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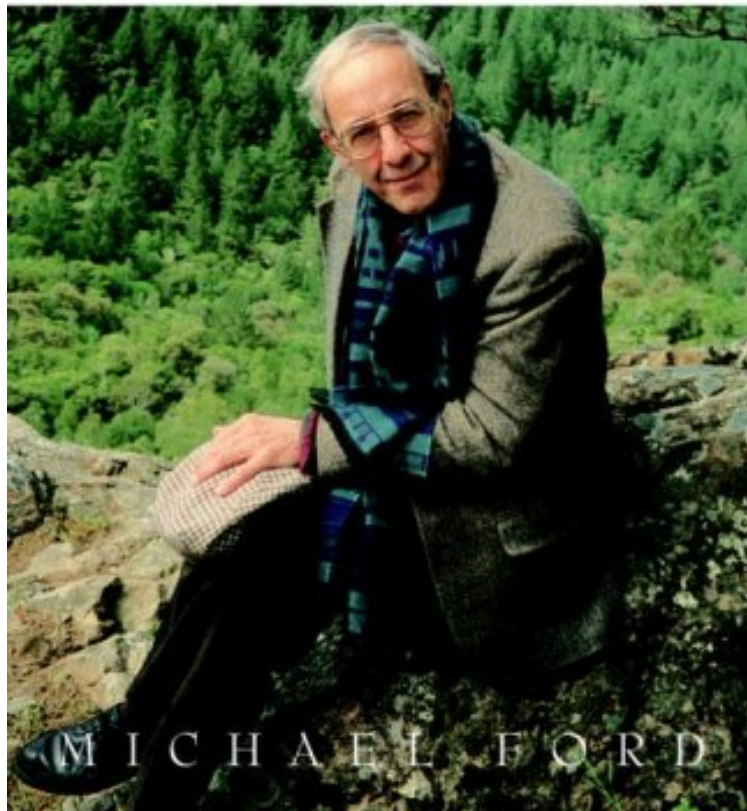
Wounded Prophet: A Portrait of Henri J.M. Nouwen

Von Michael Ford

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WOUNDED PROPHET

◀ A Portrait of Henri J. M. Nouwen ▶



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Von Michael Ford : Wounded Prophet: A Portrait of Henri J.M. Nouwen before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Wounded Prophet: A Portrait of Henri J.M. Nouwen:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen2 von 2 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. The Henri we didn't knowVon Ein KundeBiographies of the departed by their very nature tend to slouch towards irony. Michael Ford's "Wounded Prophet," chronicling the life and struggles of theologian and world-renown spiritual writer

