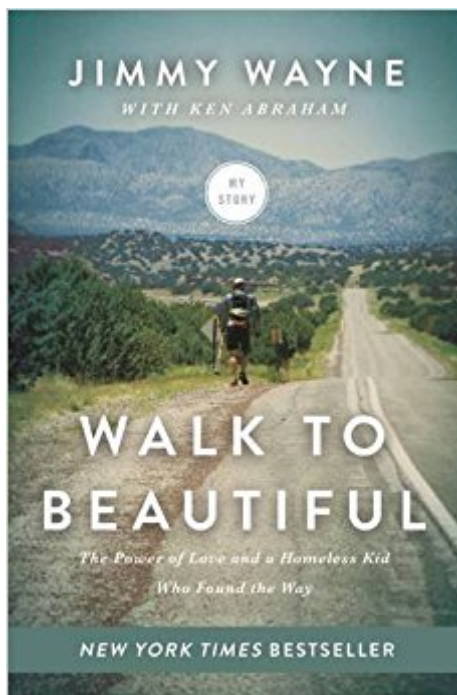




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Walk To Beautiful: The Power Of Love And A Homeless Kid Who Found The Way



Synopsis

Imagine yourself a thirteen-year-old hundreds of miles away from home, in a strange city, and your mom leaves you at a bus station parking lot and drives off into the night with her lover. That's the real life story of country music star Jimmy Wayne. It's a miracle that Jimmy survived being hungry and homeless, bouncing in and out of the foster care system, and sleeping in the streets. But he didn't just overcome great adversity in his life; he now uses his country music platform to help children everywhere, especially teenagers in foster care who are about to age out of the system. *Walk to Beautiful* is the powerfully emotive account of Jimmy's horrendous childhood and the love shown him by Russell and Bea Costner, the elderly couple who gave him a stable home and provided the chance to complete his education. Jimmy says of Bea, "She changed every cell in my body." It also chronicles Jimmy's rise to fame in the music industry and his Meet Me Halfway campaign: his walk halfway across America, 1,700 miles from Nashville to Phoenix, to raise awareness for foster kids. Join Jimmy on his walk to beautiful and see how one person really can make a difference.

ENDORSEMENTS

"If your story could use a better chapter, take inspiration from Jimmy's." —Max Lucado, *A New York Times Best-Selling Author*

"It reads like a movie to me, and if so, I'll be the first one in a seat to see it." —Dolly Parton

"Walk to Beautiful will open your eyes to the hurting people around you." —Frank Harrison, Chairman and CEO, Coca-Cola Bottling Co. Consolidated; Chairman and Cofounder, With Open Eyes

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Customer Reviews

Jimmy Wayne is a former foster kid turned country music singer/songwriter whose songs, story, and walk halfway across America in 2010 will continue to help bring awareness to kids who age out of the foster system and become homeless. He earned the prestigious "Million-Air Award" for receiving one million radio spins of his song "Do You Believe Me Now." He is the author of *Walk to Beautiful*, his New York Times best-selling memoir, and the author of the novel and made-for-TV movie *Paper Angels*. Jimmy lives in Nashville, Tennessee. Ken Abraham is a New York Times best-selling author known around the world for his collaborations with high-profile public figures. A former professional musician and pastor, he is a popular guest with both secular and religious media. His books include *One Soldier's Story* with Bob Dole, *Payne Stewart* with Tracey Stewart, *Falling in Love for All the Right Reasons* with Dr. Neil Clark Warren, and *Let's Roll!* with Lisa Beamer.

