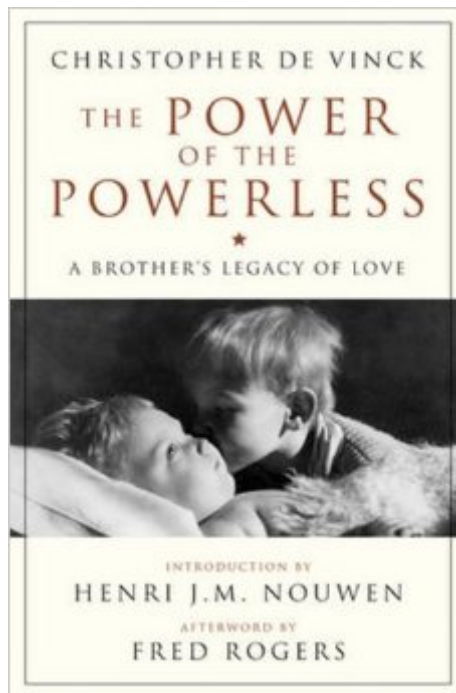


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The Power Of The Powerless: A Brother's Legacy Of Love (Crossroad Book)



Synopsis

Christopher De Vinck's moving account of his life with his brother made a deep impression on the hearts and minds of Americans. Due to a tragedy at birth, Oliver de Vinck was born severely handicapped—blind, mute, crippled, helpless. Despite the doctors' bleak prognosis, his loving parents took him home, where they and their children cared for him. He lived for thirty-three years.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (29 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

If you have ever wondered why God allows people to be born with handicaps of any type, read this book. Oliver was born blind, mute, physically and mentally handicapped, yet his life had a greater impact on more people than many of us who are "normal" can ever hope to have. This book reminds us of the value of life and is very inspiring. I found it most touching that Ronald Reagan wrote to Mr. DeVinck about the power of his powerless brother and now former President Reagan is also one of the powerless due to Alzheimer's. I would highly recommend that you read this book. I also recommend Harold Kushner's "When Bad Things Happen to Good People."

I want to let anyone know that is interested in this book to buy it. I first read this book about 8 years ago, and have made a point to read it at least once a year. It has a way of reminding me what is important in life, and what is real. Read this book and you will never be the same! I have given my copy to anyone that will read it, it is good for young teens and up!

Thank you, Chris de Vinck, for sharing your journey of love with Oliver. Your book has been an inspiration and guideline since 1984 in our choice to care for and nurture our own little Oliver, Gregory David. Although he died recently, it gave us courage and strength to know that someone else has been where we have. He gave us a vision of life that transcends the life we knew before his birth. It's all about love. It's ALL about love. You will always remain in our prayers for writing this little portrait of the gift of knowing someone who has nothing to give but love.

I was 6 months pregnant with my first child when I received a prenatal diagnosis of a potentially fatal and severe brain malformation for my unborn son. On the slim chance that he would be born alive, I was warned that he would have severe cognitive impairments, would never walk, and would never talk. Within a week following that diagnosis, I was given "The Power of the Powerless" by the father of a five year old child living with the same diagnosis as my unborn son. The story of Oliver and Christopher de Vinck helped me to find hope for my child and the deep impact that he would have on my life, and the lives of others. My son is now 3 years old, and all of those warnings from my doctor came true. My dear son cannot walk or talk, and he is severely impaired; however, just like Oliver, he is touching lives, stirring emotions, and bringing meaning to the lives of those who are willing to see the power of the powerless.

Honestly, this is the best book I have ever had the pleasure of reading. It sent me through a whirlwind of emotion, discovery, and affirmation. I cried through the whole book, sobbed even. The messages of human value, compassion, love, and hope are so inspiring and real. Each story is artfully tied into de Vinck's goal of writing about life and purpose. This is a book for everyone. I couldn't recommend a book more strongly than this one. It's astonishing really, pain is part of the process.

In the early 1990's, Christopher De Vinck--an unknown author--wrote a short tribute to his handicapped brother Oliver. A friend suggested he have it published, so De Vinck crossed his fingers and sent it to the Wall Street Journal. The Journal published it, and the story resonated across America. People showered De Vinck with letters. He decided to write a book featuring the original story intermingled with the letters he received. It is first a story of personalization: these typical American families were scarcely cognizant of the weak, handicapped, and needy in the world until they were unexpectedly thrust (through all variety of accidents and medical situations) into the thick of caring for them. Then it becomes a story of unlocking the love & compassion within all of us.

Of revealing who we are, and who we can become. As one contributor in the book put it, "I, like my Father, could have been a shallow, hard, demanding, domineering person. We could have been impervious to people's hurts and pains, but Paul brought a dimension into my father's life, into my life, which has given us an extraordinary balance." This is one of those books with lifechanging potential that will put everything back into perspective. Highly Recommended.

This book has tremendously affected the way I view severely handicapped persons. I am completing a master's degree in special education and a friend of mine sent me a copy so that we could discuss it later. I thoroughly enjoyed re-discovering why God allows us to get to know and love people who seem powerless without our help. It is truly we who are ministered to (helped). Thank you Lord for giving the DeVincks, Oliver, for a short time on this earth. I am looking forward to meeting him in the future.

This is one of those books that can cause a dramatic change in perspective for some people; you will never view a mentally and physically challenged person in the same way again. It confirms the wisdom that God has a purpose for us all, and is written with great tenderness and intelligence by Mr. DeVinck.

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