



Rhinestone Jesus: Saying Yes to God When Sparkly, Safe Faith Is No Longer Enough

Kristen Welch

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In high school, Kristen Welch wore a big, sparkly rhinestone "Jesus" pin to school every day and carried her Bible wherever she went. (Yes, she was *that* girl.) But she didn't realize her faith, though sincere, was shallow; much like her artificial accessory, it would one day tarnish, no longer a true fit for who she was. As real life catapulted Kristen into places and situations she'd never imagined, there came a day when she stood shocked in the slums of Africa and realized in one desperate moment that Jesus wasn't enough for her. At least . . . she wasn't living like He was. On the brink of a risk bigger than any she'd ever taken, Kristen knew she didn't stand a chance--unless she was willing to put aside the rhinestones and get branded by the real thing. *Rhinestone Jesus* is the story of one woman's journey from comfortably living a safe, "good-girl" faith that didn't cost much, to realizing that God was daring her to say yes to a bolder, more authentic, more dangerous way. This story of spiritual adventure throws the doors wide open for any woman who's ever thought of herself as "just a mom." Kristen will inspire and empower you to say yes to God right where you are--and stand amazed at how your life will shine.

Rhinestone Jesus: Saying Yes to God When Sparkly, Safe Faith Is No Longer Enough Details

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Elizabeth says

Rhinestone Jesus is a humerous and inspiring book about a woman who said yes to God's plan for her and her family and the result was amazing. After the author told God yes, things set in motion and the result was a great ministry: Mercy House. Mercy House is located in Kenya and there the family runs a safe, loving, and Christian home for homeless teens that are pregnant. Though this ministry is thriving and doing great work, things were not always so. The author was so honest retelling the story of her and her family's journey about how Mercy House was established and I found her honesty refreshing. The author recounted that though the family did experience good times, there were many times when things were difficult or things just did not go as planned. Instead of giving up, they kept trusting God and telling Him yes and He worked things out according to His plan. For me, I found this story to be encouraging because it reminds me of the great things that can happen when I don't give up when things get hard and what can happen if I just trust God instead. This is a great read and I hope other readers enjoy this story as much as I did.

Cecily says

I had no idea what to expect from this book other than I knew I liked the few blog posts I've read by the author on her blog We Are THAT Family. I had no idea it was mainly her story of how she developed a house in Kenya for pregnant girls living on the streets. It was truly one of the most beautiful stories I've read. While other books on serving third world countries have left me feeling guilty and overwhelmed to the point of just pushing it out of my head, this book was inspiring and so so relatable. Kristen is gut level honest and I identified with her in so many ways. She has a way of writing things in a compelling but often dry and humorous way that kept me invested and laughing. I felt like I went on the journey along with her and her family. This was a completely life changing book!

Jackie says

God knew I needed this book at this particular time in my life. May my small steps of obedience bring glory to Him.

Olubukola says

Kristen's life changed after an encounter in the sewage-filled Shanties of Kenya. Although she had been a "Church Girl" all her life, with a sparkly rhinestone pin to prove it, Kristen's eyes were opened anew in Kenya, and for the first time she saw that God is all one really needs. This experience led to the birth of Mercy House, Kenya, a safe place for pregnant teenagers. It's easy to fill our lives with clutter and have misguided notions about God and what He requires of us, but when we are privileged to have experiences like this one, nothing is the same. In this book, Kristen shares her experiences in daily life with her family, how they are not much different from any other in the challenges they have to face; dirty laundry, fighting

kids and the rest. She also shares how, together, one "yes" at a time, they are following God's purpose as a family. One important lesson that the author shares in this book, is that all you need to do is say "yes" to God. You don't need to have everything together, and sometimes you won't even be clear on what exactly you're saying "yes" to. But be assured that it is a domino effect; your surrender and acceptance of purpose will lead others into theirs.

Sara says

"Rhinestone Jesus" arrived on my doorstep at precisely the right time - just when I needed it most. Being recently thrust into a situation where my faith had to go from being sparkly and safe to being real and gritty, Kristen Welch's Scripture-rich reminder to say "yes" to what God is calling me to - right here, right now - gave me the strength to wade through a trial that surely would have been much uglier and damaging without it. This is all because Kristen was not afraid to give God her "yes", to use His Word as the backbone, and to share her story of action and faithfulness (in the little and big things). It's not unusual for me to highlight portions of a book that stand out to me in some way, it IS unusual for a book that I've finished to look like it's been tarred and feathered by highlighters and tabs like "Rhinestone Jesus" does now. I will be adding it to my "Read Again" bookshelf and revisiting it soon and often. No matter what your "yes" to God is right now, even if it seems insignificant to you (or to others), give it and give it freely - and watch miracles happen. And read "Rhinestone Jesus" while you're at it.

Louise Pearson says

Rhinestone Jesus is a delightful story that will encourage all families on how to live a purposeful life honoring God and growing strong Christian children. Kristen, the children's ministry leader, realized something was wrong when her husband Terrell , a youth pastor, asked her what happened that stopped them from being the dreamers they used to be. When he brought home a laptop and encouraged her to write, she began to see what purpose God had for her life that would enable her life to count. Although Kristen wanted things her way, she found she couldn't be the Mom she wanted to be without God's help. Even her marriage needed God's help, for Terrell confessed he was addicted to pornography. For a while they suffered from infertility. Then Kristen was asked to go to Kenya with Compassion International and to blog on the poverty and needs there. What she saw changed her, caused her to cry even when cooking or bathing her children because in Kenya there isn't much food, if any, for the poor to cook nor is there clean water to drink and to bathe in. What did her family start to make that could be sold to help Kenya's poor? When the Kenyan post office wanted a large bribe to give Kristen the box that had been mailed to them, what did they do to get it? Did their family have arguments, dirty rooms, and meltdowns like most families? What were the twelve areas they decided their family should focus on to help them live counter culturally? What five points did she indicate help create a strong family? Fantastic book!

