

The Light from a Thousand Wounds: A Mother's Memoir of Finding Beauty in Life's Darkest Moments

Corey Hatfield

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Written by a mother who remained steadfast in the face of growing challenges, certain that she was protected by God, The Light from a Thousand Wounds is an inspirational memoir.

In Corey Hatfield's scorching memoir *The Light from a Thousand Wounds*, faith is a source of solace through family challenges.

First covering Hatfield's and her husband Arin's backgrounds and the challenges they experienced before they had children, the book then follows the twisting road the couple traveled together over the years. Although Arin began his career as a preacher, in time he turned to other, more practical activities in order to sustain his family. He and Hatfield moved across state lines numerous times, reestablishing themselves in new communities on repeat. Hatfield leaned on her faith to combat the turbulence of their peripatetic situation.

The couple also brought five children into the world within a short period. An autism diagnosis made parenting one of their children more complicated. Indeed, attending to the child's behavior had a corollary effect on Hatfield's marriage and her other four children, with the situation rising in intensity as it progressed. Hatfield notes that a "question ... throbbed endlessly through my brain: *How will I ever survive my own life?*" Arin escaped by seeking work on a rig; Hatfield often felt that she was parenting alone. Sometimes feeling tested in her role as a mother, Hatfield nonetheless was steadfast, her confidence fed by the sense that she was protected by God. Indeed, while expressions of frustration do arise, they are kept at bay by the book's strong sense of positivity.

Its prose straightforward, the book follows a strict timeline, covering what happened first and then next without much flourish. Its tone is sometimes bogged down by its records of hardships, making it feel unchanging despite Hatfield's themes of persistence through dark moments. Photographs of Hatfield and her family engaged in various activities flesh out in images what the book does not in words, giving additional shape to the story. And accompanying this near-documentary approach is a second, spiritual aspect: Each chapter is prefaced with an inspirational quote, a source of consolation for the parts of the story to follow. These allusions to outside work deepen the book's sense of Hatfield's devotion to God and trust that she will be able to overcome her difficulties, if they do not do so in original terms.

The Light from a Thousand Wounds is a heart-wrenching memoir by a woman who maintained her faith while parenting through complex situations.

CAROLINE GOLDBERG IGRA (February 20, 2025)

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