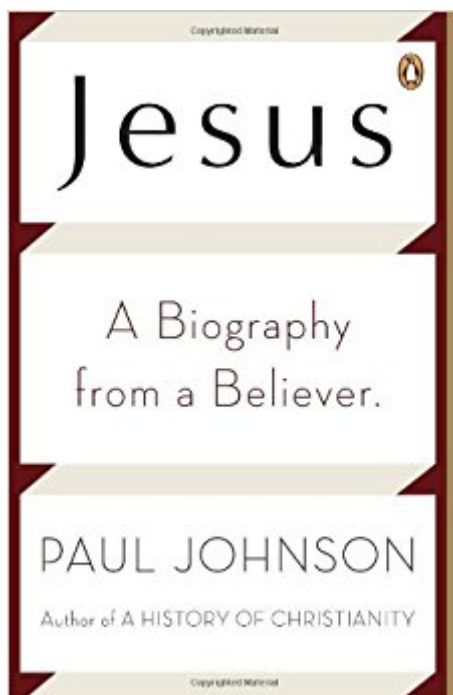


The book was found

Jesus: A Biography From A Believer.



Synopsis

The definitive life of Jesus from the bestselling author of *A History of Christianity*. Few figures have had such an influence on the world as Jesus of Nazareth. Paul Johnson's brilliant and powerful reading of Jesus' life at once captures his transfiguring message and his historical complexity. With a superb historian's command of his subject, a masterly writer's love of language, and a believer's passion, Johnson presents a lucid and deeply moving biography of a man whose life changed the course of history. Jesus offers readers a succinct yet lively account of the man who inspired one of the world's great religions and whose lessons still guide us today.

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Customer Reviews

Journalist-historian Johnson's deliberately noncontentious account of history's most famous man is unapologetically, uncarpingly based on the New Testament. Nearly no other sources are mentioned, and the short further reading list admits nothing by any Jesus Seminar scholar or other revisionist. Since the book is longer than all four Gospels put together, it is obviously more than a conflationary synopsis. Johnson weighs what little is said about Jesus' childhood and youth and why no more is said; discusses Jesus' personal affect; notes the qualities of his teaching, especially in the parables; emphasizes his reservations about the miracles he performs; and analyzes how he differentially addressed men, women, children, and the aged. Johnson outlines the "new ten commandments" that Jesus introduced in deed as well as word and with which he intended to prepare his followers not to change the world but to enter the kingdom of God. Lastly,

Johnson inspects the Passion, the Resurrection, and their aftermath to Pentecost with intelligent faith. An all-but-unalloyed (the Catholic Johnson favors women in priesthood) gift to all believing Christians. --Ray Olson --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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Kudos to Paul Johnson! Johnson is one of this reviewer's favorite historians. This is true whether one is perusing one of his huge tomes such as "Modern Times"; "A History of the American People"; "A History of Christianity"; or "A History of Judaism or one of his succinct biographies such as "Napoleon"; "Churchill" or Socrates. Jesus is a biographical journey of the Christ from his birth in Bethlehem to His crucifixion on Golgatha and His resurrection in the garden. Johnson tells the familiar story by following the outline of the synoptic gospels and the maverick gospel John. The book is filled with biblical quotations and sparkling insights. Among the quotes by Johnson I noted the following with my trusty Lamy pen: "The world into which Jesus was born was harsh, cruel, violent and unstable. It was also materialistic and increasingly wealthy."-p. 11 "...the massacre of the innocents...reminds us of the darker side of life in an obscure province of the Roman Empire in the first century AD."-p. 23 "It is a somber and unwelcome fact that for more than half of Jesus' life we know absolutely nothing about what he did or where he went or how he lived."-p. 27 "He was man, and needed to be man, for four reasons" First, to put people to the test of faith. Second, to communicate as a human being. Third, to suffer. And fourth, to serve as a model for all time, which he could do only as man-the way of Jesus. "And being a man, he needed helpers, disciples, apostles."-p. 47 "He was a reluctant miracle worker."-p. 59 "The truth is, Jesus was not so much a rhetorician, or a preacher, as a poet."-p. 99 "The essence of a Jesus parable is to stimulate thought..."-p. 106 "His speech was silver, but we weigh his silences in gold."-p. 122 "...those who have followed him over two thousand years have made the world a better place, and they have enabled many of those who dwell in it to lead more fulfilled and happier lives."-p. 161 "The Christianity he bequeathed has not been tried and failed. As G.K. Chesterton once wrote, it has been found difficult and left untried. But it remains at our disposal. Its message, at its simplest is; do as Jesus did."-p. 226 As a Presbyterian pastor I would recommend this little gem of a book as a gift to new church members; participants in a confirmation class or as a personal devotional or text in a church school class. It's a fine book of Christian belief!

As one who is further developing a true personal relationship with God and truly accepting Jesus as

my Savior, I completely appreciated this book as it follows the life of Jesus. Reading very much like a biography, it examines the relationships with His Evangelists, His Disciples, His miracles, and His actions while giving different perspectives of each from the ideas of John, Mark, Matthew and Luke. Although I have read the Bible, this book is ideal for those wanting to learn more about Jesus Christ as it's center subject without a religious tilting towards a certain Christian viewpoint. Highly recommended for those beginning their journey with Christ to those who are fortunate to have had Him as a leader, above all others, in their life for years. Also, a good book for children ages 12+ to learn more about Jesus, as a man, while on this earth and the happenings and His beliefs which guided Him to be our Savior.

Johnson is a prolific history writer, with significant titles to his name. This short biography of Christ is a great read. It is well-written and fresh for the believer and approachable for the non-believer alike. It is not jammed full of Scripture references, like apologetics books or Bible study materials. It is not intended to be either of those things. As a believer, I had to adjust my perspective while reading the first three chapters, mainly because I am accustomed to more analytical text with footnotes and cross-references when reading about Jesus or God's Word. The subtitle is true to the text - this is a biography, and it paints a visual image of its subject. Johnson summarizes the era of Jesus' birth and life on earth with fresh insights on cultural practices and gives you a sense for the man behind the red letter verses in the Bible. Johnson's economy of language hits the nail on the head. No fluff. No sense that the author has to jam one more thing in to prove his point. It reads like eloquent campfire storytelling, relating the author's recollections of his old friend, Jesus. "You should have seen the way Jesus addressed the leaders of his day...like nothing you can imagine. Calm, poised, one step ahead of the game. He was forever a paradox, loving the unlovable and turning conventional wisdom and rule-following on its ear." (my own paraphrase, not a direct quote from the text). This may be the most winsome, read-it-in-a-day portrait of Jesus you will find, and may be the book about Jesus that intrigues the skeptic to want to learn more.

This is a masterfully written synthesis of the events cataloged in the gospels. However, it is crucial to note that this book is not just a re-hashing of the texts penned by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; as an account of the life and teachings of Jesus, it of course draws heavily from the gospels, but it is also buttressed by Paul Johnson's knowledge of history and his piercing insight (the chapter entitled "Jesus's New Ten Commandments" is itself worth the price of the book). Additionally, this is a remarkably well-written biography. Johnson has produced a highly enjoyable read while adhering to

brevity and forwarding helpful observations. As a Christian, this book furthered my understanding and appreciation for the life, teachings, and uniqueness of Christ. I personally derive the most enjoyment and utility from "Jesus" when I read it subsequent to reading the gospels.

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