Heidi says

A most inspiring read! If you feel the desire to help, to make a difference, but feel inadequate/disorganized/too busy/overwhelmed... PICK UP THIS BOOK. Kristen Welch shares the story of her "yes", when confronted with poverty, disease, and death in the slums of Kenya. How she hones her desire to facilitate change, by choosing one need out of the thousands that exist is an incredible journey of faith,

heartache, enlightenment, and God's hand in hers and her family's. Mercy House Kenya, her international non-profit that rescues young pregnant girls from the slums and provides pre and post-natal care, education, and life skills, is in the God-sized business of breaking the cycle of poverty and despair. She shares the good, the hard, and the ugly of changing lives, even while raising her busy young family, and reminds us all that even our small yes's can bring about enormous shifts for the better. Be prepared to dog-ear pages and underline passages... this one will stay with you. Giving away two copies on my blog (<http://heidimilton.com>) through Wednesday, May 6.

LeighAnn says

I loved it and I'll probably read it again!

Shannon says

I'm not much on nonfiction, so it took awhile to read this, but it was an interesting and compelling story.

Erin says

"Rhinestone Jesus" is primarily the story of how Kristen Welch, a mommy blogger from Texas, founded Mercy House in Kenya after visiting the country with Compassion International. I enjoyed reading about her experiences, but I didn't like the "Unpinned Faith" sections at the end of each chapter. Yes, Kristen has experience in doing something many would consider extreme, but it felt strange reading her advice for readers--maybe because she doesn't seem like enough of an expert after only a few years of leading her organization. I think this book would have worked better as a memoir rather than memoir-ish self-help.

Natalie Homer says

This book read like several other Christian feminist type of books I've read lately, and like the others, it was disappointing. I would really like to see a Christian woman write about theology in a manner that isn't just another mommy blog turned into a book. Welch focuses a lot on how motherhood is divine, and how she experiences God through her children and how she serves God by taking care of her family. I don't disagree with this necessarily, but talk about regurgitating "sparkly, safe faith" that women in the church have been dealing with for centuries.

Like another reviewer mentioned, I was also a little put off at the "Do as I say, not as I do," lesson about Mercy House and charity and good works. What she wanted to get across to her audience was not clear to me. I guess if the reader comes into this one not expecting anything revolutionary or different or pro-feminist, then they might enjoy it quite a bit.

Traci says

The title doesn't really fit the book--this is more the story of the foundation of Mercy House with some 'think about it' type tips tossed onto the end of every chapter. The writing isn't great--this reads like a 7th grader's report--but I think the biggest issue is that I'm not sure what purpose Welch had for this book. Is it to rally us to support her, is it her share her tale, is it to encourage us to start equally big movements or is it to discourage us from such things? The last two issues were particularly problematic--with the premise of the book being that we should all say a big Yes to God that seems impossible...Welch turns around and spends a great deal of time saying that most people shouldn't start international aid efforts and should just do small things for their community. She describes discouraging people who have written to her wanting to start Mercy House like organizations of their own. It adds up to a book that doesn't have a clear message.

It's thought provoking and Welch is certainly admirable, but it is also incredible how much money it has taken to impact so few individuals. The hundreds of thousands of dollars involved in Mercy House had actually (at the time of the book) only helped 12 girls and their infants. Comparing that to the work of other foundations is thought provoking, and so reading Rhinestone Jesus didn't inspire me to financially support Mercy House, which I definitely did not expect when I started the book. I admire that Welch and her family have devoted their lives to helping the poor and feel badly giving this two stars, but it's just not a 3+ star book.

Mariejkt says

1st part of this book was very interesting and good to read. Then it turned into at least to me an infomercial on the needs of 3rd world countries. I wish the 2 halves of the book matched. Oh well.

JoJo Sutis says

This is absolutely one of my favorite nonfiction reads this year!

I really felt I was able to go on a faith journey with the author as she shared her own experiences. I love that she isn't afraid to be real and authentic with readers about what living for Jesus really looks like and the fact that our excuses and reasons to say "No" to whatever He is calling us to do- just don't hold water!

I was so delighted that she included photos throughout the book and the "Unpinned Faith" sections at the end of the chapters really put what I was learning into applicable steps.

Rhinestone Jesus will inspire, challenge and encourage readers to step out of their comfort zones into an active, exciting, adventure with Christ!!!

Kris says

Oh.My.Goodness! What a fabulous book! I thought this was going to be another mommy blogging book when I stared it. And it was good – "My youngest child told me the other day that she wanted to be the president of the United States. 'Really?' I asked. 'Because you want to change the world?' 'No,' she answered. 'I want to be the boss of you.'" And Kristen confesses that her family is THAT family – the one whose children throw tantrums in Target and the one who the emergency room nurses know by name and the

one who struggles living godly lives, where the husband struggles with pornography and the wife struggles to not shop too much.

BUT THEN Kristen took a trip to Africa with Compassion International that rocked her world. What could she do to change her world, she, just a mom with dirty laundry and dust bunnies galore. This is what she did and her response to other moms is “Dear moms, love God; love others. It’s a simple response to His great love for us. You don’t have to do something big for Him; just do something because your yes matters! He can make something beautiful from your life too.”

What I loved about Kristen’s book was I didn’t leave it feeling guilty for not doing what she did or feeling like I should. Instead I felt like she was saying do something that is my passion that honors God. Fabulous book and I really want my book club and all my friends to read this one! Wish I could give it more stars than 5!!!
