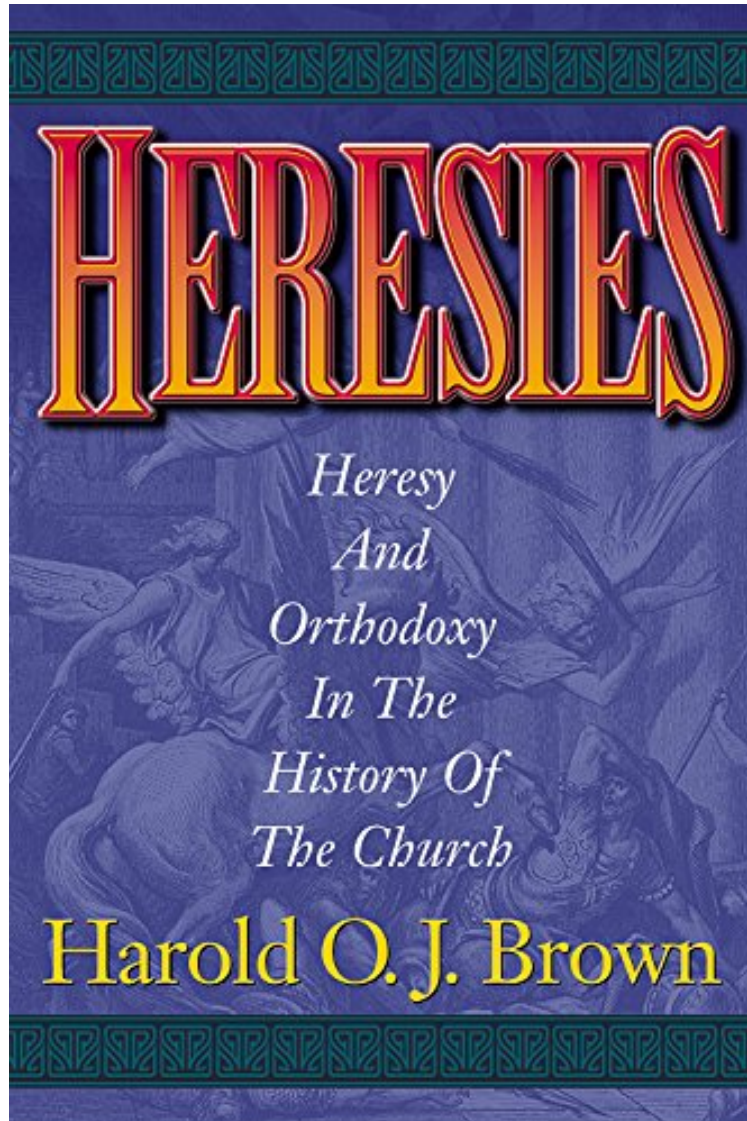


## Heresies

*Harold O. J. Brown*

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**Harold O. J. Brown : Heresies** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Heresies:

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. IndispensableBy michael johnsonThree books should be in the library of every serious Christian: The King James Bible with Scofield notes, Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, and Heresies and Orthodoxy in the History of the Church by Harold O.J. Brown (A good Bible dictionary would qualify as a fourth). More than any other book on the subject, it is eminently understandable to the average person, comprehensive in coverage of the 1st Century A.D. through the 20th Century and to say it is interesting is an

