



Jesus for the Non-Religious

By John Shelby Spong

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The Pope Describes the Ancient Traditional Jesus; Bishop Spong Brings Us a Jesus Modern People Can Be Inspired By

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Jesus for the Non-Religious By John Shelby Spong Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #87336 in Books
- Published on: 2008-02-26
- Released on: 2008-02-26
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.00" h x .76" w x 5.31" l, .58 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 336 pages



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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Spong, the iconoclastic former Episcopal bishop of Newark, details in this impassioned work both his "deep commitment to Jesus of Nazareth" and his "deep alienation from the traditional symbols" that surround Jesus. For Spong, scholarship on the Bible and a modern scientific worldview demonstrate that traditional teachings like the Trinity and prayer for divine intervention must be debunked as the mythological trappings of a primitive worldview. These are so much "religion," which was devised by our evolutionary forebears to head off existential anxiety in the face of death. What's left? The power of the "Christ experience," in which Jesus transcends tribal notions of the deity and reaches out to all people. Spong says Jesus had such great "energy" and "integrity" about him that his followers inflated to the point of describing him as a deity masquerading in human form; however, we can still get at the historical origin of these myths by returning to Jesus' humanity, especially his Jewishness. Spong so often suggests the backwardness and insecurity of those who disagree with him that his rhetoric borders on the fundamentalist. His own historical and theological reconstructions would be more palatable if he seemed more aware that he too is engaged in mythmaking.

(Feb. 27)

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About the Author

John Shelby Spong, the Episcopal Bishop of Newark before his retirement in 2000, has been a visiting lecturer at Harvard and at more than 500 other universities all over the world. His books, which have sold well over a million copies, include *Biblical Literalism: A Gentile Heresy*; *The Fourth Gospel: Tales of a Jewish Mystic*; *Re-Claiming the Bible for a Non-Religious World*; *Eternal Life: A New Vision*; *Jesus for the Non-Religious*, *The Sins of Scripture*, *Resurrection: Myth or Reality?*; *Why Christianity Must Change or Die*; and his autobiography, *Here I Stand*. He writes a weekly column on the web that reaches thousands of people all over the world. To join his online audience, go to www.JohnShelbySpong.com. He lives with his wife, Christine, in New Jersey.

From AudioFile

The intense devotion of the former Episcopal bishop of Newark to his subject is apparent. In his prologue, the author's voice expresses the intimacy of his commitment to Jesus, as well as his struggle for a personal appreciation of Him amid the Christian church's institutional appropriation of Him. Alan Sklar takes over in Part 1 as narrator. He conveys the appropriate sense of drama and emphasis, as well as excellent Hebrew pronunciation, with a tempered edge the author seems to lack. The result is a more lucid, albeit equally passionate, presentation that both theologians and the lay listeners will find compelling. Music at the beginning and end of each CD enhances the text. L.V.B. 2008 Audies Finalist © AudioFile 2008, Portland, Maine-- *Copyright © AudioFile, Portland, Maine*

Users Review

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Chris Robertson:

Often the book Jesus for the Non-Religious will bring one to the new experience of reading the book. The author style to explain the idea is very unique. If you try to find new book to read, this book very suited to

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