



# *Jesus Calling*

by Sarah Young

## A Critical Theological Review:

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*Jesus Calling* by Sarah Young (Thomas Nelson Publishers) is not a new book. It was first published in 2004 and only recently became a publishing juggernaut.

In 2013 *Jesus Calling* was the seventh best-selling book in America.<sup>1</sup> Overall, it has sold more than ten million copies in twenty-six different languages. In 2013 it outsold *Fifty Shades of Gray*.<sup>2</sup> In October 2014, the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Expanded Edition was published with some significant changes. The success of *Jesus Calling* spawned two subsequent publications: *Jesus Lives* (2009) and *Jesus Today* (2013). *Jesus Today* also became a bestseller and was named 2013 Book of the Year by the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association.<sup>3</sup>

Publishing houses have been quick to capitalize on the success of *Jesus Calling* by producing several spinoff publications, including the following:

- \* *Jesus Calling: 365 Devotions for Kids*
- \* *Jesus Calling Bible Storybook*
- \* *Jesus Calling Women's Edition*
- \* *40 Days with Jesus: Celebrating His Presence*
- \* *Jesus Calling - 365-Day Perpetual Calendar*
- \* *Jesus Calling: A 365-Day Journaling Devotional*
- \* *Peace in His Presence: Favorite Quotations from Jesus Calling*
- \* *Trusting in Christ (Jesus Calling Bible Studies)*
- \* *Experiencing God's Presence (Jesus Calling Bible Studies)*

<sup>1</sup><http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2014/02/23/the-strange-saga-of-jesus-calling-the-evangelical-bestseller-you-ve-never-heard-of.html>

<sup>2</sup><http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2013/october/sarah-young-still-hears-jesus-calling.html>

<sup>3</sup>ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Sarah Young, *Jesus Calling* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2004).

<sup>5</sup>You will notice some odd capitalization practices in my quotations of Young. She consistently capitalizes references to presence, light, love, peace, and glory. This is somewhat odd since we

When we consider the number of deluxe editions, expanded editions, large print editions, and special editions, it is easy to see that Sarah Young's influence cannot be overstated. Given the issues raised in this review, I don't believe that her influence has been a salutary one.

### About the Author

Sarah Young grew up the daughter of a college professor (vii).<sup>4</sup> She majored in philosophy at Wellesley College and completed a Masters degree at Tufts University. Her first experience with the presence of God was while studying at a Christian community in a tiny Alpine village in France. According to Young, this was a branch of L'Abri, an international ministry started in Switzerland by Francis and Edith Schaeffer.

In the introduction to *Jesus Calling*, Young describes her "conversion":

One night I found myself leaving the warmth of our cozy chalet to walk alone in the snow in mountains. I went into a deep wooded area, feeling vulnerable and awed by cold, moonlit beauty. The air was crisp and dry, piercing to inhale. Suddenly I felt as if a warm mist enveloped me. I became aware of a lovely Presence,<sup>5</sup> and my involuntary response was to whisper, "Sweet Jesus." This utterance was totally uncharacteristic of me and I was shocked to hear myself speaking so tenderly to Jesus. As I pondered this brief communication, I realized it was the response of the converted heart; at that moment I knew I belonged to Him." (vii)

usually capitalize the names of God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit and pronouns that refer to the Persons of the Trinity. Young does capitalize those names in accordance with standard convention, but also capitalizes these other words. This raises the question of whether Young is using these words as names of God or synonyms for God. If she is using these words in this way, it raises other **serious** theological issues that I have not addressed in this review. Young never explains this break with conventional capitalization practices.

To the discerning reader, that would sound like anything but a solid conversion testimony. But this type of feelings-based, subjective experience is what characterizes *Jesus Calling*. The book is light on theology and heavy on feelings and experience.

A slightly more robust mention of gospel truths is contained in the introduction to *Jesus Today*, where Young writes:

For Christians, our hope is firmly anchored in the cross of Christ. Because He paid the penalty for all our sins, we know that we are fully forgiven and that ultimately our story finishes well—at the portals of heaven! Even now, as we live in the trenches of this world, we are assured that God is in control and He is good.

I referred to heaven quite a bit in this book. So I want to clarify that this glorious future is for all of us—and *only* those of us—who acknowledge our sinfulness and ask for the forgiveness Jesus secured through His finished work on the cross.<sup>6</sup>

After her conversion, Young attended Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis and earned a Masters degree in counseling and biblical studies. There she met her husband, Steve, who is a third-generation missionary to Japan. After graduation, they spent two 4-year terms in Japan, doing church-planting work. After returning from Japan, they lived in Atlanta, where Steve worked with a local Japanese church and Sarah earned a further degree in counseling at Georgia State University.

