



## **Walking from East to West: God in the Shadows**

*Ravi Zacharias, R.S.B. Sawyer (Contributor)*

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## **Walking from East to West: God in the Shadows Ravi Zacharias , R.S.B. Sawyer (Contributor)**

Ravi Zacharias was born in India and has literally moved from the East to the West and the West to the East and repeated the cycle again and again to answer skeptics' questions about whether God is alive, who Jesus is, what is truth, and whether we can really find absolutes. Ravi has spoken of his own journey only in bits and pieces in his other books and talks. It is a journey that has led him beyond his family and culture into a revelation that replaced pantheism with monotheism, and into a relationship with a God the vast majority of his people do not worship. From this new understanding birthed in him by the founder of Christianity, Ravi has gone forward to teach as one of our generation's great apologists.

A life lived in Christ is the greatest argument of all for the living God. Ravi urges the reader to look at the lives that have turned the hearts of people into movements for Christ. In the first three centuries of the church, the Apostles and followers like Polycarp and Tertullian and Origen demonstrated with their lives the truth of the resurrected Christ. A whole line of witnesses from every generation succeeded these who walked in the footsteps of Jesus, with names like Augustine, Catherine of Sienna, Bernard of Clairvaux, Luther, and Wesley leading the procession.

But history begins on an individual level.

Ravi shows readers his life, in its successes and failures, in its existence in the East and in the West, and in his attempts to bring the truth of Christ to those in any culture who don't know him. The Hebrew poet has said that a life rich in experiences is a life from which others can learn.

This book is about Ravi's journey, from meaninglessness to the abundant joy of Christ, from East to West and back again, in the all-consuming passion of letting the world know about true freedom, and in whom that freedom is found.

## **Walking from East to West: God in the Shadows Details**

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### Chris Hamilton says

This was a great book! I've always really enjoyed Ravi's approach and his love to go anywhere to speak. It was really awesome to finally hear his story from boyhood adolescence in India to his time now as the co-founder of RZIM Ministries headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia. I never knew of his troubled childhood with his father and how painful that time was for him, and the total transformation of his father when much later in life in a moment of conviction dedicated his own life to Christ. This was my favorite of all of Ravi's books that I've delved into so far, and I believe it was because this one felt so personal and such a good story.

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### Violet says

From the first time I heard Ravi Zacharias speak in our Saskatoon church (sometime in the late 1970s or early '80s) I have been fascinated by his message and manner. His memoir, *Walking from East to West: God in the Shadows*, shines a light on where he came from and how he became the popular evangelist, Christian apologist and humanitarian that he is today.

In chronological order he tells the story of his unhappy childhood in India, his conversion, his move (with his family) to Canada, and his blossoming into family life and ministry.

The *God in the Shadows* angle is Zacharias recognizing and pointing out how God has been present in his life (though often unseen and unrecognized till much later). In fact he sees evidences of this being the case even before his existence in his great-great-grandmother's conversion to Christianity. This is powerfully brought home to him when he finds her grave site and sees that the verse on her marker is the very one that God used to call him back to life after his suicide attempt. Throughout the book he points out many other marvelous "coincidences" that bring him to the conclusion that God has been interested in and involved in his life all along the way.

He comes across as a humble, grateful man who is still amazed at what God has done in and through him—a Chennai Indian lad who, until his conversion, was a sports-loving, directionless school goof-off.

The writing style is not as intellectually taxing as some of his more philosophical books and though the odd time a professorial word or two slips in, mostly *Walking...* is an easy-to-read story.

As I usually do when I read inspiring biographies and memoirs, I marked passages for future retrieval. Here are some bits I highlighted from *Walking From East to West*:

"God has an appointment with each of us, and it is critical that every man and woman know this. He will stop our steps when it is not our time, and He will lead us when it is" - p. 168 (Kindle Edition).

"... if you have not learned to pay the smaller prices of following Christ in your daily life, you will not be prepared to pay the ultimate price in God's calling" - p. 199.

