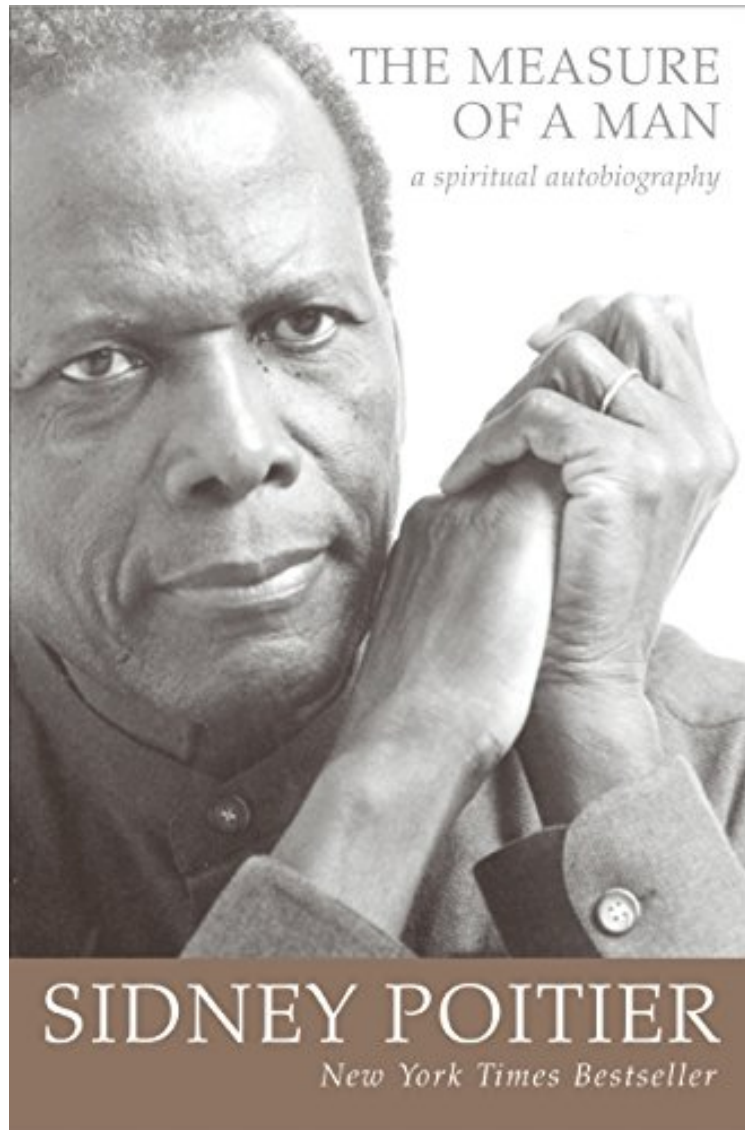


(Download pdf) The Measure of a Man: A Spiritual Autobiography (Oprah's Book Club)

## The Measure of a Man: A Spiritual Autobiography (Oprah's Book Club)

*Sidney Poitier*

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**Sidney Poitier : The Measure of a Man: A Spiritual Autobiography (Oprah's Book Club)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Measure of a Man: A Spiritual Autobiography (Oprah's Book Club):

16 of 16 people found the following review helpful. Great bookBy Sahra BadouI was captivated from the beginning of this book. Poitier starts the book by him flipping through the hundreds of TV channels he has at home. Having gone

through all the channels, and finding nothing interesting to watch, he goes through the channels once more, but again finding nothing interesting to watch. Then he asks himself the question, "What am I doing with my life?" I have asked myself that same question a thousand times while doing exactly the same thing: flipping through the myriad channels available to me. I therefore quickly connected with the author. Poitier then realizes that he need not be stuck in front of his TV set. He has many friends, he leads a very interesting life, and he is rich. He could do anything he wants, so why is he stuck in front of his TV set? The book promised to be very interesting from the onset, but I felt it did not really deliver the spiritual message I was hoping for. The book is really a biography of Poitier's life, especially his early years. He moves forward and back through his life, recounting stories from his adult as well as young years, and I found this shifting back and forth between his early and adult life a bit confusing. Had he recounted his life in a linear fashion I would have absorbed the book better (but this is just a personal preference). I really enjoyed reading about his early life, especially when his parents thought he would die when he was a baby, and his father brought a shoe box to bury him in it. The struggles he went through as a child, and his relationship with his mother, who used to beat him, were also very interesting. I did lose interest half way throughout the book, but I continued reading. I did regain interest three quarters of the way through, but still I did not understand the spiritual message he was trying to convey. He mentions a movie part he did not accept to play, at the surprise of all, but later explains that it was the measure of a man inside him that prevented him from taking the part. He just felt that the character he was supposed to play was too weak, and therefore did not represent the true measure of a man. Thus the title of the book. I recommend you listen to the audiobook read by Poitier. I found the audiobook more interesting than the book. There is a certain effect on the soul when listening to the voice of the author than reading his written words (I ended up finishing the book by listening to the audiobook while walking every morning). Imagine if you can actually hear the voice of Jesus instead of reading his words! There is a lot of acting in the author's voice in the audio version. The author does not simply read the words, but actually acts on the words. It is a different experience. I also liked the author's conversational style, as if he is talking directly to you. For example, he says things like, "You understand? You follow?..." I liked this book, and found Poitier's life very interesting. However, I was disappointed by his spiritual message. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Very good halfway through, then ??? By J. Palumbo I have to agree with some of the other reviewers. This biography starts off brilliantly and about half way through starts to get very boring. Poitier is an outstanding actor and humanitarian but it doesn't look like he had a very good editor. This "You know" business is annoying. I hate to hear it in conversation and it certainly doesn't belong in written word. His beginning years were touching and inspiring. Around the time he is starting to film "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner" he seemed to go off on a tangent and completely lost me. Too much philosophical blather and not enough story. I will continue to read the book but it doesn't look like it is going to be one of my favorites. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Exceptional Book By An Exceptional Man By Rick Spell I'm a little young for Poitier. Sure I saw some movies but was never a huge fan at the same time always being impressed by how he carries himself. This book fills in many holes. How can a man this elegant and poorly educated be so dignified? Read this interesting story of his beginning and the book is all worth it. But this isn't just autobiographical, this is a man looking back at his life with the wisdom of age and sharing this wisdom. I really enjoyed this book and the brief look at a great career and personal life being the first black movie star growing up in the era of civil rights. Poitier may project a "white Uncle Tom" image but that would be FAR from the truth of this intelligent man. I have since recorded to watch about 4 of his movies including the low budget academy award winner which I truly look forward to seeing.

