



The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions

Marcus J. Borg, N. T. Wright

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Jesus is reported to have asked his disciples, "Who do you say that I am?" The question of who Jesus really was has been reignited in our own time, as scholars, clergy, and laypeople debate the truth about Jesus. The answer determines what true Christian faith and authentic Christian living are today.

Now, two leading scholars, representing the primary alternative views, freshly capture the historical Jesus debate in one spirited volume. Marcus Borg, the most popular liberal voice on Jesus, a member of the Jesus Seminar, and author of the bestselling *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time*, and N. T. Wright, the most prominent standard-bearer for the traditional stance, outspoken critic of the Jesus Seminar, and author of *Jesus and the Victory of God*, collaborate for the first time in a civilized but forthright debate about all the essential issues.

In alternating chapters, Borg and Wright present their significantly different visions of who Jesus was, what he taught, and what he did. Although both authors share a conviction that Christian faith should be grounded in the best historical scholarship and they agree that Jesus is the Christian messiah and preached the Kingdom of God, they express sharp, well-argued disagreement over many crucial issues. Did Jesus know that he was the messiah? Did Jesus intentionally die to redeem humankind? Was Jesus bodily resurrected from the dead? Was Jesus God? Was Jesus born of a virgin?

The authors show how we can come to know Jesus historically and how our faith is vitally shaped by that understanding. Marcus Borg, a practicing Episcopalian, and N. T. Wright, a prominent Anglican clergyman—both of whom obtained their doctorates in New Testament at Oxford University, working with the same principal professor—express their views with remarkable clarity and personal conviction. And their lively, substantial, yet respectful dialogue provides a wonderful foundation and model for how the historical Jesus debate needs to be conducted.

Through their engaging exchange Borg and Wright begin to answer the essential question of "how different visions of Jesus relate to visions of the Christian life," and they spell out what it means to each of them to be a Christian at the end of the twentieth century.

The Historical Jesus Debate in one volume

For the first time, leading figures in the field collaborate to debate the essential issues in the historical Jesus controversy. *The Meaning of Jesus* offers the major alternate visions of Jesus and explores the differences the understanding of Jesus makes in shaping faith today. The authors show how what one thinks of Jesus determines what it means to be a Christian. They debate all the crucial issues, including:

The Second Coming

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