"Yes, logic is linear, but its implications are radial" - p. 205.

"Through all of the visitations of life—successes or failures—it is not how well you are known or not known. It is not how big your organization is or isn't. It is not even how many sermons one has preached or books one has written or millions of dollars one has accumulated. It is *how well do you know Jesus?*" - p. 224.

I would recommend this book to all who have been impacted by and continue to enjoy and be challenged by the speaking and writing of Ravi Zacharias.

*Walking from East to West* is part of my own Kindle collection.

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### **Michelle Hilleson says**

The 40's and 50's gave us C.S. Lewis, the 70's gave us Francis Schaeffer, and the 90's to present day has given us Ravi Zacharias. Ravi Zacharias is this marvelous collision of a truly brilliant mind, but a genuinely humble spirit; someone who loves God with abandon and loves man out of that abundance. When I found the opportunity to hear his story in his own words, I jumped at the opportunity.

I don't want to include any spoilers, but this book tells of a time when this man who is known for his clarity of thought was unfocused and floundering. It tells of this confident and gifted evangelist/apologist had no confidence but his confidence in God. It tells of some of the truly dangerous places in this world where he has been called to share the Gospel. Through it all, God's grace and God's favor shines through. I enjoyed getting to see mischievous side of this serious man and I shed tears for some of the more difficult times in his life.

For anyone who has been touched by his ministry or his writing, I highly recommend this book

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### **Elisabeth says**

There is no greater discovery than seeing God as author of your destiny. -RZ

A memoir of one of our times greatest thinkers and defenders of the Christian faith, 'God in the Shadows' gives readers a glimpse of the making of this man that provides hope to any who may believe they are beyond being used by God. Ravi's story is a powerful example of God's grace, providence and pursuit of his children - a great encouragement to all.

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### **Ho Christopher says**

The book was a good read, not too long, with chapters spread out well and it was an engaging read. It first talks about the author's childhood and living standards in India. Also, how he grew up in a nominal Christian family, faithfully attending services but not pious.

It further explores his relationship with his dad (who he is quick not to blame), his mum and his grandmother, his education while he was young, his own struggle with his own loneliness which culminated in a suicide attempt. One surprising fact was that Ravi Zacharias was a rather good cricket player and still is excited about this sport.

One verse that was stuck with him whilst on bed recovering from his suicide attempt was John 14:19b "Because I live, you also will live". Which nearing the end of the book gives a surprise about the significance of this verse in his own (family) life.

After conversion, Ravi was deeply influenced by YFC and also was exposed to preaching, which in the future would be his full-time vocation: A itinerant preacher and apologist.

Hereafter Ravi talks about his life as one training to be a hotel manager, and the family's transit to Canada and how he met Margie (his future wife) and also how he was slowly used by God in his preaching, within Canada and in other parts of the world.

What I personally felt the book was highlighting was how God was working behind the scenes in his life, God has indeed planned all things in his life to make him who he is today.

Second, I've seen how passionate Ravi is for the Indians, how he longs for all to come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Many times he shares about how he longs to be able to go back to India frequently and see more of them come to know and believe in Jesus Christ.

Rating: 4.5/5

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### **Lila Spengler says**

I wish there were more than 5 stars available because this book rates far beyond pretty much any book I have read in recent years. Ravi Zacharias' story touched my heart and my intellect equally. I found myself each morning looking forward to reading a little bit more yet only allowing myself a chapter or two. I did not want it to end! Throughout the book, God and His purpose in Ravi Zacharias' life were always in focus. I found myself fighting with tears at each reading as Ravi describes how God used so many events, including a suicide attempt, directly and completely to both bring Ravi to Him and then to direct him in God's purpose for his life. What a powerful example of God choosing to work through a man to share His gospel message and of a man laying aside his life to allow God to work through him. What an amazing God we serve!