"I have no wish to play the pontificating fool, pretending that I've suddenly come up with the answers to all life's questions. Quite that contrary, I began this book as an exploration, an exercise in self-questioning. In other words, I wanted to find out, as I looked back at a long and complicated life, with many twists and turns, how well I've done at measuring up to the values I myself have set." Sidney Poitier In this luminous memoir, a true American icon looks back on his celebrated life and career. His body of work is arguably the most morally significant in cinematic history, and the power and influence of that work are indicative of the character of the man behind the many storied roles. Sidney Poitier here explores these elements of character and personal values to take his own measure as a man, as a husband and a father, and as an actor. Poitier credits his parents and his childhood on tiny Cat Island in the Bahamas for equipping him with the unflinching sense of right and wrong and of self-worth that he has never surrendered and that have dramatically shaped his world. "In the kind of place where I grew up," recalls Poitier, "what's coming at you is the sound of the sea and the smell of the wind and momma's voice and the voice of your dad and the craziness of your brothers and sisters...and that's it." Without television, radio, and material distractions to obscure what matters most, he could enjoy the simple things, endure the long commitments, and find true meaning in his life. Poitier was uncompromising as he pursued a personal and public life that would honor his upbringing and the invaluable legacy of his parents. Just a few years after his introduction to indoor plumbing and the automobile, Poitier broke racial barrier after racial barrier to launch a pioneering acting career. Committed to the notion that what one does for a living articulates to who one is, Poitier played only forceful and affecting characters who said something positive, useful, and lasting about the human condition. Here is Poitier's own introspective look at what has informed his performances and

his life. Poitier explores the nature of sacrifice and commitment, pride and humility, rage and forgiveness, and paying the price for artistic integrity. What emerges is a picture of a man in the face of limits his own and the world's. A triumph of the spirit, *The Measure of a Man* captures the essential Poitier.

From Publishers Weekly Given the personal nature of this narrative, it's impossible to imagine hearing anyone other than Poitier, with his distinctive, resonant voice and perfect enunciation, tell the story. In his second memoir Poitier talks about his childhood in the Caribbean, where he was terribly poor by American standards, but quite happy, swimming and climbing all he could. One of eight kids, Poitier was sent to live with an older brother in Miami when he started to get into difficulties as a teen. But frustrated by his inability to earn a living and by the disparaging way whites treated him, Poitier left Miami for New York. There he worked as a dishwasher, started a drama class and launched a celebrated acting career that led to starring roles in such classics as *To Sir, with Love* and *Raisin in the Sun*. Poitier's rendition of these events is so moving that listeners will wish this audio adaptation were twice as long. Simultaneous release with the Harper San Francisco hardcover (Forecasts, May 1). Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Winner of this year's Grammy for Best Spoken Word Album, this production is a delight in every way, with the narration by Poitier appropriately dramatic and mellifluous. The story of his meteoric and fated rise to fame as a successful actor respected by his peers almost belies his hardscrabble beginnings on Cat Island off the coast of the Bahamas. And the "lucky star" Poitier falls under is actually the common denominator among all successful people: a willingness to work harder, and an innate resourcefulness, including the ability to listen to one's own instincts and to move when the time is right. If this sounds philosophical, it is; the book is much more than another celebrity memoir. It is not only Poitier's reflection on a long life in the world of arts and entertainment but also a statement of his personal views on what it means to be a good man, honed in discussions with friends and fellow travelers on life's journey who were themselves of a philosophical frame of mind. Highly recommended. Mark Pumphrey, Polk Cty. P.L., Columbus, NC Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc. With the unwavering sense of dignity and worth . . . this man's authenticity is earned by the life he describes. (Los Angeles Times) Reading *The Measure of a Man* is somewhat akin to having a worthwhile conversation with a revered older relative; he doesn't always tell you what you want to hear, but you appreciate it just the same. (Washington Post) An affecting new memoir. (Dallas Morning News) In this powerful book, [Poitier] shares his touchstones with us and makes us question what foundations guide our own lives. (Ebony) Revealing . . . Poitier invites us to re-examine his work and, through it, our history. (New York Times Magazine) Candid memoirs from the actor who has starred in more than forty movies, directed nine, and written four. (USA Today) Reflective, generous, humane . . . moving . . . [Poitier] writes with vivid emotion. (New York Times Book Review) Having already penned a book about his professional life, legendary actor Sidney Poitier tackles a greater subject--life itself--with this new spiritual autobiography. (American Way)