



FAIRHAVEN BOOK REVIEW

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" A WALK ACROSS AMERICA "

BY PETER JENKINS

INTRODUCTION

Normally a book review highlights a newer book that has been released. In this case, the book being reviewed was first printed nearly 40 years ago. The reason for the review is to remind folks of the book. I was sitting recently with a couple of pastors, and our conversation turned to books. **A Walk Across America** came up, and I had never heard of it before. I quickly grabbed the book for reading and discovered the pastor's recommendation was "dead-on." I could not put the book down. I believe I read the book in one week.

OVERVIEW

The book was published in 1979 by Peter Jenkins through the help of The National Geographic Society. The purpose was to share the experience of the author as he decides to walk across America. This is the first book. There is a follow up book which he wrote because this book only covered half of his trip. The book is a very interesting read because the author is very cynical of America at first and thus he decided to walk across America to see all of its the faults.

SUMMARY & ASSESSMENT

There are some great chapters throughout the book that grab your attention. The first that I will highlight is the chapter on Homer Davenport. This chapter highlights Peter's trek up the sides of the mountains of Virginia near Chattam Hill. He meets a full-blown mountain man that most of the folks down in town are scared to visit. This man Homer takes a liking to Peter, and they develop a friendship and stay together for a little while. The beauty of the mountainside is "seen" through the vivid descriptions of the area. The wonder of how this man lived is very interesting especially to Peter who grew up in city life.

The other section of the book that is very interesting is his stop in North Carolina where he ran out of money. He lived with a black family for almost 6 months and worked at a lumber mill. The tales of this stop are both hair-raising and enlightening. He made it through threats to his life, threats to his dog, and was even able to develop a second family. The story of Peter and his new family making it through a terrible tornado is amazing also. Peter's first family came to meet him and spent some days with him as he finished his stay in Smokey Hollow. His father made a statement that sums up the rest of the book. His father said, "Son, you be sure you treat everyone like you've been treated by these fine people, and you continue to find great Americans everywhere you and Cooper walk."

CONCLUSION

This book is not a spiritual book and was written in the late 1970s before the deluge of political correctness. For that reason, some of Peter Jenkin's spiritual "awakening" is probably not Biblically sound. There is some language used that is not spoken much today. Some of the lessons that Peter learned are not necessarily spiritual, but would be great for many in today's culture to take heed. It is not a hard read. The book has 288 pages, and they seem to fly by as you let your imagination flow with the stories.

Quote from Peter Jenkins: "I had started out with a sense of bitterness about what my country appeared to be. But with every step I had learned otherwise. I had been turned on by America and its people in a thousand fantastic ways."

RESOURCES

You can purchase the book at the following link for only \$8.50 including shipping:
<https://bookstore.fairhavenbaptist.org/product/a-walk-across-america/>