According to the brief biography provided on the Lifeway Christian Resources website, Sarah and Steve Young “are currently ministering to Japanese people and helping establish an international church in Australia.”<sup>7</sup>

Sarah Young rarely grants interviews and lives a rather reclusive life, considering that her books have become almost an industry unto itself. She has remained absent from the conference and media circuits that characterize so many other best-selling authors. In her book, *Jesus Today*, Young speaks openly of physical suffering from vertigo and Lyme disease that have kept her seriously ill for years. That may partly explain her lack of media presence.

### **A Bit about the Book**

*Jesus Calling* is billed as a devotional book for Christians. At the top of the cover we read, “Devotions for Every Day of the Year.” But this is not your standard devotional. This book is unlike the *Our Daily Bread* (RBC) or *Days of Praise* (ICR) devotionals to which many Christians have become

accustomed.

Young’s 365 “devotionals” would be more accurately described as “personalized revelations” or “messages.” In fact, Young refers to them as “messages” in her introduction. She describes how these “messages” from Jesus are written through her to you.

She writes:

This practice of listening to God has increased my intimacy with Him more than any other spiritual discipline, so I want to share some of the messages I have received.... I have written them from Jesus’ point of view; i.e., the first-person singular ( I, Me, Mine) always refers to Christ. “You” refers to you, the reader, so the perspective is that of Jesus speaking to you (xiii).

In the last paragraph of her introduction, she writes: “These messages are meant to be read slowly, preferably in a quiet place. I invite you to keep a journal to record any thoughts or impressions you receive as you wait in His presence.”

As you can see, Young regards these “devotionals” as something far more than just her own devotional thoughts or insights. She actually calls them “messages.” She regards these as direct, divine, personal revelations from Jesus to her, which she now offers to you. She believes that she has received these revelations from Jesus.

Each message is relatively brief. Some of them consist of only a short paragraph which takes a few moments to read. Even the longest message, which filled a whole page, only took me thirty seconds to read. Each day’s message is accompanied by Scripture references, which Young says she included to provide additional depth for the reader.

Here is a sample message. I opened the book randomly and landed at the message for **July 23**:

I am the Light of the world. Men crawl through their lives cursing the darkness, but all the while I am shining brightly. I desire each of My followers to be a Light-bearer. The Holy Spirit who lives in you can shine from your face, making Me visible to people around you. Ask My Spirit to live through you, as you wend your ways through this day. Hold My hand in joyful trust, for I never leave your side. The Light of My Presence is shining upon you. Brighten up the world by reflecting who I AM.

John 8:12; Matthew 5:14-16; 2 Corinthians 3:18;  
Exodus 3:14

That is it. That is a typical “message.”

The messages are indeed written in the first person, as

<sup>6</sup>Sarah Young, *Jesus Today* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2012), xvi. Emphasis in the original.

<sup>7</sup><http://www.lifeway.com/n/Contributor/Young,-Sarah?No=12#results>

if Jesus, Himself, were speaking. Some of the wording and language is very similar to the passages that are referenced.

You will notice that there is nothing theologically deep or profound about that message. This is typical of all of the messages. There is nothing that will enhance your theological understanding nor deepen your knowledge of Scripture. They offer nothing that is challenging or strong in doctrine and theology. For the most part, the messages are weak, banal, and rather insipid.

Further, there is not a lot of variety in the messages. Most of the messages that she offers revolve around the themes of peace, trust, and presence. In the introduction, Young admits:

I have found themes of His Peace becoming more prominent in my writing. I'm sure this tendency reflects, in part, my personal need. However, when I get to know people, I find that most of them also desire the balm of Jesus' Peace" (xiii).

Indeed, Young does not stray very far from the theme. This makes for very repetitive and trite reading.

### The 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition

Sarah Young's claims that she has received these "messages" from Jesus have been appropriately criticized in many Christian circles. In what seems like an attempt to avoid criticism, the publisher changed some of the wording in the new 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition of *Jesus Calling*.

For instance, compare the passage quoted earlier from the original book with the same passage in the newer edition:

#### **Original Introduction (2004):**

This **practice of listening to God** has increased my intimacy with Him more than any other spiritual discipline, so **I want to share some of the messages I have received**. In many parts of the world, Christians seemed to be searching for a deeper experience of Jesus' Presence and Peace. The **messages that follow** address that felt need.

