



The Way of a Pilgrim

Anonymous , Helen Bacovcin (Translator) , Walter J. Ciszek (Foreword)

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

The Way of a Pilgrim

Anonymous , Helen Bacovcin (Translator) , Walter J. Ciszek (Foreword)

The Way of a Pilgrim Anonymous , Helen Bacovcin (Translator) , Walter J. Ciszek (Foreword)

This enduring work of Russian spirituality has charmed countless people with its tale of a nineteenth-century peasant's quest for the secret of prayer. Readers follow this anonymous pilgrim as he treks over the Steppes in search of the answer to the one compelling question: How does one pray constantly? Through his journeys, and under the tutelage of a spiritual father, he becomes gradually more open to the promptings of God, and sees joy and plenty wherever he goes. Ultimately, he discovers the different meanings and methods of prayer as he travels to his ultimate destination, Jerusalem.

The Way of a Pilgrim is a humble story ripe for renewed appreciation today. The recent changes in Russia have revealed the great religious traditions of that land, and this work, freshly translated for modern times, is among the finest examples of those centuries-old traditions.

The Way of a Pilgrim Details

Date : Published (first published 1860)

ISBN :

Author : Anonymous , Helen Bacovcin (Translator) , Walter J. Ciszek (Foreword)

Format : Kindle Edition 211 pages

Genre : Religion, Spirituality, Christianity, Theology

 [Download The Way of a Pilgrim ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Way of a Pilgrim ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online The Way of a Pilgrim Anonymous , Helen Bacovcin (Translator) , Walter J. Ciszek (Foreword)

From Reader Review The Way of a Pilgrim for online ebook

Alok says

This book is the story of a poor peasant who lost everything and used his misfortune to reach the supreme spiritual heights with his love for Jesus. I got to know about it from the books written by the spiritual masters who followed Hindu and Buddhist paths, but suggested to read it for inspiration. It's a very small book. You can finish it in a single sitting. But you might need numerous sittings to reflect on it and absorb the motivation it's capable of providing you.

This book shows that one needs nothing but a strong determination and persistence to find God and the infinite divine bliss. But he shouldn't be satisfied with the intellectual knowledge and the rituals we have to perform in religious places. He must strive for the inner riches and the direct experience which come with 'incessant prayer'. If one chooses the path of meditation rather than prayer, the book is equally helpful because both of the paths look different but are essentially the same in the longer run.

soulAdmitted says

Con l'introduzione di Cristina Campo: portentosa, ebra e stupefatta come la preghiera del Nome in cui si avventura e di cui scrive.

samuel stolper says

this is the book over which franny is obsessing in 'franny and zoe'.

wander siberia, internalize your recognition of god. go slowly, and watch the world around you.

this was anonymously written in russia in the 19th century.

cool.

Jadranka says

??? ?? ???? ????? ???? ?? ????????? ?????? ?? ?????? ???? ? ?????? ?? ????? ??????. ?????? ?? ?? ??
???????? ?????? ?? ?????? ?? ??? ????????? ?????? ?? ?????? ????????? ? ?????????, ??? ?? ????? ? ?????????
?????????.

7jane says

This is a story of a wanderer practicing the Jesus Prayer ("Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me" (other

forms also exist)) while wandering around Russia during the last days of serfdom under the rule of Nicholas I. The book was first printed in 1884, but had already been written down earlier by someone who had known the original person but was better at writing the story down well.

There are stories within the main story; the wanderer meets people, both pious and not so, criminal and devout, rich and very poor. He clearly enjoys solitude more, especially because of his prayer practice, and frequently reads his Bible and the Philocalia collection, which I have also read.

A good travel story, a good addition to knowing the Jesus Prayer and a quick read. I enjoyed it.

Johannes says

J'ai lu celui-ci en français parce que je ne voulais pas de se concentrer sur l'intrigue. Je voulais me concentrer sur le chemin théologique sur lequel le pèlerin traversé. Le Français m'a aidé à maintenir un rythme lent parce qu'il faut que j'utilise le dictionnaire chaque 3 minutes!

Nathan Duffy says

Phenomenal. Such direct, earnest prose while simultaneously extremely rich and beautiful. This feature of the book itself mirrors the content i.e. the way The Jesus Prayer is so simple and accessible, yet spiritually opens depth upon depth.

If you are Orthodox, or familiar with Orthodoxy, I recommend saving the reading of the annotations for later, as they somewhat jar and disrupt the flow of the narrative. On the other hand, I imagine the footnotes would be extremely helpful for non-Orthodox who want to read and enjoy the text.