Henri Nouwen, is no different. However, what makes this personal history rise, incredibly, above the genre fray is that the irony of Nouwen's life, as reported by Ford, makes his stamp on this world all the more indelible. In this biography, on the Roman Catholic priest and spiritual journalist, the author goes at length to show the late writer could not live up to his books. Nouwen, who died in 1996 at age 64, wrote beautiful, very personal, volumes on spirituality; many consider his impact on modern-day spirituality to rival that of Thomas Merton. However, it turns out the great author fought many demons, just one of which was his hesitancy to come out of the closet as a gay man. Ford's thesis is that Nouwen's many wounds (his inability to endure solitude; his chronic attention-getting) made him a better writer, a better priest; his wounds allowed him to know how to heal the hurt of others. Nouwen wrote passionately from a place of pain most readers could relate to and find solace. "He discovered that it was from the wounded places in himself that he could reach the wounded places in others," Ford writes. After all the biographer suggests, the best theology comes from one who knows. "Trained in psychology and steeped in the riches of Christian spirituality, Nouwen managed to balance his awareness of the dynamics of the human psyche with his openness to the workings of the Spirit," the biographer reports. "Wounded Prophet" in both structure and content is not a classic biography. Ford catalogues his subject in three sections ("Heart"; "Mind"; and "Body") in much the same manner Nouwen formatted his own work. Ford says he wanted the book not to be, "a full-scale biography, an assessment of his literary output, or a systematic theology of his thinking, but an exploration of the person Henri Nouwen as a wounded prophet for our time." Both structure and content succeed wonderfully. A Nouwenian (if there is such a creature), who knows full well the body of the theologian's work will find much treasure here; a neophyte to the man who wrote nearly 40 books will discover a rich background from which to begin an extended reading of his theology. One does not have to know of Nouwen (NOW-un) to find "Wounded Prophet" profitable. Therein lies its magic, perhaps. We see in Nouwen, ourselves and in reading Ford's exploration of this unique spirit we discover even the most vaulted of souls struggle with the human condition. We find out that Nouwen was terribly absentminded and chaotic as he concentrated with all his might on keeping his daily conversations with God on time, and on topic. "His primary need for prayer meant he was completely oblivious of more mundane things. He would dash to the bathroom whenever he was staying and shower without closing the curtain, soaking the whole place in water. Then without looking in the mirror he would shave as quickly as possible so he could get downstairs and be with God (at six in the morning)." For a man who wrote at length about solitude and the need for stillness to hear the Spirit, Nouwen was no contemplative. Ford recounts that during a 45-minute Quaker gathering in silence, Henri was found to be jittery and fidgeting. At one point he was seen to be "checking his watch." At one congregation, where Nouwen preached for the past decade of his life, it was customary to see him run in at the eleventh hour before service and genuflect almost on the fly. The writer was an extremely lonely man who needed constant companionship and reassurance. He often found himself alone at the end of the wild readings and speeches he gave, and wondering where everybody went. Often on the road, it was not uncommon for Nouwen to phone friends, around the world, with little regard for differing time zones. Ford illustrates a man who "expected rapt attention," when he spoke and who became severely agitated when someone in the audience moved or left. As a creative force, Nouwen has few rivals, but that energy, bottled up inside his lanky frame fueled a litany of self-inflicted wounds. All his maladies conspired, says Ford, to give Nouwen doubts about his own identity. Nouwen was gay and in the last few years of his life, talked openly about writing a book on "homosexuality." But it never transpired. To the end he was unsure how his personal sexuality would impact his public ministry. He had a lover, and in Ford's book little is said about him. The biographer does say Nathan Ball declined to give access to that part of Nouwen's life.

0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A contemporary spirituality of brokenness. Von Ein Kunde Michael Ford's biography, as the title clearly implies, will introduce the reader to the brokenness of Henri Nouwen. The author's intent is to give us a clearer picture of the "wounded prophet" by connecting some of the dots left unconnected in Nouwen's writings. No doubt, some readers will be disturbed by what they see. However, the finished portrait is attractive for several reasons. First, Mr. Ford did his homework. His portrait is based upon countless interviews with Nouwen's friends, family members, and colleagues. Although several people appeared to violate Nouwen's privacy in the process, overall the interviews resulted in a deeper understanding of his woundedness. Second, rather than leaving the reader wallowing in Nouwen's brokenness, the author reveals his true understanding of Nouwen's heart as he enables the reader to see the vital relationship between Nouwen's brokenness and his compassion for a broken world. Finally, in an attempt to portray the "physical spirituality" of Nouwen, the author truly blesses his readers with a collection of delightful and touching photographs. In conclusion, the careful reader of this book will be forever grateful to Henri Nouwen for blessing us with a contemporary spirituality of brokenness.

0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. An Outstanding Honest Portrait of Henri Nouwen the Man Von Daniel J. Maloney This is the most outstanding biography of Henri Nouwen written to date. Ford did a wonderful job in researching Nouwen's life and in being honest about his discoveries. There was never any question in my own mind of the gifts which Henri Nouwen offered to his readers as a direct result of his own personal human-ness; his own imperfections -- his woundedness. The first biography published by Nouwen's friend from Holland was extremely poor. It was the perfect little boy grows up to be perfect and prophetic saint story. The author of that work indicates he set aside his personal knowledge of Nouwen for the sake of greater objectivity. I believe the