#### **Recent Editions (2014):**

This **practice of being still** in God's Presence has increased my intimacy with Him more than any other spiritual discipline, so **I want to share some of the writings I have gleaned** from these quiet moments. In many parts of the world, Christians seem to be searching for a deeper experience of Jesus' Presence and Peace. **The devotions that follow** address that felt need.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup><http://standupforthetruth.com/2014/11/changing-jesus-calling-damage-control-false-christ/>. Visit this link for examples of other changes that have been made in the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Though the publisher has changed "listening to God" to "practice of being still" and "messages I have received" to "writings I have gleaned," it has done nothing to alleviate the concerns that we should rightly have concerning this book. *Jesus Calling* is still written in the voice of Jesus, as if Jesus were speaking these very words. A rose by any other name .

### A Critical Theological Review

As Christians we are called to "examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; abstain from every form of evil" (1 Thessalonians 1:23-24). We should strive to be like the Bereans who examined the Scriptures daily to test Paul's message. If the apostle Paul was not above scrutiny, then certainly Sarah Young is not either.

The critique that follows is not intended to be mean-spirited. It is intended to examine her claims and her purported personal revelations in the light of the inerrant and infallible Word of God. Young claims to be a channel of divine revelation to Christians today. This should concern every believer. Given her claims, she deserves a careful examination in the light of Truth.

#### **1. *Jesus Calling* was inspired by New Age mystics.**

In an interview with the Christian Broadcasting Network, Sarah Young described how she learned to "dialogue" with God. She said:

My journey began with a devotional book (*God Calling*) written in the 1930s by two women who practiced waiting in God's Presence, writing the messages they received as they "listened." About a year after I started reading this book, I began to wonder if I too could receive messages during my times of communing with God. I had been writing in prayer journals for years, but this was one-way communication: "monologue." I knew that God communicates through the Bible (and I treasure His Word), but I wondered what He might say to me personally on a given day. So I decided to "listen" to God with pen in hand, writing down whatever I sensed He was saying. Of course, I wasn't listening for an audible voice; I was seeking the "still, small voice" of God in my mind/heart.<sup>9</sup>

*God Calling* was written by two anonymous New Age mystic women in the 1930s. They claimed to be channeling direct messages from Christ Himself.

In the introduction to *Jesus Calling*, Young says of this

Edition of *Jesus Calling*.  
<sup>9</sup><http://www.cbn.com/entertainment/books/jesuscallingqa.aspx>

book:

While I was living in Japan, someone had mailed this book to me from the U.S. I had not read it at that time, but I had held onto the book through two international moves. Six or seven years later, this little paperback became a treasure to me. It dovetailed remarkably well with my longing to live in Jesus' Presence (xi).

So, are we to believe that Jesus chose to reveal Himself personally to Sarah Young, a woman so undiscerning that she embraced "revelations" channeled through New Age mystics? Young is apparently so theologically naïve that she cannot see the problems with two New Age mystics who supposedly channeled the spirit of Jesus.

## 2. Young demonstrates a very low view of Scripture.

In the introduction to *Jesus Today*, Young offers a nod to an orthodox view of Scripture. She writes, "I believe the Bible is the infallible Word of God, and I strive to present to my readers only what is consistent with that unchanging standard."<sup>10</sup> On the surface, that sounds good. However, what she gives with one hand, she takes away with the other. Look at that comment in the context of the entire paragraph:

Like *Jesus Calling*, *Jesus Today* is written from the perspective of Jesus speaking to you, the reader. As with all my books, I relied on the help of the Holy Spirit as I worked—seeking to listen to Jesus throughout the creative process. When I write in this way, I am always selective in my listening. If anything is unbiblical, I reject it. I believe the Bible is the infallible Word of God, and I strive to present to my readers only what is consistent with that unchanging standard.<sup>11</sup>

Why does she need to be selective in her listening? Does Jesus need an editor? Does she think that she is receiving revelations that are unbiblical? If she is really hearing from Jesus, and these messages are truly from Him with the help of the Holy Spirit, then why does she need to be so critical? Does she fear that Jesus might tell her something unbiblical? She may believe that the Bible is infallible, but she certainly does not believe that what Jesus is speaking today is infallible. He apparently needs her to do some fact-checking for Him!

