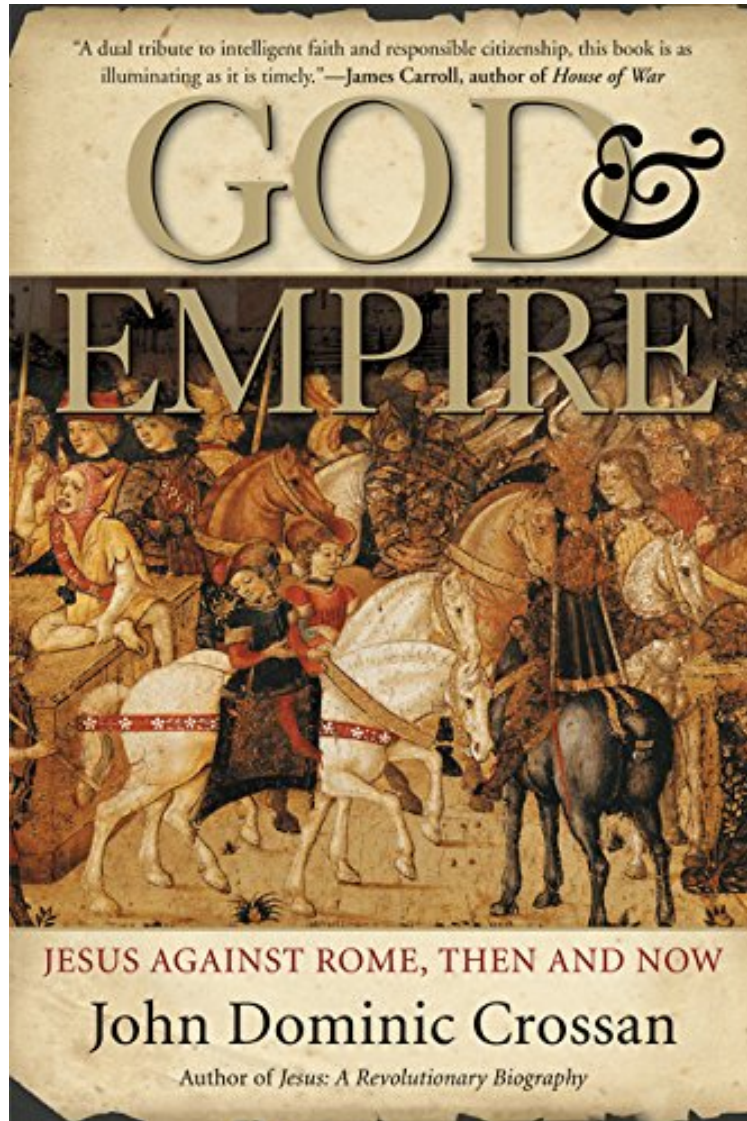


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God and Empire: Jesus Against Rome, Then and Now

John Dominic Crossan

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John Dominic Crossan : God and Empire: Jesus Against Rome, Then and Now before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised God and Empire: Jesus Against Rome, Then and Now:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Understanding the Context of NT listeners By melvern glenn roseberry I have enjoyed this book and found many "gems" in it historically. I am espctially thankful for the scholarship that went into the study of the parrallels of NT titles and text that were reflective of tittles and secular references of the Romans. That was the real impetus of my buying this book as I strive to grasp the NT era culture and

mind as it would have been affected by the specific wording and terminology of the NT. I ask, what did the contemporary reader or listener think of this in real history. God and Empire helps answer that. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This has much to do with His death and the ...By Genesis A. Slaughter This has much to do with His death and the fact that those who followed Him then didn't really know, they got what they wanted in many cases and then deserted Him at the end. Rome believed the lies of the Pharisees to stay in power over them. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Dangerous idea: the powerful lose. By Allison Milligan I find Crossan's scholarship and tone and vision a ray of hope in many ways. His vision of the power of Christ, a powerless nobody in the values of the Roman Empire is a paradigm that continues to subvert the power of the powerful. About 300 years after the crucifixion, Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire. That irony has had various consequences. I love exploring this. I love the way Crossan lays it out, piece by piece. That said of course 25 years from now there will arise a challenging other theology. Theology is, after all, a long conversation going back to Peter and Paul. Fun to observe and sometimes take part. God knows.