WALK TO BEAUTIFUL: The Power of Love and a Homeless Kid Who Found the Way, is the life story of Jimmy Wayne, who is best known for his success in Country Music as a singer and songwriter. Three albums, numerous hit songs, a three week #1 hit "Do You Believe Me Now" and a major tour with Brad Paisley and Dierks Bentley attest to Jimmy's abundant talent as a Country Music entertainer. But Jimmy is much more than that. He is also a former foster kid, abused and abandoned as a child. He was a homeless teenager, living on the streets doing anything he had to to survive. He is a testament to the "power of one person to make a difference in someone's life," as did an elderly woman named Bea, who saved him by taking him in when he was 16 and homeless. He is proof that belief and faith in God can lead to forgiveness of the worst kind of atrocities. Yes, Jimmy Wayne is a singer, songwriter and musician, but he is also a tireless advocate for children in the foster care system and those aging out of the system without families, to face life completely on their own. God has blessed Jimmy with incredible talent as a singer, musician, entertainer and speaker and he is using it to raise awareness to kids now walking in the shoes he once did. **WALK TO BEAUTIFUL** is his story of how he is able to do this and why. As you can imagine, Jimmy has MANY stories to tell. Co-author Ken Abraham has taken this collection of harsh and sometimes humorous stories and masterfully written and arranged them to poignantly tell Jimmy's story in a way that keeps the pages turning. The first half of the book details Jimmy's childhood of abuse and abandonment. It will make you angry and

break your heart. You will also get a sense of what so many kids experience in America at the hands of those who are supposed to love and take care of them. You will get a glimpse at foster care from someone who lived it. You will feel hungry, abandoned, scared, desperate, unwanted, homeless. You will find yourself asking, "How could this kid possibly survive?" "How did he grow up to be successful?" The answers to those questions are found in the second half of the book. Here you meet Bea and Russell Costner and see what the power of love can do for even the most discouraged and angry child/teenager. There were others too, who helped Jimmy overcome the chaos of his difficult past, and they are all mentioned with great appreciation for their part in his life. But Bea is the ONE who invited Jimmy into her home for as long as HE wanted to stay. The love Bea had for Jimmy, and he for her, comes through beautifully in these pages as does the enormous gratitude Jimmy feels toward Bea for the prayers and encouragement she gave him to find a dream and chase it. That dream was music. Reading about Jimmy catching his dream of writing songs and becoming a Country Music singer/musician is entertaining and often funny as Jimmy tells stories on himself, allowing the reader to experience his endearing wit and humor. These chapters also reflect how "success" to one person can mean something completely different to another. The last part of the book demonstrates the conviction Jimmy has to never forget where he came from and to help the kids and teenagers experiencing foster care and homelessness, as he once did. On January 1, 2010, after just completing the American Saturday Night tour with Brad Paisley and Dierks Bentley, Jimmy walked out of Nashville, TN on foot. Jimmy's "Meet Me Halfway" project was launched with the sole intention to raise awareness to foster youth, especially those who age out of the system at age 18 without a family or other adult connections, expected to survive completely on their own. Jimmy would spend the next 7 months walking 1700 miles (halfway across America) until he reached Phoenix, AZ on July 31, 2010. Jimmy shares some of the incredible people and places, the wonderful and sometimes scary experiences, he encountered on his walk. He explains how "The Walk" forever changed him. After reading these pages, you will fully understand how serious and dedicated this man is in helping these kids, and why he needs your help. WALK TO BEAUTIFUL is written in a way to give hope to youth or adults struggling to survive or find their way in the world. It's also written to inspire those looking for more purpose in life, those needing a push to take that next step toward helping others. For anyone involved with foster children in any way, this book offers great insight into their world. This is a book about faith and trust in God, even when it seems He is gone. It's about finding the peace of

forgiveness, no matter how badly you've been wronged. I believe WALK TO BEAUTIFUL (The Power of Love and a Homeless Kid Who Found the Way) will help many "find the way" to find the way. I believe more people will realize they too can "be somebody" and make a difference in the life of a child or teen that needs just ONE person to care. I believe many will open their hearts and WALK TO BEAUTIFUL with Jimmy. I encourage everyone to read WALK TO BEAUTIFUL and see where it leads them.

