“Should I Be Concerned About Sarah Young’s ‘Jesus Calling’?”

What do you have to say about *Jesus Calling* author Sarah Young? I’m seeing and hearing about red flags from several other reputable Christian sources such Lighthouse Trails and Worldview Weekend.

One ought to be skeptical when someone is writing a book telling you they have heard from Jesus and this is what He said. The popularity of Sarah Young’s *Jesus Calling* also calls for scrutiny because millions are reading it and saying they have benefited from it. I have looked at the links you provided and here is what I think.

Their use of Galatians 1 to criticize the book is puzzling to me because Sarah Young does not offer another gospel. Paul was dealing with the Judaizers and those who were adding works to the salvation message. She makes quite clear that Jesus is her Savior and as a former missionary she also is clear that salvation is by grace alone. This also comes across in many of the daily entries.

Sarah Young also makes no pretension to be adding to Scripture. She makes it clear that the Bible is the only infallible word of God. In the foreword to a follow-up book, *Jesus Lives*, she says she has written what she “heard” (quotation marks are hers) and has tried to make sure it aligns with Scripture. So she is careful to indicate she is not hearing the infallible Word of God and she checks what she eventually writes with the Bible. Each entry is followed by several Scriptures, and when Scripture is quoted in what she has written it appears in italics.

One of the links referenced 1 John 4:1 which admonishes us to

test the spirits since not every spirit is from God. They did not mention the following two verses which tell us that we know a spirit is from God if “that spirit confesses Jesus as the Christ who has come in the flesh” (1 John 4:3). Sarah Young tests what she “hears” against the Word of God and she definitely believes Jesus is the Christ and came in the flesh. John also implies that we may sometimes hear from spirits that are from God! Why else would he admonish us to test them? If we never hear from God after the apostolic age, John should simply have said do not pay any attention to any spirit—it can’t be from God. Testing is a waste of time if the authors from Lighthouse and Worldview Weekend are to be followed.

The gospel of John closes by telling us that Jesus did many more things that have not been written (and presumably said other things that were not written). So Jesus said some things that are not in the Bible. Since Jesus did not sin and He tells us He spoke only what the Father told Him to say (John 17:7-8), then there are words of God that were not recorded in Scripture. They are not in the Bible presumably because they were not intended for all people at all times. Similarly, I’m sure kings and leaders in Israel consulted prophets of God at times for which we have no recording. It’s reasonable to assume that often the prophets did indeed hear from God but didn’t write it down. Again, there have been words God has spoken that we do not have in the Bible because they were not intended for all people at all times. But it was still communication from God. The links provided verses that clearly say we are not to add to the Scriptures. I agree. Sarah Young makes no claim to do so. Some will find what she has written useful and some will not. She may occasionally write something that is not clearly Biblical in character. Her admission that she tries to make sure what she writes is in accordance with the Bible indicates that she knows she is human, makes mistakes, and does not claim any sort of infallibility of her writings. Any Christian writer today should always recognize their own fallibility.

In John 15, Jesus calls His disciples “friends.” Since this is in the Bible it’s meant for all people at all times. Those of us who have fully accepted Jesus’ death on the cross as payment for our sin and believe God raised Him from the dead are friends of Jesus. With my earthly friends I don’t just know in my head they are my friends; I spend time with them, and yes, even converse with them. The canon of Scripture is definitely closed. Sarah Young does not pretend to be opening the canon back up again.

Jesus Calling is not for everybody. (The claims that the Jesus of *Jesus Calling* sounds feminine is more a problem of the writers than of Sarah Young.) The Triune God is the author of both masculinity and femininity. I would think He knows how to speak both languages (Isaiah 49:15).

Again, I was not impressed with the arguments put forth that what Sarah Young has written is somehow adding to Scripture, presents a false gospel, or that the only way God speaks to us today is from the Scriptures.

I have been using *Jesus Calling* and *Jesus Lives* as part of my daily devotional time for a year and a half. My discernment filter is operational all the time, and I have not come across anything that concerns me.

Respectfully,

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Posted June 22, 2013
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