth and success. In the heart of her message is the startling realization that our spiritual growth creates a corresponding material success. . . . The writing is beautiful and polished, and the entire book features heart-warming and entertaining stories that inspire faith and the commitment to positively embrace the challenges of life and to transform them into opportunities. Faith, Power, Joy: Spiritual Guidance from 5 Generations of Remarkable Women is a book with a message that will resonate in many hearts. I had a lot to learn from its characters.

— Readers' Favorite

5-Star review by Divine Zape "A beautiful and unique book about five generations of the author's family, with amazing insight about why family members do what they do, how they handled adversity and change and navigated the trials and joys of their amazing and sometimes heart-breaking experiences. The quotes and references are excellent." - Anne Puryear, D.D., Author of *Stephen Lives! My Son Stephen, His Life, Suicide and Afterlife and Messages from God*

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Nothing happens by chance. We live in an ordered universe. Natural, immutable law prevails through absolute intelligence and consciousness. We call it God, Spirit, our Higher Power, First Principle, Reality, or Truth. Some feel no need to name it; it guides us nevertheless.~ ~ This energetic force which guides our lives, channels us along the pathways that bring us lessons and wisdom we need to learn through the exercise of our free will. We frequently follow circuitous paths to complete our learning. Often we repeat situations or put them aside until similar causes and conditions activate us again and we achieve what we are to know, understand and do.~ ~ It was no accident that I graduated from the Master Gardener program in the spring of 2010 after putting it on hold for fifteen years. I was exhilarated as I accepted my certificate. I knew this would usher in a new segment of my life. Intuitively, I sensed I was starting on a journey that would lead me in directions I had no concept of at the time. My intuition was right.~ ~ During my internship in the Master Gardener program, a colleague suggested I write gardening articles for our on-line publication to obtain my required volunteer hours. Since I worked full-time, it was a great solution. I wrote my first article, "A Dirty Story," about reclaiming a damaged portion of my yard for a vegetable garden. It was published, and I continued writing monthly articles.~ ~ One evening while writing my article, I recalled that my mother, who's also been a Master Gardener (in the first class of 1972-73), had written articles on gardening. I instantly recognized we had something in common that I'd never considered. We's always been estranged. She had died thirteen years earlier and I regretted not knowing her better.~ ~ This realization preoccupied me. I wanted to know more. I wondered what other commonalities we shared that I was unaware of. My curiosity led me to explore genealogy and family history, to interview family and friends, and travel on a research trip to the places my mother's family had lived.~ ~ As I learned more, I felt an overwhelming desire to share my knowledge. I first thought I might write only about my mother, but then felt an urge to share our family's chronicle. Delving into factual information and family myth led me to realize we all had more in common than I imagined. We were five generations of resilient, intriguing women. Courage and determination carried us through personal loss, financial challenges and grief as well as love, friendship and sharing. Although our times, circumstances and temperaments were

different, we all learned lessons which led us to faith, power and joy.~ ~ This book is a work of fiction based on fact. It recounts the saga of five generations of women in my maternal family line. I've included Mackie, my great-grandmother; Minnie, my grandmother; and Gail, my mother (all deceased), as well as myself and my daughter, Veola. I used historical facts as the background for the stories. Some details are yet to be found; others I chose not to use where they did not enhance the storyline or my artistic purposes.~ ~ I write to understand myself and my world, and have written journals for years. My daughter is a Christian author of a series of books for middle grade children (The Coin Chronicles). My mother wrote short stories and articles, and my grandmother wrote articles about the theatre. Although I have no existing writing of my great grandmother's, I sense that she was led to write also. Perhaps I'll find hers yet.~ ~ My mother, Gail, wrote her life story in the 1970's. I quoted from it, as well as from her saved letters, and used them as the basis for some of our conversations recorded in the book. My sister found our grandmother's journal and I incorporated some of her journal entries. I created a couple of entries that she might have written but were not in the time period of her journal (1930-1940). I also included entries from my own journals to illustrate my personal growth. My daughter contributed some of her devotionals and family stories to highlight her life.~ ~ As I learned more about my ancestors and consequently myself, new healing emerged and understanding took the place of residual resentment or grief. As I wrote, I often felt my ancestors' energies, feelings, and attitudes flow into my mind and heart. I felt three generations of women - Mackie, Minnie and Gail - hovering over me as I unearthed high school yearbooks, newspaper clippings, city directories, property records and photos. I felt them with me in spirit, encouraging me, guiding me, and providing intuitive hints as I pondered factual data and family lore.~ ~ The more I delved into each woman's life, the more passionate I felt about sharing our inspirational stories. The more I was moved by our demonstrations of faith, energized by our power as women, and exhilarated by our joy, the stronger I felt about sharing it now. I couldn't wait until I verified every fact.~ ~ My resolve also grew because I felt I might run out of time. I had missed interviewing my mother and her siblings, since they are deceased. During my research, I interviewed two elderly women, long-time family friends; they both passed shortly afterwards. I interviewed my deceased uncle's wife, who was also elderly, and concerned about her failing memory. I was fortunate to talk with her when I did, as her memories continued to fade.~ ~ I firmly believe we come into our lives to learn specific lessons and develop in unique ways that our souls require for their ultimate growth. I believe that we as family carry not just our DNA and the results of our nature and nurture, but spiritual commonalities and a collective family consciousness that carries through generations.