Robin Friedman says

A Prayer For The Heart

I have read books on spirituality from many religious traditions, but I had never read "The Way of a Pilgrim", an anonymous work from the middle or late 19th Century in the Russian Orthodox tradition. I came to the book by way of the late J.D. Salinger's "Franny and Zooey" Franny and Zooey which I also had the opportunity to read of late. For those readers unfamiliar with it, Salinger's book consists of two interrelated short stories which center on two precocious young people, Franny Glass, 20, and her brother, Zooey Glass, 25. Franny is spending a college football weekend with her boyfriend, Lane. The weekend comes to disaster because Franny is preoccupied with reading "The Way of a Pilgrim". She discusses the book with Lane, who is uninterested. In the second story, Franny is at home in New York City after the weekend and appears on the verge of nervous collapse. Her brother Zooey engages her in a pair of conversations which center upon Franny's reading of "The Way of the Pilgrim," Zooey tries to get his sister, and himself, to understand the book. He also tries to get Franny to move ahead with her life rather than to self-destruct.

I was fascinated by Salinger's treatment of and obvious affection for "The Way of a Pilgrim" and read it immediately upon finishing "Franny and Zooey". The book that came to hand was an edition published in 1996 translated by Olga Savin with an Foreword by the famous American Russian Orthodox priest, Father Thomas Hopko. There is a latter edition of "The Way of a Pilgrim" which also includes the successor volume "A Pilgrim Continues on his Way" translated by Savin, The Way of a Pilgrim and A Pilgrim Continues on His Way (Shambhala Classics) that remains in print. I did not read that edition.

Probably most secular American readers come to "The Way of a Pilgrim" from reading Salinger. It is very valuable to study the book from the outside, so to speak, as with other religious books. It is also important to remember, as Father Hopko reminds the reader, that the book is also part of a specific religious heritage.

"The Way of a Pilgrim" is a short book told in four brief chapters called Narratives. It is told in the first person by a wanderer through Russia of peasant background and with a withered arm. The reader learns something of his history only gradually, mostly in the Third Narrative of the book. At the age of 20, after the death of his wife, the narrator is attending a church service where he hears the reading of Thessalonians with the text "Pray without ceasing." (1 Thess. 5:17) He begins to wander in search of someone who can explain prayer to him. After some false leads, the narrator meets an elderly monk, a starets, who shows him how to recite the Jesus Prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ have mercy on me" and gives him some instruction to deepen his understanding. The starets also advises the pilgrim to study an early collection called the "Philokalia" which consists of mystical and ascetical writing of early Fathers of the Eastern Orthodox Church.

The nameless pilgrim wanders throughout Russia reciting the Jesus Prayer, reading the Philokalia, and internalizing his spiritual understanding. He begins his wanderings at age 20 and recounts his story to his Spiritual Father at age 33 while he is trying to secure passage to Jerusalem. He tells the reader of his deepening understanding of the Jesus prayer during his wandering, mendicant life.

Most people love stories, and "The Way of a Pilgrim" includes many. The wanderer meets many people during his journey, and makes stops along the way to perform work for brief times that he can do consistently with maintaining his spiritual practice. He meets people good and bad, criminals who try to rob him, a young girl fleeing from a proposed arranged marriage, priests, other wanderers, clerks, and many others. Many of these people have their own stories to tell of their spiritual lives. The wanderer receives instruction from some about the Jesus Prayer and ultimately instructs others.

In "Franny and Zooey" , Franny recounts at some length (p. 34), the part of "The Way of a Pilgrim" which most impressed her. It is a long section late in the book in which some small children invite the wanderer to their home, telling him (in the Salinger) that "You must come home to Mummy. She likes beggars.") The wanderer goes to the home where he is warmly received by the children's mother and father and learns their stories. The pilgrim is invited to dinner, which is attended by a number of other people who turn out to be servants of the family, described by the husband as "sisters in Christ." Franny observes that "I mean I loved the pilgrim wanting to know who all the ladies were." (p.34, Salinger)

A portion of the book I liked occurs somewhat later, with the same people, when the pilgrim is having dinner with the family and with a priest following a service. The priest recounts the mundane chores he needs to perform, tending the farm and his children, and how he lacks time for study. The pilgrim momentarily feels sorry for him until the wife tells him that "Father speaks this way from humility. He always humbles himself, but he is righteous and the kindest of men. He has been a widower for twenty years now and has been raising a whole family of grandchildren, as well as serving frequent services in church." The narrator then remembers the following teaching from the Philokalia:

"He who has attained to genuine prayer and love no longer puts things into categories. He does not separate the righteous from the sinners, but loves all equally and does not judge them, just as God gives the sun to shine and the rain to fall both on the just and the unjust."

I was pleased that Salinger's book led me to "The Way of a Pilgrim". I learned from the book. I can understand why Salinger paid such great attention to it in "Franny and Zooey".

Robin Friedman

Cheryl says

This little book largely serves as my mine and my husband's memorable introduction to all things having to do with the Orthodox Christian faith. What a wondrous door has been opened to us! I highly recommend this book to all Christians, not just those exploring Orthodoxy. It takes place in 19th century Czarist Russia and follows the adventures of a homeless, yet joyful Christian pilgrim. His all consuming goal is the learning of continuous prayer.

