

Review of *The Christmas Box* by Richard Paul Evans

If you have never read *The Christmas Box* by Richard Paul Evans, you have something to look forward to. I wouldn't even wait until Christmas, but being a quick read, you may find this to be a classic tradition to open up and read again every Christmas anyway.

Though my all time favorite Christmas story centers in the actual birth of our Savior as found in scripture, my all time favorite fictional novel is actually *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens. But there is definitely room for more great Christmas themed tales in the adult fiction genre. There are so many qualities innate to Christmas; perhaps that is why it can be difficult for a good story to emerge that would measure up to our expectations. Nonetheless, *The Christmas Box* does.

Richard Paul Evans has improved his writing since finishing this first novel of his. But I'm not sure he has aced himself with any better idea for a story since. *The Christmas Box* does have several sentimental elements, but given the miracles of the season it fills the ordinary with the extraordinary. I didn't feel that it was over the top, but rather it opened up my feelings to experience that, which can be beyond me at times. I speak of angels and spiritual pining that sometimes we are only in tune with during Christmas or maybe with the passing of a loved one, times when we find ourselves closer than ever to Jesus Christ and a world beyond this one. For those who spirituality is a reality in this life, the story is told far too less, not far too often. Critics berate *The Christmas Box*, saying it is too sentimental, but if there is a better way to attach spiritual to the physical elements constructed by a story in a way that we can understand, I would be surprised if that is a story at all. Jesus Christ spoke in parables in much the same way, to tell a story that we could relate with both physically and spiritually. *The Christmas Box* is a great story that does not detract from the meaning and greatest story behind Christmas, but rather gives us another way to understand it and equate it to our lives and the reality of Christ's gift of life beyond our deaths.

In short, I would recommend this book to anyone who wants a nice easy read. I think it centers on matters of great importance in a light palatable manner that could be shared with families. It deals with some tough questions, but it focused on the issues at hand. Through a concise, curious, and enjoyable storyline you won't put this book down very long. You will find yourself returning to it and filling your appetite to your heart's content with its clever and inviting style and story.