Young presents for herself a lose-lose scenario. If the messages that she is receiving are truly from Jesus, then such critical thinking and discernment are unnecessary. If the messages she is receiving are not from Jesus, then they are nothing more than the fabrications of her overactive imagination or demonic revelations. If she is receiving

messages that are unbiblical, what does that say about their source?

Young claims to speak on behalf of Jesus, even putting His "messages" to us in the first person. She claims that these are messages that she received directly from Him during her times of quiet and contemplative listening. Yet, she apparently cannot trust everything that He has told her. Some things have to be rejected. The "Jesus" that Sarah Young listens to has to be listened to very selectively. Those are her words, not mine.

Her view of Scripture is seen in some candid admissions that she makes in the introduction to *Jesus Calling*. When describing her first attempt at listening for personal messages, she writes:

The following year, [apparently the year after she read *God Calling*] I began to wonder if I, too, could receive messages during my times of communing with God. I had been writing in prayer journals for years, but that was one-way communication: I did all the talking. **I knew that God communicated with me through the Bible, but I yearned for more.** Increasingly, I wanted to hear what God had to say to me personally on a given day. I decided to listen to God with pen in hand, writing down whatever I believed He was saying. I felt awkward the first time I tried this, but I received a message. It was short, biblical, and appropriate (xi-xii). [Emphasis added]

That statement reveals her pathetically low view of Scripture. She yearned for *more*? Is Scripture not enough? No, for Sarah Young, Scripture **is not enough**. She needed and longed for communication separate from Scripture and outside of Scripture.

Nobody who has read and understood Psalm 119 could ever make that statement. Nobody who truly knows and understands the precious gem that Scripture is could ever say that they yearned for something *more*. Nobody who treasures the word of God and understands its power, its relevance, its authority, and its glory, would ever say that they yearned for something *more* than what the Bible has to offer.

Did Young exegete every single passage of Scripture? Has she mined every precious truth, memorized every book, and meditated upon every passage? Has she plumbed the riches and mined the precious truths of Scripture to such a degree that she has personally exhausted that treasure trove of divine wisdom and revelation of the glory of Christ and the nature of God?

Are we to understand that what kept the great students, theologians, expositors, and preachers of past generations like Whitfield, Edwards, Spurgeon, Calvin, and Luther busy for their entire lives, was exhausted so quickly by Sarah

<sup>10</sup>*Jesus Today*, xvi.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*

Young?

It is truly tragic that this woman has such a low view of Scripture. For Young, Scripture is insufficient to meet her needs.

She continues:

My journaling had changed from monologue to dialogue. Soon, messages began to flow more freely, and I bought a special notebook to record these words. This new way of communicating with God became the high point of my day. I knew these writings were not inspired as Scripture is, but they were helping me grow closer to God.

I have continued to receive personal messages from God as I meditate on Him. The more difficult my life circumstances, the more I need these encouraging directives from my creator.

How can something that God says not be inspired? Young says that the writings that she received from God, the messages of God speaking to her “were not inspired as Scripture is.” That statement reveals her completely faulty understanding of the doctrine of inspiration. Whatever God says is inspired. God cannot speak a message that is inspired on one occasion, and then speak an uninspired message on another occasion. It is not possible for God to speak and for His words to not be inspired. Inspiration is the act of God breathing out His word.

Young wants to have her theological cake and eat it too. She wants to claim that her messages come from God and are the words of Jesus without claiming that these same words are inspired. Such a distinction is nonsensical. Keep in mind that all of these messages are written from the perspective “of Jesus speaking to you” (xiv).

How does Jesus speak without it being authoritative, inspired, inerrant, and infallible? This is the conundrum faced by all non-cessationists who believe that Christians today are getting personalized revelation, prophetic visions, and words of knowledge. They try to assert that these continuing messages from Heaven are not on par with Scripture. So they must postulate a God that managed to get it right in Scripture, but continually gets it wrong today.

In fact, if Young is really getting messages from Jesus, then she needs to explain why we should not be adding *Jesus Calling* as the 67<sup>th</sup> book of the Bible.

Second, Young seems to think that what she really needs during difficult life circumstances are these personalized divine directives. Again, Scripture is not enough.

You would think that she would turn to the comfort offered in the Psalms, the promises given in the New Testament, or the glory that is revealed in the book of Revelation. These are not enough. Apparently, in the theology of Sarah Young, her personal messages trump the promises of Scripture. They

offer her more comfort and encouragement than Scripture ever could. This is Young's low view of Scripture.