best thing a friend undertaking a biography can do is tell the story of the person they knew well. Ford through his interviews truly captures the special nature of Henri Nouwen as a man, a psychologist, a theologian, a priest and writer. He tells the story of the Wounded Henri -- essentially the story Henri told us in his own works -- most especially in *From Anguish to Freedom* to private journal Nouwen kept while in treatment which he allowed to be published the year he died. The human Henri, in his own quest for centeredness, in his own flawed manner, wrote of themes which seem somewhat universal to the human condition. Michael Ford captures this Henri and reveals the genesis of much of his gifted writings. I would recommend this book, Robert Durback's revised "Nouwen Reader", Nouwen's own "Wounded Healer" and *From "Anguish to Freedom"* as the four and most amazing portraits of the true Henri. It's a shame that editors kept him on a tight reign when he wanted to be more honest in his writings later in life. To hear Henri speak of his own struggles is a gift we mostly indirectly get a glimpse of in his books. Michael Ford's work gives a wonderful background of the complete Nouwen. Henri Nouwen was an inspiration to me throughout most of my adult life. He continues to be so in his death. His woundedness only adds to my appreciation of his willingness to write and to share. I believe Nouwen will be eventually considered a very significant spiritualist in more years to come as people re-read his works with new eyes and a whole new audience is able to have the opportunity learn about this gifted man in future years. In his death, while far too young, Nouwen has much to teach us through his written word and through the post-humous work he leaves us in his writings now being widely re-published. I am confident that Nouwen is now in the embrace of the Father in Heaven and has finally found true peace and love in his death. He needs to search no longer. An outstanding, honest and depthful coverage of the life and struggles of a contemporary holy man. Highly recommended!

Kurzbeschreibung Henri Nouwen, a Dutch Roman Catholic priest, was one of the most beloved and important spiritual writers of the twentieth century. Since his death in 1996, his stature has only increased; and his books, including *The Inner Voice of Love*, *The Wounded Healer*, and *The Return of the Prodigal Son*, have become cherished classics. For thousands of readers around the world, Nouwen's influence as a teacher and author is considered equal to, or greater than, that of the century's great spiritual writers, C. S. Lewis and Thomas Merton. Although Nouwen could be radically revealing about his personal thoughts and struggles, there are nonetheless gaps in our understanding of who he was. *Wounded Prophet*, readers are given the first extensive look into this man who touched so many, not only through his own words but, most powerfully, through the eyes of those around the world who knew Nouwen best. While researching this compelling biography, BBC producer Michael Ford conducted wide-ranging interviews with Nouwen's friends, colleagues, and family members. What he discovered was far more compelling than what he had imagined: Though Nouwen was indeed the generous and loving man many thought he was, he was also never able to find consistent peace in his own life. Tormenting him were profound feelings of anxiety, insecurity, and loneliness. This portrait gives an honest and well-balanced account of Nouwen's life that leaves no stone unturned, investigating his childhood, his family, his sexuality, and his life as a priest and member of the LArche Daybreak community in Toronto. From the Trade Paperback edition. de Henri Nouwen's devotional writings are effective because their revealing, personal voice invites readers to share an effortless intimacy with him. This literary intimacy, in turn, helps many readers achieve greater closeness with others and with God. Michael Ford's biography of Nouwen, *Wounded Prophet*, draws on interviews with Nouwen's colleagues and close friends who describe Nouwen, predictably, as the generous and loving man readers have met through Nouwen's books. Yet Ford's biography also contains some striking surprises about the extreme loneliness and anxiety that plagued Nouwen throughout his life. *Wounded Prophet* is especially insightful regarding the connections between Nouwen's homosexuality, which he grappled with in earnest during the last years of his life, and his theology, which became increasingly grounded in the life of the senses during that same period. Ford has a clear understanding of and deep compassion for his subject, whose vocation he summarizes beautifully near the end of the book: "Like many mystics, Henri Nouwen was in tune with the energy of divine life, passionate about Jesus, and committed to speaking words of hope from his own mysterious anguish. It was a vocation for connecting the spiritual with the earthbound." --Michael Joseph Gross.com Henri Nouwen's devotional writings are effective because their revealing, personal voice invites readers to share an effortless intimacy with him. This literary intimacy, in turn, helps many readers achieve greater closeness with others and with God. Michael Ford's biography of Nouwen, *Wounded Prophet*, draws on interviews with Nouwen's colleagues and close friends who describe Nouwen, predictably, as the generous and loving man readers have met through Nouwen's books. Yet Ford's biography also contains some striking surprises about the extreme loneliness and anxiety that plagued Nouwen throughout his life. *Wounded Prophet* is especially insightful regarding the connections between Nouwen's homosexuality, which he grappled with in earnest during the last years of his life, and his theology, which became increasingly grounded in the life of the senses during that same period. Ford has a clear understanding of and deep compassion for his subject, whose vocation he summarizes beautifully near the end of the book: "Like many mystics, Henri Nouwen was in tune with the energy of divine life, passionate about Jesus, and committed to speaking words of

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