

## Q & A



### ***Beauty and Resistance*** *Spiritual Rhythms for Formation and Repair*

November 11, 2025 | \$18.99, 192 pages, paperback | 978-1-5140-1228-4

**Jonathan Walton** is a senior resource specialist for InterVarsity Christian Fellowship focusing on political discipleship and civic engagement. He is also the creator of the Emotionally Healthy Activist Course and writes *The Crux* daily on *Substack*. He has written five books, including *Twelve Lies That Hold America Captive*. He holds a degree in creative writing from Columbia University and an MA from the City University in New York in the Study of the Americas. He lives in Queens, New York, and attends New Life Fellowship.

## We Must Hold Beauty and Resistance in Tension

### Why is this book needed right now?

**Jonathan Walton:** We have pastors and politicians saying that empathy is a sin, rejecting the beatitudes as weak, and dismissing with prejudice core teachings of Jesus. All of our “zones are flooded.” Our communities are fractured, and the felt need that something is wrong and “we need to do something about it” has never been more fervent across large cross sections of society. Yet our ability to actually make long-lasting, impactful change has never felt so out of reach. Especially change that flows from love and kindness, not fear and anger.

In a world full of so much disappointment, division, and despair we need practical, sustainable steps to engage meaningfully in love and justice with God, self, and neighbor. We need robust engagement with beauty and resistance and replicable, contextualized rhythms of formation and repair.

### What does it look like to respond to the world as rested people versus reactive people?

**Jonathan:** I am a more kind, just, and loving person after I have had a good night’s sleep, a full meal, hydrated well, and have had time to reflect with friends on how my life is actually going—as opposed to struggling to sleep at night, eating when I can, and holding everything in because I lack a social life and deep relationships. This is evident in how I treat my spouse, child, or an unhoused neighbor.

There is a better chance that I will respond out of my deepest values and not my deepest wounds if I am living life as a human being, not as a human doing. Because if I don’t have enough margin to feel like a person, not a thing, then it will be improbable for me to meet my neighbor nearby or worldwide with the same dignity I won’t even afford myself. As John the Baptist said, I can only give what I have received. And I pray that readers would receive an invitation to the Rest of God and take it.



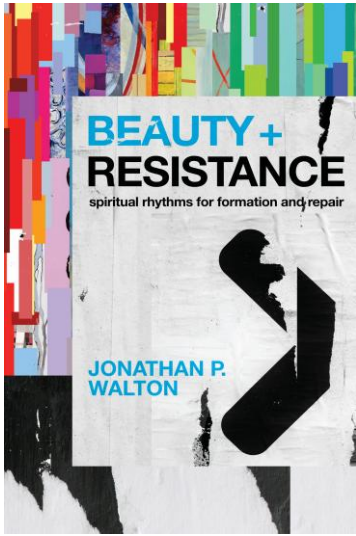
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#### **What part of your own story led you to pursue writing *Beauty and Resistance*?**

**Jonathan:** How I show up in the world—the things I say and do on a consistent basis—flows from who I am at my core. Jesus said a tree will be known by the fruit that it bears. So a lemon tree will not produce apples. If I am claiming to be a lemon tree then I must allow myself to be rooted, nourished, and beholden to the love and justice of God, or I will bear the fruit of this world and not of his Kingdom. To do otherwise is just lying to myself, claiming faithfulness while displaying inconsistency. And no one loves hypocrisy.

I believe the world is in desperate need of people who live within integrity, and that integrity must start in our own lives at every level—individually, intimately, interpersonally, institutionally, and ideologically. And where there is a knot in the wood of our lives, by God’s grace and with his help in community, we need to address it.

I was burnt out because I did not have the emotional, relational, and spiritual scaffolding to hold myself up and together as I tried to change. I did not have a rule of life or life with God that could bear the weight of who I am and who I wanted to be. And as soon as I could confess that, then God could meet me. And that’s exactly what he did.

#### **How will this book change the way people look at activism?**

**Jonathan:** When the disciples said Jesus is Lord, they were saying Caesar was not. Romans 12 says that we are not to conform to the patterns of the world but be transformed by the renewing of our minds. The passage continues with invitations to radical love, justice, and humility with an exhortation to love our enemies and overcome evil with good. To follow Jesus is to be an agent of change—whether in prayer on your knees, marching in the streets, or meeting a neighbor’s need for company, clothing, or emotional healing.

When we don’t live out of pride, narcissism, and hurry and instead embody the great commandments and the great commission, then we are activists—resisting the ways of the world to receive and reflect the beauty of Christ and his Kingdom. And we can do that in a sustained, emotionally healthy way because we hold both beauty and resistance in wonderful tension and equal importance.

I hope every reader sees themselves as a child of God and lives into that identity at every level—individual, intimate, interpersonal, institutional, and ideological.



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## Activist Shares Recipe for Rhythms of Rest and Resistance

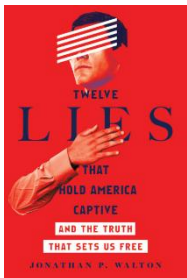
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Jonathan is also a senior resource specialist for InterVarsity Christian Fellowship. He focuses on political discipleship and civic engagement, developing resources around justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion and discipleship experiences to practice and pursue racial justice and ethnic reconciliation.

He is a leader in guiding others toward deeper, formational work around justice issues as well as preaching, teaching, cohort experiences, conferences, and workshop facilitation.

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### More From This Author:



**[Twelve Lies that Hold America Captive: And the Truth that Sets Us Free](#)**

\$20.99, 224 pages, paperback | 978-0-8308-4558-3

The president is not the Messiah, the Constitution is not the Bible, and the United States is not a city on a hill or the hope for the world. Jonathan Walton exposes the cultural myths and misconceptions about America's identity, showing how our notions of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are at odds with the call to take up our cross and follow Jesus. Discover how the kingdom of God offers true freedom and justice for all.



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