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## Mancuso's "New England ramblings: Seeking spiritual revival in a land of beauty" (book review)

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# Book Reviews

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Mancuso, J. J. (2020). *New England ramblings: Seeking spiritual revival in a land of beauty*. Rimrock, AZ: Warner House Press; Illustrated Edition. 46 pp. \$26.03. ISBN 9781951890049.

In *New England Ramblings*, J. James Mancuso whets one's appetite to visit the six states that make up New England with his thoughtfully chosen photos, Scriptures, and devotionals.

From the starkness and bleakness of winter through the newness and freshness of spring through the fullness of summer, James brings us on a genuine journey using his camera lens and offers a unique blend of familiar sights in different perspectives and situations. For example, sometimes we might think we can only get that "perfect shot" on a calm, peaceful day but we see the value of the lighthouse more on a stormy, foggy day. I love the way he uses nature to frame his shots and bring out a new perspective. Sometimes we are like his granddaughter making cookies, when told to look up and smile, we continue to do what we are doing and say "cheese". I love the way he ties this into revival. Saying a magic word will not make revival happen, we need to be looking to the Lord- studying His Word, nature, praying and leaving behind the former passions that can still ensnare us.

Another lesson from photography and life that comes out through the book is that things are not always as they appear or how you would like them to appear. This comes across in his devotional entitled "Right before my eyes" when he was trying to capture the majestic view of Vermont's Green Mountain in the brilliant setting sun. The view through his sunglasses was striking and free of glare. A quick snapshot made a good photo but he wanted to capture the view through His sunglasses and the phone just focused on the sunglasses rather than on the spectacular view through them. Sometimes we can be like the phone camera and be so focused on the immediate that we miss the broader perspective. The lesson that I learned here is to not to be so focused on earthly things that I miss seeing them in the light of glory.

The book is a collection of photos, poetry and devotional observations that bring together the physical journey through the seasons and the spiritual journey of living out our faith in Christ.

It is definitely a timely and encouraging read in these unprecedented times. It comes with a bonus that it can be purchased for 25% off through the publisher.

**Reviewer**

Deborah McConkey, Library Director, Epic Bible College & Graduate School, Sacramento, CA.