

frank e peretti this present darkness

Frank E. Peretti's This Present Darkness is a seminal work in the realm of Christian fiction, blending elements of supernatural thriller and spiritual warfare. Released in 1986, it marked a turning point in the genre and has since become a cornerstone for readers interested in the intersection of faith and fiction. This article delves into the themes, characters, and the impact of this influential novel.

Overview of This Present Darkness

This Present Darkness follows the story of a small town called Ashton, which becomes the battleground for a cosmic struggle between good and evil. The narrative is driven by the experiences of two main characters: a journalist named reporter Marshall Hogan and a local pastor named Hank Busche. As they uncover a sinister plan orchestrated by dark forces, they also encounter the powerful influence of prayer and faith.

Plot Summary

The novel opens with a series of strange occurrences in Ashton, leading to the arrival of Marshall Hogan, who is investigating the local college and its influence on the community. As he delves deeper, he discovers a conspiracy involving a shadowy figure named the "dark one," whose ambition is to undermine the town through manipulation and deceit.

Parallel to Marshall's journey, Pastor Hank Busche faces his own trials as he leads the dwindling congregation of his church. As the town becomes increasingly influenced by darkness, Hank's faith is tested. The narrative intertwines the human struggles of these characters with the spiritual battles fought by angels and demons, illustrating the importance of spiritual vigilance and prayer.

Thematic Elements

This Present Darkness is rich with thematic elements that resonate with readers, particularly those with a Christian background. Below are some of the key themes explored in the novel.

Spiritual Warfare

At the heart of This Present Darkness is the theme of spiritual warfare. Peretti presents a vivid depiction of the unseen battle between angels and demons. This concept serves as a reminder that life is not merely a physical existence but also a spiritual journey where faith and conviction play crucial roles.

- Angelic Intervention: The novel portrays angels as warriors who engage in battles to protect the faithful. They provide guidance, strength, and support to the characters, symbolizing the belief that divine help is always available to those who seek it.
- Demonic Influence: The dark forces in the story manipulate and deceive individuals, leading them away from faith and community. This representation warns readers about the subtle ways evil can infiltrate lives, emphasizing the need for awareness and vigilance.

The Power of Prayer

Another significant theme in the novel is the power of prayer. Throughout the story, characters engage in prayer, which acts as a catalyst for change and protection. Peretti emphasizes that prayer is not merely a ritual but a powerful tool that can influence the spiritual realm.

- Community Prayer: The book illustrates the strength of collective prayer, showcasing how a united community can confront and overcome darkness.
- Personal Faith: Individual moments of prayer serve as turning points for characters, highlighting the personal relationship one can have with God.

The Importance of Community

Peretti also underscores the significance of community in overcoming adversity. The characters in *This Present Darkness* find strength and support in one another as they face the challenges posed by the forces of evil.

- Church as a Sanctuary: Hank Busche's church serves as a refuge and a place of empowerment for the community, illustrating the role of faith-based organizations in providing support and guidance.
- Unity Against Evil: The collaboration between the characters emphasizes that together, people can stand firm against adversities, reinforcing the idea that faith is strengthened in community.

Character Analysis

The characters in *This Present Darkness* are well-developed and serve as representations of various facets of faith, doubt, and perseverance.

Marshall Hogan

Marshall Hogan is a determined journalist whose investigative spirit drives the narrative. Initially skeptical, his journey leads him to confront the reality of spiritual warfare. His character arc reflects the struggle between doubt and faith, ultimately culminating in a profound transformation.

Hank Busche

Hank Busche represents the faithful pastor who grapples with despair as he witnesses his congregation dwindle. His steadfast commitment to prayer and community serves as a beacon of hope. Hank's journey illustrates the importance of resilience and faith in the face of challenges.

The Dark One

The antagonist of the story, the Dark One, symbolizes the pervasive nature of evil. His manipulative actions serve as a reminder of the dangers that lurk in the shadows, prompting readers to remain vigilant in their faith.

Impact and Legacy

Since its publication, *This Present Darkness* has had a profound impact on Christian fiction and popular culture. Its unique blend of thriller elements and spiritual themes has resonated with readers and inspired subsequent works in the genre.

Influence on Christian Fiction

- Pioneering the Genre: *This Present Darkness* is often credited with helping to establish a market for Christian thrillers, paving the way for authors like Ted Dekker and Frank Peretti himself in subsequent works.
- Broader Appeal: The novel's gripping narrative and relatable characters have attracted not only Christian readers but also those interested in supernatural fiction, broadening its reach.

Cultural References

The themes and concepts presented in *This Present Darkness* have permeated various aspects of culture, including discussions on the nature of good and evil. The book has been referenced in sermons, discussions on spiritual warfare, and even in popular media, reflecting its lasting impact.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Frank E. Peretti's *This Present Darkness* remains a significant work that continues to resonate with readers today. Its exploration of spiritual warfare, the power of prayer, and the importance of community provides valuable lessons for individuals seeking

to navigate their own spiritual journeys. As a pioneer in Christian fiction, Peretti has left an indelible mark on the genre, encouraging readers to engage with their faith in a deeper and more meaningful way. Whether one approaches it as a thrilling narrative or a spiritual guide, *This Present Darkness* offers insights that are both relevant and profound, inviting readers to reflect on the unseen battles that shape their lives.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the main themes explored in 'This Present Darkness' by Frank E. Peretti?

The main themes in *'This Present Darkness'* include the battle between good and evil, the power of prayer, and the influence of spiritual warfare on everyday life. The book illustrates the unseen struggle between angels and demons and emphasizes the importance of faith and community.

How does Frank E. Peretti portray spiritual warfare in 'This Present Darkness'?

Peretti portrays spiritual warfare as an ongoing battle that takes place in the unseen realm, affecting the physical world. He uses vivid imagery of angels and demons to depict this struggle, suggesting that human actions, particularly prayer and moral choices, can influence the outcome of these spiritual conflicts.

What is the significance of the setting in 'This Present Darkness'?

The setting in *'This Present Darkness'* is significant as it takes place in a small town called Ashton, which symbolizes a microcosm of society. The town serves as a battleground for the spiritual forces at play, highlighting how spiritual darkness can infiltrate communities and the importance of vigilance and faith in combating it.

What role do the characters play in conveying the message of 'This Present Darkness'?

The characters in *'This Present Darkness'* serve as representations of various responses to faith and spiritual challenges. Their struggles and growth illustrate the impact of prayer, community support, and personal conviction in overcoming darkness, ultimately conveying a message of hope and resilience.

How has 'This Present Darkness' influenced Christian literature and media?

'This Present Darkness' has had a significant influence on Christian literature and media by popularizing the genre of spiritual warfare fiction. Its success paved the way for other

authors to explore similar themes, and it has inspired adaptations in various formats, including radio dramas and discussions in Christian circles about the nature of evil and the power of faith.

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