understatement. I read it cover-to-cover about 15 years ago and because it was borrowed and no longer in print, I had it photocopied page-by-page costing over \$50 but considered that a bargain. This book will be a constant reference throughout the Christian's earthly pilgrimage and along with the Holy Spirit, sharpening Christian discernment of the innumerable spirits and erroneous, unscriptural beliefs. This book will help the hesitant and perhaps timid to "Contend for the Faith once delivered to the saints." However, conspicuous by its absence is a treatment of Roman Catholicism. The last sentence of the penultimate chapter states: "It may soon be necessary to say of mainstream Roman Catholic theology that it, like most Protestantism, is neither orthodox(Christian) nor heretical(Christian) but another religion." In other words, despite and aside from Orthodox Christology, it is not the Christian Faith but a syncretistic religion. It's periodic addition of overtly anti-Biblical and anti-Christian dogma beginning in the Fifth Century and continuing to the present renders the Roman Catholic religion wholly hostile to the New Testament Christian Gospel. It is another religion entirely. For example, Ephesians 2:8-9 states: "For by grace are you saved through faith; and not of yourselves: it is a gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast." But the Roman Church, in the Council of Trent, anathematizes, curses and damns to Hell any one who believes the Biblical doctrine that a person is saved by Grace through Faith without works. The Roman Catholic Church officially repudiates and curses the Gospel of Grace, the very heart and soul of the Christian Faith. It follows, then, the Roman Catholic Church is antithetical to the Christian Faith regardless of protestations and its gospel of faith plus works is a counterfeit gospel condemned by all thirteen epistles of St. Paul in the New Testament, from Romans through Philemon. An excellent book on the subject of Rome's actual religion is Petrus Romanus and in particular section three: Doctrines, Dogmas, Supernaturalism and The End Times and Chapter Thirteen: Priestcraft, Sacraments, and Sorcery and Chapter Fourteen: The Occult Queen of Heaven. 17 of 18 people found the following review helpful. Informative and Engrossing By Jedidiah Carosaari I felt like I walked through the valley of Christian history, and on every side of me lay dragons and lions of dissent, seeking to devour Truth and replace it with the viscera and bones of deception. Brown presents Christian history as the dialectic of orthodoxy, heresy, and the response to heresy. Without heresy, the Church would not be what we know today. For we defined ourselves by what became heretical. There would be no need to state the precise nature of the Trinity (or as precise as is possible) if there had not been those who denied its existence. There would be no need to say that Jesus is one person, in two natures, one divine and one human, if some had not claimed that Jesus was only divine, or two persons. There would be no need to dwell on the grace of Christ's soteriology, if some had not believed that we were essentially good, and just needed to be reminded of the truth through Christ's example. For those who would claim, as some do these days, that heresy was orthodoxy, and orthodoxy only the most powerful of the parties who wrote the histories, Brown convincingly shows how what we understand orthodoxy to be today is what has always been believed, from the earliest times, and the earliest sources. It is not however simple to uncover this truth, or simply that what we believe now must be what was first believed- this Brown also makes clear. Perhaps one of his most interesting insights is how the Roman Church left the path it was on, in reformatting its doctrine of transubstantiation, making it more exact than it needed to be. In so doing, they removed the personal efficaciousness of soteriology. And though the Eastern Church also believed in a literal transformation, with their less legalistic focus on mystery, they were still able to unite the average believer with her Lord. Unfortunately, this legalistic soteriology dependent on literal transformation of elements, which only priests could perform and thus be fully involved with, created a gap between God and man. This gap needed to be resolved, and led directly to the Protestant Reformation, in Brown's opinion, as one possible solution. If only the Roman Church had been content to not innovate in doctrine, but allow for differences in understanding on the elements, the Church today might still be more united. Brown does better on early heresies than later ones. Once he gets to the last few centuries, what he calls the End of the Age of Heresy, his writing style declines, and the story becomes much drier. Without heresy, a book on heresies is simply less interesting. And so it took me a good deal of time to wend through the end, though the first 4/5ths of the book took only a few days. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Very good book on History of the Church By David Very good book on History of the Church, a difficult read for me as his vocabulary was above mine, but it well worth the effort.

"The history of Christian theology is in large part a history of heresies, because Jesus and the claims he made . . . seemed incredible," writes the author. Heresies presents "the story of how succeeding generations of Christians through almost twenty centuries have tried to understand, trust, and obey Jesus Christ." Particularly concerned with christology and trinitarianism, the author calls on the four major creeds of the church: Apostles', Nicene, Athanasian, and Chalcedonian to separate orthodoxy from heresy. He acknowledges that heresy has done much more than confuse and divide the church. It has also helped the church to classify orthodoxy. Just as heresy served this purpose historically, so it serves this purpose pedagogically in Heresies. This volume presents a clarion call to evangelicals to preserve tenaciously "the faith once delivered to the saints." Frank E. James III wrote in the Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society: "Brown deserves to be commended not only for his insightful scholarship and his readable style but also and more importantly for providing a sorely-needed jab to the soft underbelly of modern evangelicalism."

About the Author Harold O.J. Brown, Ph.D. Harvard University, is professor of biblical and systematic theology at Trinity Evangelical International University and author of several books.