At the heart of the Bible is a moral and ethical call to fight unjust superpowers, whether they are Babylon, Rome, or even America. From the divine punishment and promise found in Genesis through the revolutionary messages of Jesus and Paul, John Dominic Crossan reveals what the Bible has to say about land and economy, violence and retribution, justice and peace, and, ultimately, redemption. In contrast to the oppressive Roman military occupation of the first century, he examines the meaning of the non-violent Kingdom of God prophesized by Jesus and the equality advocated by Paul to the early Christian churches. Crossan contrasts these messages of peace with the misinterpreted apocalyptic vision from the Book of Revelation, which has been misrepresented by modern right-wing theologians and televangelists to justify U.S. military actions in the Middle East. In *God and Empire* Crossan surveys the Bible from Genesis to Apocalypse, or the Book of Revelation, and discovers a hopeful message that cannot be ignored in these turbulent times. The first-century Pax Romana, Crossan points out, was in fact a "peace" won through violent military action. Jesus preached a different kind of peace—a peace that surpasses all understanding and a kingdom not of Caesar but of God. The Romans executed Jesus because he preached this Kingdom of God, a kingdom based on peace and justice, over the empire of Rome, which ruled by violence and force. For Jesus and Paul, Crossan explains, peace cannot be won the Roman way, through military victory, but only through justice and fair and equal treatment of all people.

From Publishers Weekly In this fine study of civilization, culture and transformation, Father Crossan asks important questions: have those who resort to violence as a means of change succeeded in their quest for empire? Or has nonviolence been more effective in bringing about lasting change? Crossan, professor emeritus at De Paul University and author of several well-received works including *The Historical Jesus*, believes that the solution is not in violent intervention but in the coming of the Kingdom of God on earth. But how, and when, will this Kingdom come? In comparing the missions of Jesus and John the Baptist, Crossan states his idea clearly: "Jesus differed precisely from John in emphasizing not the future-presence but the already-presence of God's Kingdom as the Great Divine Cleanup of the world." In other words, Christ saw the Kingdom as a present and active reality. Crossan uses the teachings of Jesus to promote his thesis, and then turns to an unlikely ally—the Apostle Paul—by suggesting that Paul's emphasis on equality and freedom helped carry forward Jesus' program of nonviolent change. Crossan's latest work presents a complex subject in a clear and powerful way, and it merits a wide readership. (Mar.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist *Starred* By Crossan's lights, Jesus proposed the nonviolent kingdom of God to supplant Rome. And not just Rome but civilization per se may be the object of Jesus' revolution, for civilization building was Rome's pretext for imperial aggression and economic as well as physical violence against common people. Fighting Rome was folly, so the kingdom of God movement aimed to liberate ordinary people nonviolently. It threatened Rome because Jesus' proclamation of God defied the Roman emperor's institutional divinity, and because Jesus proposed peace through justice against Rome's conceit that it achieved peace through the violence of conquest. Paul sharpened the concept of equality in the kingdom of God by advocating for slaves and cooperating on equal terms with women; here Crossan goes Garry Wills' *What Paul Meant* (2006) one better by carefully explaining that pro-slavery and anti-women Pauline remarks come from epistles spuriously attributed to him. Later, the Revelation of John promulgated a "pornography of violence" and has malevolently affected Christianity ever since, most recently in rapture theology, whose influence on U.S. neoconservatives' bush-league Rome is the immediate provocation for this book. The opposition of God and empire, of justice and violence, persists. Despite a few rant-lines from the progressives' book of cant, this book makes the best reading for the most readers of any that Crossan has written. Ray Olson Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved. A dual tribute to intelligent faith and responsible citizenship, this book is as illuminating as it is timely. (James Carroll, author of *House of War: The Pentagon and the Disastrous Rise of American Power*) This fine study of civilization, culture and transformation presents a complex subject in a clear and powerful way. (Publishers Weekly) This book makes the best reading for the most readers of any that Crossan has written. (Booklist (starred

review))A wonderfully written and organized treatise... Thoroughly enjoyable and incredibly informative. (Library Journal)