In this book we were introduced to a very simple, yet powerful prayer and method of helping oneself to "pray without ceasing", as the Apostle Paul instructs. The prayer is called the Jesus Prayer, and it is simply, "Jesus Christ, have mercy on me." I will say that for my husband, this little prayer has set him on a road he never thought he would be on. In our use of this prayer, God has begun very visibly leading the both of us and actually supernaturally guided my husband to add first "a sinner" to the end of this prayer, and later "Son of God" to the middle of it. The really interesting thing about that is that AFTER he listened, heard, and obediently added these phrases we "randomly" came across other Orthodox books which spoke of this prayer WITH those very phrases added in as a longer version. Not only that, but he came upon the two page discussion of this prayer in another book through a first time random opening to a page and there it was!

In addition to learning about a method of achieving constant interior prayer of the heart, we get to see Christian community in pre-Communist Russia, and that made me feel somewhat sad, being an omniscient observer of sorts, to this story; knowing about the terrible persecution of Christians to come less than a century after these events.

The other uplifting thing about this story to me, is that it comforted me about the plight of the homeless; reminding me that even that humble condition is not the hopeless end of the world. Even then, how one experiences life largely has to do with the state of the garden of the soul. In this book, our pilgrim, once he learns a good habit of interior prayer, journeys on with nothing but some crusts of bread, a jar of water, his Bible, and his copy of "The Philokalia" (A compilation of Orthodox teachings on prayer and mystical life with God) and experiences joy and peace continually.

Appu says

I had never heard of this book. But I picked this up after reading the initial lines which are really moving. It is a brief book. In the Dover edition it runs to just 66 pages. It is a personal narrative of a wandering Russian

pilgrim of the mid 19th century. The pilgrim is one armed and his only worldly possessions are his Bible and Philocalia, which is a collection of mystical writings of the Orthodox tradition. He survives on alms given by others. Since he could read and write, rare skills in 19th century Russia, he gets respect wherever he goes. The pilgrim's major spiritual tool is the 'Jesus prayer': "Lord Jesus Christ have mercy on me". He tells us that through long practice, this prayer has become co terminus with his breathing. There are many interesting stories and spiritual reflections in this book. The Language is very simple and lucid. As the narrative ends, the pilgrim is on way to Jerusalem, a trip sponsored by a benefactor.

I was attracted to the book probably because I like Tolstoy's writings, where we encounter many monks and pilgrims. Tolstoy's story Father Sergius is about an ascetic monk who realises his vanity and in the end becomes a pilgrim.

Martha Pavlovna says

There are many things that I learned from this book, from the Philokalia, through the pilgrim. In Chapter 1, how to pray the Jesus prayer is taught. The elder advises the pilgrim to say "Lord Jesus Christ have mercy on me" 3 thousand times per day, then 6 thousand times per day and finally 12 thousand times per day! In Chapter 2, the pilgrim travels towards Siberia and meets an officer who talks in depth about the Bible. The officer tells the pilgrim, that a monk once told him that "If you do not understand the Word of God, the devils understand it and tremble." So, therefore even if one struggles with reading and understanding the Bible, there is still benefit to our souls. In Chapter 3, the pilgrim is preparing to leave Irkutsk and tells his spiritual father about his life, what led him to a life of wandering. The pilgrim had once been married, and he and his wife were a very pious couple, sadly she died, and he could not bear the grief living in their hut, so he sold it and set off. In the final chapter, the pilgrim recounts many of the interesting people he met. Near Tobolsk, the pilgrim meets some children who invite him to their large house. The family is well-to-do and very generous, housing and feeding beggars, pilgrims and the sick. They insisted that he stay with them and had many spiritual discussions together. The pilgrim inspired by all that he hears plans to go to Jerusalem next.

Saga Norén says

Regalo de cumpleaños 20. Un poco aburrido, por eso lo dejé colgado.

Elizabeth Andrew says

Absolutely delightful! This book, part memoir, part spiritual text, is the happy-go-lucky pilgrim's account of his quest to discover what exactly is meant by the Biblical call to "pray constantly." He traverses Russia, encountering humble strangers, priests, drunkards, and wise startsi, all of whom augment his understanding of prayer. Eventually he prays the Jesus Prayer ("Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me, a sinner") tens of thousands of times daily over years, so his book becomes a meditation on this prayer and a compendium of teachings from the Philokalia. I can see where some readers would find this obsessive and perhaps magical thinking. I found it a wonderful introduction to the mystical lineage of the Jesus Prayer and its context in Eastern Orthodox teachings.

"Prayer is the outpouring and the activity of love."

--The Way of the Pilgrim

Keith Brooks says

Excellent . I don't see why this Eastern Orthodox classic can't be a part of an evangelical Protestant's toolbox . We need more John Wesley's in this regard .

Kevin Wojciechowski says

Even though there were things I didn't like about the way the book is written, the major theme/lesson of the book has changed my life. It's only 90 pages and I'd say it's well worth the read.
