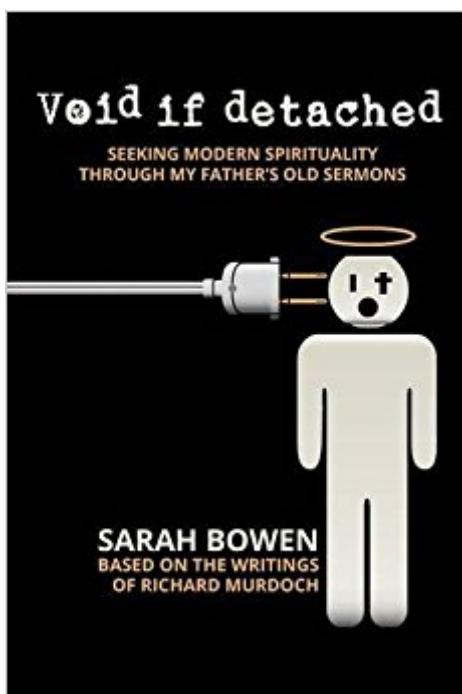


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# **Void If Detached: Seeking Modern Spirituality Through My Father's Old Sermons**



## Synopsis

This is the story of a religion-phobic Gen Xer who felt a void because she had become detached from her faith. In fact, she wasn't sure what her faith was or if she actually had any faith at all. Raised as a preacher's kid, she had an astonishingly long list of why religion didn't work for her--until five years after her father's death, she began reading his sermons. Follow her journey through history and theology as she sometimes seriously--and often irreverently--learns to fill the void with something greater than herself.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

After 20 years of writing marketing copy to finance her travel addiction, Sarah Bowen hunkered down to craft her first book, *Void if Detached*, based on the sermons of her father, the Reverend Richard Murdoch. Reading through the manuscripts of 1,500 sermons she received after his death, she found herself on a fascinating spiritual recovery. Sarah dove cautiously into the Hebrew Scriptures and Christian Bible, studying initially through online courses at Yale University, Emory University, and the Reformed Theological Seminary. Soon, she found herself able to say the "G" and "J" words without cringing--something she had not been able to do comfortably since her late teens. She realized she had found modern spirituality in her father's old sermons. Sarah found herself curiously drawn to One Spirit Interfaith Seminary, where she eventually enrolled to pursue the addition of "Reverend" to her name as well. In 2017, she will enter the (proverbial) family business, with a focus on animal chaplaincy through an interfaith/interspiritual lens. Not surprisingly, the study of the world's great faith traditions has greatly increased her

craving for more travel-but this time, to spiritually-charged locations.

In one of the sermons of Ms. Bowen's father, Reverend Murdock makes the distinction between excellence and perfect and he says "perfection is mechanical; excellence is dynamic. It is that spark--that little extra part that will cover for and excuse what is not perfect." (Bowen, 2016, p. 260). Ms. Bowen achieves real excellence in her masterpiece. And it is "dynamic." It is the love Ms. Bowen put into her work that gives it that spark where it achieves its excellence. And the grammar and writing also perfect by the way, but far from mechanical. The way she combines scriptures with her dad's sermons and biblical history gave spirituality and religion a different spin for me. In my own upbringing as a minister's daughter I had a lot of blind spots--I knew scripture but not as much history. Ms Bowen's work made a lot of sense to me and I can appreciate the wisdom and skill that went into the way she creatively put all this together into a meaningful representation of her father's legacy. It also gives the reader some real nuggets of things to think about in their own spiritual paths. Highly recommended. Author, Jean Marie Manthei, MA, LPC, CACIII

What I realize as I read these is that the problems faced today are the same as 30 years or 3000 years ago. Nothing changes. So much for the onward and upward myth. Rev. Murdoch is both a Biblical scholar and an astute observer of our human follies.

This woman is the daughter of a wonderful pator who passed away way too early in life. Her book is inspiring as were his sermons

An excellent book for skeptics who want to understand the jewels of the Hebrew and Christian bible stories. This creative book avoids dogma and preachiness, favoring instead the questions many of us ask during our spiritual journeys. The author even states "you do not need to be religious or even believe in God to read this book." Truly a fresh approach to this type of content. I learned an amazing amount of information that I can apply to my own questions about spirituality and how it fits in my life.

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