We are related in spirit and energy as well as physically, mentally and emotionally. Family truly is forever. The influence of family on our lives is immense. What we do with it is another matter. In my family of origin, my first role was to question and rebel, the next was to investigate and understand, and my final is to celebrate. How's that for a complete turnaround? If we can accept, celebrate and judge - but not condemn - ourselves and our families, we can become better people, be closer to our loved ones, enjoy happier lives, and deepen our personal and spiritual natures. I hope this book will inspire you to take another look at your own family - an open-minded look, a far-reaching look - and be able to understand with compassion, forgive where forgiveness is needed, love unconditionally, and celebrate your family's unique and perfect contribution to our human family.

The book is AMAZING! I loved it! I just want to tell the author "Thank you so much for writing it!"

Great special interest story that illuminates how spirituality enters your life and the part it plays in family dynamics.

I love how this author shows how learning about your family history can heal many wounds. Some may find family history to be a dry subject, whether it's your own family or not. But Sheryl is so talented at bringing these stories to life that you feel like you've stepped into another time, eavesdropping into her history. Before reading her book, I hadn't given a thought to the many gifts one can receive from open-mindedly looking at the patterns of Life and its lessons from the family members that came before us. Sheryl's own journey in understanding and healing is very inspiring. Whether you decide to take a similar journey yourself or not, Sheryl's book is a gift to all who need inspiration, need reminding that living takes faith, and faith has its own rewards. Thank you, Sheryl, for sharing your story and that of your family. A real treasure.

I came this book across, and I was sort of drawn to it. There are many things I love about this book. The sincerity with which it's written. A touch of bygone times. Old family pictures that provoked melancholic feelings within me. The sincerity with which it's written. The way she interweaves her family's history with her own spiritual insights and experiences. I felt as if I sneaked into somebody else's life. The author expresses her hope that the book will inspire us to take another, compassionated and open-minded look at our own family, and be able to understand and celebrate their unique contribution to our human

family. As for me, her book absolutely inspired me. What's more, I spent a great afternoon immersed in another world. I wouldn't want to miss it. Thank you for letting me in your world, Sheryl.

Such an easy book to read. It is like having a conversation with the author about her discoveries. Her 'path' is not my path, but she shares it for a reason. It is amazing what can be learned by learning about our ancestors. Interesting that we can trace back the 'hurts' and find that the causes might not have been what we might have imagined. Thank you, author, for sharing this healing.

I especially enjoyed the stories of the author's grandmother and great-grandmother. But I also appreciated her vulnerability as she shared her own journey of healing. While I do not personally feel comfortable embracing some of the spiritual paths she shares, I appreciate hearing her own journey on these paths. And as a fellow INFJ, I connected with elements of the journey those of us with this personality share.

Sheryl's style appeals to me. I love any book that uses REAL LIFE stories to illustrate the ideas and precepts of the author. Sheryl uses sensitive narrative borne out of much research into her own family. Her use of great quotes from other writers and great souls adds depth to her text. A thoroughly entertaining read.

By researching the stories of her maternal ancestors, author Sheryl Stradling heals the wounds of her past and discovers common threads of strength and faith through five generations of women from her great-grandmother all the way through herself and her daughter. Anyone interested in genealogy, women's spirituality, or the struggles and strengths of family will enjoy this non-fiction historical and spiritual exploration.

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