

[PDF] Birth Of Christianity

John Dominic Crossan - pdf download free book

Books Details:

Title: Birth of Christianity

Author: John Dominic Crossan

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Description:

John Dominic Crossan is the leading contemporary scholar on the historical Jesus, which means that his vocation is to look behind, around, and through Christ's resurrection, toward the goal of establishing what can be known about the life of Jesus of Nazareth.

His search for the historical Jesus, however, takes place in the larger context of the life of the church. Among the goals of *The Birth of Christianity* is to teach readers how our habits of worship have created false gods. To that end, Crossan attempts to unearth the religion's earliest forms. What did Christianity look like, Crossan asks, between the crucifixion and the conversion of Paul? And what might Christianity look like today had Saul never set off toward Damascus?

Crossan's conclusions don't come from newly discovered documents; they come from freshly-minted academic methodologies. He uses anthropology, history, and archaeology to construct his arguments

about the essential nature of both Jesus' religion and Paul's. The 25-cent summary of his conclusion is that Jesus did not recognize the dualism between spirit and flesh that formed the basis of Paul's apocalyptic Christianity. In other words, Jesus was more Jewish than Paul.

The ramifications of this argument are huge. Crossan says much of Christian worship--and many of the world's injustices--are based on the dualistic Christ that Paul preached. Though Crossan doesn't bully readers into accepting his conclusions, he does press hard for them to situate their own beliefs in relation to his interpretations of Jesus and Paul. At every point in the evolution of his argument, he asks readers questions such as "How do you understand a human being?" and "What is the character of your God?" Then he proceeds to answer these questions himself. Finally, he tells readers what he thinks these answers mean.

It's an incredibly civilized style of argument--both spiritually and intellectually respectful and always rhetorically engaging. Though *The Birth of Christianity* weighs in at almost 600 pages of text, you'll probably want to read every word. And after that, you'll probably be hungry for more. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

From Library Journal In his latest book, Crossan (New Testament, DePaul Univ.) asks, "What in that original interaction [between Jesus and his first companions] made continuation from before to after [the Crucifixion] possible or even inevitable?" As with his massive *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Peasant* (LJ 2/1/92), Crossan incorporates crosscultural anthropology, literary analysis, and the history and archaeology of Roman Judea in the first century C.E. to answer his pivotal question. Reading early Christian texts against a background he rigorously establishes in the first half of the book, Crossan teases out a picture of infant Christianity. Though he may not convince all readers?his case rests heavily upon the priority and independence of questionable documents?Crossan's work cannot be rejected out of hand. Recommended for seminary and academic libraries.?Craig W. Beard, Univ. of Alabama at Birmingham Lib.
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