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### **Kristin Murphy says**

Loved this memoir of a man I've listened to for so long! His life is so inspiring to me and he gives such encouragement to everyone. I listened to the audio book and the narrator was very good!

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### **Sara Joseph says**

I am a shameless fan of testimonies. How precious and creative is the work of God in a yielded human! I can never tire of it. Ravi's story was well told, making me nostalgic for India, the land of my childhood. I too walked with him from East to West and enjoyed every minute of it. What a wonderful Savior Jesus is!

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## **Clint Smith says**

A highly inspirational memoir of Ravi Zacharias' journey through pain, danger, and surprises in his quest to a closer walk with God. The internationally renowned evangelist's testimony serves as a platform to educate and motivate any reader in search of a stronger faith and the desire to impact others. I strongly recommend Walking from East to West: God in the Shadows

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## **Carol Arnold says**

### **Compelling Story**

This autobiography of Ravi Zacharias is a very compelling story from start to finish. My opinion of him has always been that he is a super intellect. I have always been in awe of his mind. He is an author who I had to really think hard and concentrate to understand. And yet I find in this book that as a young student, he was a failure. He was repeatedly told by his father that he was a failure and would never amount to anything. As a teenager he tried to commit suicide. The result was indeed his death, but it was a spiritual death to self as the Lord used this experience to give him a new life in Christ.

From his first moment of conversion, he was totally committed. He was even able to find Christian churches in India. He also went to Campus Crusade for Christ meetings. They were alive and active in India! As Ravi unfolds his story, he is careful to reveal how God is always with him in the shadows directing his path.

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## **Andy Gainor says**

“And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.” Revelation 12:11?

Pretty much sums it up. I found myself crying at multiple points of this gospel saturated life and story. Friends that were martyred, families redeemed, I kept asking "how far would I go for Jesus' sake?"

Thank you, Ravi for writing this down. Just as you carried so many godly men's stories before you, I will certainly be carrying your's.

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## **Crystal says**

Starts off a lil slow, but as you begin to see its trajectory the story begins to unfold in a marvelous way that is sure to reinforce your faith.

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## **Emi Ciupe says**

Incredible story!

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### **Julia Forrester says**

I struggled with what to write about this book because it's not just the story of Ravi's life. Ravi chronicles his life and the inner struggles in such a way that it makes you look at your own life and think about the assumptions you live by and where you're going. I found this book to be not only interesting but also thought provoking. No matter where you are in your life and faith journey I think this book is an interesting read. It will shape you in the same way that spending time with a dear grandfather shapes you, gently and slowly, something you come back to and meditate on in the future.

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### **Cynthia says**

"You see, of all five siblings in my family, I had the unhappiest childhood."

Born in India in 1946, Ravi's life was filled with uncertainty and lack of purpose. Today he travels around the world speaking to governments, Ivy League universities, and on the radio. His message is that of certainty and hope in Christ. Firmly believing that the Christian faith is grounded in absolute truth, he has written/co-written over twenty books as he shares through philosophy, apologetics, and theology. How did he make this transformation? Walking from East to West; God in the Shadows is his story. He writes of his family background, what it meant to be Indian, how he ended up in Canada, met the woman who became his wife and mother of their three children, and how God brought him into ministry.

If you've never read anything by Ravi, I strongly encourage you to do so. I believe he is the forefront philosophical and moralistic apologist of our day. Do not be intimidated by such words; he defends the Christian faith on levels that few people dare to acknowledge, but are underlying issues for many. His personal story is amazing and gives a new insight into his work. I understand the passion that comes through in his words and voice (he has many audio lectures available in addition to his radio broadcasts). If you are family with his work, but not the man, this book will enlighten you of some of the stories he shares in his other works. You will understand why he thinks and works as he does. Apart from his other works, this book is an amazing testimony to the work of God; perfect for biography lovers.

Walking from East to West by Ravi Zacharias with R.S.B. Sawyer, published by Zondervan

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