### 3. Young claims to be an instrument of divine revelation.

There is no way to get around the fact that Young is claiming to receive personal messages from Jesus which she has now passed on to us. She is claiming to be an instrument, a channel of divine revelation. She is quoting Jesus.

This is a cause of great concern to any discerning reader. I understand there are large segments in Christianity who think that such personal revelation is standard fare. The entire charismatic movement, Word of Faith Movement, and the New Apostolic Reformation Movement are all built upon continuing revelation. Further, many otherwise Orthodox Christians who would not consider themselves to be charismatic believe that God continues to lead them through personal impressions, coded messages, and internal promptings much akin to those offered by Sarah Young.

I do not believe that she is hearing from Jesus. I do not believe that such visions, revelations, and promptings are legitimate. I believe that Scripture is closed. The 66 books given to us in the Old and New Testaments constitute the complete, adequate, sufficient, inspired, inerrant, infallible and final Word of God. The faith has been once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3).

The claims by Sarah Young are nothing more than a modern form of Gnostic mysticism presented under the guise of a Christian “devotional.”

**4. The book contains factual errors.** This serves to highlight the problem with Sarah Young presuming to quote Jesus in her messages.

In the message for January 28, Jesus is quoted as saying to Young, “I am with you always. These were the last words I spoke before ascending into heaven. I continue to proclaim this promise to all who will listen” (29). The Scripture offered at the end of the message is Matthew 28:20.

“I am with you always” are the final words recorded in the gospel of Matthew, but they are not the last words that Jesus spoke before ascending into heaven. His final words are recorded in Acts 1:7-8, where we read:

He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the Earth.”

Verse nine then says, “And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.”

This factual error serves as a good case study for the problems with Sarah Young's personal messages. She claims

that this is what Jesus said to her. Yet it is patently false.

So, did Jesus forget? Did He forget what His last words were? Or did He lie to Young when He gave her this message for January 28? Or worse yet, did Scripture get it wrong?

The fact that Young affirms that “the Bible is, of course, the only inerrant word of God” (xiii) may alleviate this tension in the minds of some, but we are still faced with the issue that Young is quoting what Jesus specifically said to her. The Jesus that Young is listening to is either forgetful or deceitful.

The publishers are not ignorant of this factual error. In the more recent additions of *Jesus Calling*, the message for January 28 has been changed to: “I am with you always. I spoke these words to My disciples after My resurrection.” Thankfully, Thomas Nelson has stepped in to edit Jesus so that He does not look like such a bumbling fool.<sup>12</sup>

Another example of a factual error is found in the message for August 23:

Entrust your loved ones to Me; release them into My protective care. They are much safer with Me than in your clinging hands. If you let a loved one become an idol in your heart, you endanger that one—as well as yourself. *Remember the extreme measures I used with Abraham and Isaac. I took Isaac to the very point of death to free Abraham from son-worship. Both Abraham and Isaac suffered terribly because of the father's undisciplined emotions. I detest idolatry, even in the form of parental love. [Emphasis mine.]*

Abraham was guilty of “undisciplined emotions” and “son-worship”? This is not what Scripture teaches. Young would have us believe that Jesus is teaching this nonsense! Ultimately, she cannot be blamed for such bad teaching if Jesus gave her this revelation. This is the sad consequence of believing that God speaks to us outside of Scripture—He ends up getting blamed for a lot of bad decisions and a lot of false teaching!

In later editions of *Jesus Calling*, the italicized portion of the message quoted above has been changed to the following:

Joseph and his father, Jacob, suffered terribly because Jacob loved Joseph more than any of his other sons and treated him with special favor. So Joseph's brothers hated him and plotted against him. Ultimately, I used that situation for good, but both father and son had to endure years of suffering and separation from one another.<sup>13</sup>

An entirely different example is given! That changes the

meaning of the message. It raises the question again, “Why did Thomas Nelson need to edit Jesus?” If Jesus actually gave that first message to Sarah Young, who are they to suggest He needs redacting? If He did not give this message to Sarah Young, then why are they publishing this nonsense to begin with?

#### **5. The book is filled with numerous examples of Scripture-twisting and quoting Scripture out of context.**

Though Young uses words and phrases taken from Scripture in her messages and includes Scripture references for further depth for each day's reading, these Scripture passages are often unrelated to the subject of her message.