A special thank you to Thomas Nelson--W Publishing and NetGalley for an ARC in exchange for an honest review. Walk to Beautiful, The Power of Love and a Homeless Kid Who Found the Way is a poignant and inspiring account of Jimmy Wayne's journey, written by Jimmy Wayne and Ken Abraham--one which will forever change your life! Jimmy Wayne is known for his altruistic and giving heart. In the country music industry he is known for his song writing, and hit songs, while being supported by his many fans, worldwide. However, readers may not be aware of the horrific childhood and challenges on his way to stardom and adulthood. This is like "Job"; one hurdle, obstacle, disappointment, and challenge after another, and yet Jimmy possessed the drive, talent, determination, and tenacity, even in his darkest moments; to overcome his troubled past. He was fortunate to have some people along the way who took a chance on this remarkable young man, and he desires to give back and pay forward. I will be honest, I am not a country music fan (even though my sister who resides in NC is an avid fan). A great deal of Jimmy's childhood took place in Gastonia, NC area, with some of the crazy people and backward views. Wow, I had no idea the power and impact of this beautifully written and extraordinary book. The more I read, the more intrigued, I became and began reviewing Jimmy Wayne's website, and listened to all the videos and was highly impressed. Walk to Beautiful portrays the story of how Wayne was able to rise above his background with the help of supportive, adoptive parents as a teen, and become a successful country singer and in-demand motivational speaker. The book takes you from Jimmy's early years as a boy, left many times on the street alone by his mother, bullied by his peers, to fend for himself; growing up being passed from one foster home to another, with neglect and abuse, tortured, with no food or place to live, or sleep. However, one woman and man took him in, and taught him about love, music and living. When you look at this highly talented musician, good-looking guy, today, and listen to his beautiful words and songs, it is hard to believe the rough road he has traveled. Through his determination, he has not let his past define him, nor his future; however, has used his humble

and troubled past to help others going through similar experiences. Jimmy has dedicated the book, his life story to Bea, a wonderful 75-year old woman who took him in when he was 16 years old, after a voice told him to stop and see if she needed help with her yard work. Bea and Russell later asked him to move in, and were instrumental in turning Jimmy's life around. Bea who passed away in 1997, will always be in his heart, and now Jimmy is giving back to the community to help other foster children, who have nowhere to turn. From 2010 when Jimmy walked from Nashville to Phoenix on his Meet Me Halfway campaign, he set out to raise awareness for foster youth who have aged out of the system. The walk in itself helped stem the idea to document certain thoughts and memories, which led to the birth of Walk to Beautiful. "Thirty Thousand kids every year age out of the foster care system the moment they turn eighteen. Many of them will become homeless, addicted, or imprisoned. Some will never see their twenty-first birthdays. I knew I wanted to help those kids the way somebody had helped me. But how?"

• Walk to Beautiful is an inspiring and remarkable book. It does not read like a non-fiction, or memoir. As an avid reader of over 350 books a year, a professional reader and blogger

• Trust me, this is a story you cannot put down! It is so shocking, you feel as though this has to be fiction. How could any one person survive this life?

On a Personal Note: I formerly served as a Board Member for an organization in Atlanta for at risk teens, YES Atlanta (Youth Experiencing Success) and commend adults who strive to help these youth, by providing positive role models, and resources in order to change their environment, with an opportunity to lead healthy and rich lives as adults. Even though the book will bring you to tears, there are many parts which are witty and humorous. I especially loved the parts about growing up in the south. He had such bad role models when it came to Christianity, with the distorted views of church, beliefs, and hypocrisy. It was refreshing to learn he did not lose his faith, through all of this, when he finally got to see firsthand from Bea what faith and love really means. I highly recommend this beautifully written and inspiring book, and well deserving of 5 stars. It will change you. Nashville, and country music fans will love all the stars, names, mentions, and tidbits. Foster children and troubled youth, will find hope and joy in these words, for the future. Congrats, Jimmy, thanks for putting yourself out there, with courage and bravery to tell your story, and relive your past, forgive those who turned their back on you, and share with others while making a difference in lives across the world.

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