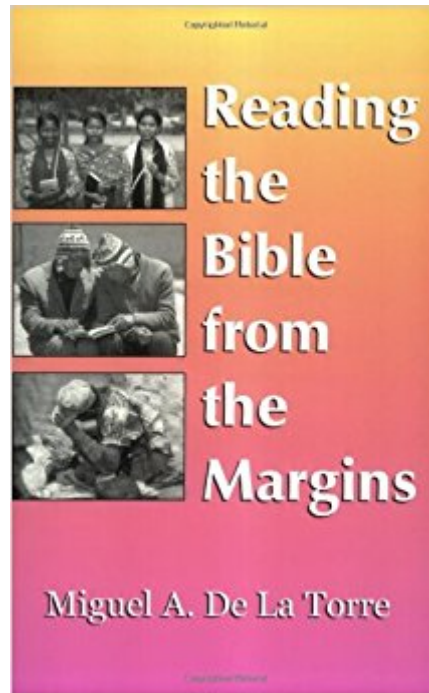




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Reading The Bible From The Margins



Synopsis

This introduction focuses on how issues involving race, class, and gender influence our understanding of the Bible. Describing how "standard" readings of the Bible are not always acceptable to people or groups on the "margins," this book offers valuable new insights into biblical texts today.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Miguel De La Torre is associate professor of social ethics at Iliff School of Theology, a director to the Society of Christian Ethics, and the co-chair of the Ethics Section at the American Academy of Religion. De La Torre is a newspaper and Internet columnist and a respected expert on liberation theologies.

This is an excellent book on "Liberation Theology" written in plain, easy-to-understand English. Don't worry, it's not a dumbed-down version of this topic, it is just written in an enjoyable manner that explains how to read the Bible from the perspective of the poor, the oppressed, and victims of discrimination over the ages and still to this day (specifically hispanics, amerindians, asians, blacks, females and gays). Chapters look at the importance of language, reading the Bible from the Center (i.e. from the viewpoint of the privileged), unmasking the Biblical justification of Racism and Classism and Sexism, amongst other topics. The author peppers the book with examples from his own life within hispanic culture. I highly recommend it!

Useful and accessible book to help "traditional" Christians understand reasoning for liberation theology. Used this book in seminary but can be read at the beach too. Challenging to ones' complacency.

De La Torre must have learned a lot about how to explain difficult concepts about biblical interpretation by teaching undergraduates right out of their church youth groups at an evangelical college. He has used his classroom experience to write a crystal-clear, focused and even entertaining book explaining that our interpretations of the Bible are culturally influenced in such a way as to reinforce ideas and practices that baptize our own privileges and justify the oppression of others. The first several chapters of the book are as clear an explanation of how biblical interpretations can be culturally flavored in such a way as to under gird the reader's self-interest as I have read anywhere. However, De La Torre never depreciates Scripture or undermines its value and authority. He is unabashedly Christian. He affirms his commitment to his faith and the book which is its foundation. At the same time, he is clear that Scripture has commonly been read and interpreted by the advantaged and learned in such a way as to justify racist, misogynist and homophobic biases. He uses illustrations from his own experience as a Hispanic man to help his readers begin to understand that what often seems straightforward and obvious in Scripture isn't necessarily so. He has also carefully listened to African-American, Asian-American, feminist and gay thinkers; he includes in his book their thoughts about how their ethnic and class perspectives open to them new insights into the meaning of Scripture that the dominant church culture usually misses. Later chapters in the book, in which De La Torre makes a case for cultural interpretations of Christ are a tad more forced and less satisfying. (Surely we don't need to make Christ Hispanic in order for the cross and resurrection to be relevant for the experience of Hispanic people. The oppressed can experience God identifying with their oppression through Christ without having to change Jesus' genes. He is still a marginalized Jew, and this is why he speaks today to marginalized people of whatever race or culture.) Yet, this is quibbling. This is a fine book that should make all Christians rethink the way we read the Bible and help the church become more like Christ. I am using it to teach a class for my congregation and encouraging my members to read it. The material in this book, thanks to De La Torre's patient and clear writing, is accessible to almost anybody sitting in our pews. Some may be convinced; everyone will be pushed to rethink easy assumptions about Scripture.

Reading the Bible from the Margins is a vital resource for the post-modern world. Although Miguel A. de La Torre did not posit an entirely new thesis, this book is articulate, well researched and easy to read. For those seeking an understanding of Liberation Theology, this book is the place to begin. Most impressive is the author's credentials -- not his academic background (which is considerable), but the fact that he is speaking from the margins because he is of the margins. If a person wants to learn a way to improve the world -- all of the world, Reading the Bible from the Margins is an excellent, thought-provoking beginning.

In this book the author explains the purpose of interacting with the Bible from the perspective of those on the margins. The book offers a good overview of discussions that have emerged in response to traditional "white" theology in a way that it is an ideal primer for seminary students, ministry professionals and laymen alike. There are several scriptural insights that will absolutely blow your mind! I will never read the bible the same thanks to the exceptional scholarship and relevance of this book.

A departure from the typical white, American perspective. Both refreshing and thought provoking!

indispensable as part of our education on reading our sacred text through different eyes.

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