For instance, right out of the gate on January 1, she misuses **Jeremiah 29:11**. The message for that day reads in part:

As you focus your thoughts on Me, be aware that I am fully attentive to you. I see you with a steady eye, because My attention span is infinite. I know and understand you completely; my thoughts embrace you in everlasting Love. *I also know the plans I have for you: plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Give yourself fully to this adventure of increasing attentiveness to My Presence.*

The sentence that is in italics, is a quote from **Jeremiah 29:11**: “For I know the plans that I have for you,” declares the Lord, ‘plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.’”

**Jeremiah 29** is a message to the exiles who were taken in captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. Specifically, the promise had to do with God's plan to bring his people back to the city of Jerusalem. God had promised this through Jeremiah, and would fulfill this through Nehemiah, Zerubbabel, and Ezra, when they would return to Jerusalem to rebuild the wall and the temple after the seventy years of captivity in Babylon.

Young takes the verse completely out of its context, and uses it as if it were a fortune-cookie promise. That passage, in its context, has nothing at all to do with focusing our attention on God, or readying ourselves for an adventure of increasing attentiveness to His presence.

This is not an isolated instance. It appears as if Young seeks to use the language of Scripture to lend an air of authenticity to her “messages.” Many people will read these messages, hear language and phrases they have seen in Scripture, check the isolated Scripture references, and conclude that these messages are indeed biblical and

<sup>12</sup>See <http://standupforthetruth.com/2014/11/changing-jesus-calling-damage-control-false-christ/>. The same factual error occurs in the message for October 15. A similar change has

been made by Thomas Nelson in the later editions.  
<sup>13</sup><http://standupforthetruth.com/2014/11/changing-jesus-calling-damage-control-false-christ/>

supported by Scripture.

Another example of her careless disregard for Scripture comes from her message for January 10:

Every time you affirm your trust in Me, you put a coin into My treasury. Thus you build up equity in preparation for days of trouble. I keep safely in My heart all trust invested in Me, with interest compounded continuously. The more you trust Me, the more I empower you to do so. Practice trusting Me during quiet days, when nothing much seems to be happening. Then when storms come, your trust balance will be sufficient to see you through. *Store up for yourselves treasure in heaven*, through placing your trust in Me this practice will keep you in My Peace.

The phrase “store up for yourselves treasure in heaven” comes from Matthew 6:20-21, which Young references at the bottom of the page. In the context, Jesus was teaching on the subject of the proper use of wealth, and the way in which the use of our wealth reveals the condition of our hearts. Young takes that phrase entirely out of its context, and uses it to teach that we can store up God's peace for ourselves through our acts of trusting in Him.

Again, these are not isolated examples. This is how Young treats Scripture. She takes phrases out of Scripture and uses them in these messages to teach things that those phrases and passages do not teach. I cannot overstate the danger of this! Her fortune-cookie-hermeneutical approach to Scripture will be picked up by her readers, who will assume that this is how Scripture is to be read and studied. Her reckless disregard for context modeled in her messages will inevitably be adopted by those who regard her messages as the words of Jesus.

Further, such reckless disregard of context ends up being blamed on none other than Jesus Himself. After all, He is the one supposedly giving these messages. Young presents a Jesus who twists Scripture and quotes it out of context. Does anyone really think that Jesus would use His holy Word this way? If not, then you can be assured that these messages are not from Him. Jesus would never sanction the abuse of Scripture in this way, let alone do so Himself.

### **Conclusion:**

*Jesus Calling* claims to contain first-person messages from Jesus to us. Clearly, it does not. Jesus would not endorse the channeled “revelations” of New Age mystics. Jesus would not abuse and misquote Scripture. Jesus would not make factual mistakes. Jesus would not need to be edited and redacted by Thomas Nelson.

Sarah Young offers a Jesus that speaks errors and needs to be listened to selectively. She presents a Jesus Who

speaks without authority and Whose word can be given without it being inspired.

This book is filled with weak, insipid, banal, and lifeless platitudes. There is no meat here - nothing of substance, nothing that will serve to equip or sanctify the believer. Christian, you are far better off reading Scripture. That should not need to be said, but unfortunately in our day and age, it is too often forgotten. Scripture is being set aside in favor of direct, personal, divine “messages”—and that to the detriment of the Christian Church.

To the Word! Go to the Word and stay in the Word! *Jesus Calling* has nothing to offer to the Christian. Nothing. Do not be deceived by the supposed “messages” that Sarah Young claims to have received, for therein lies another Jesus.

Without Wax -

