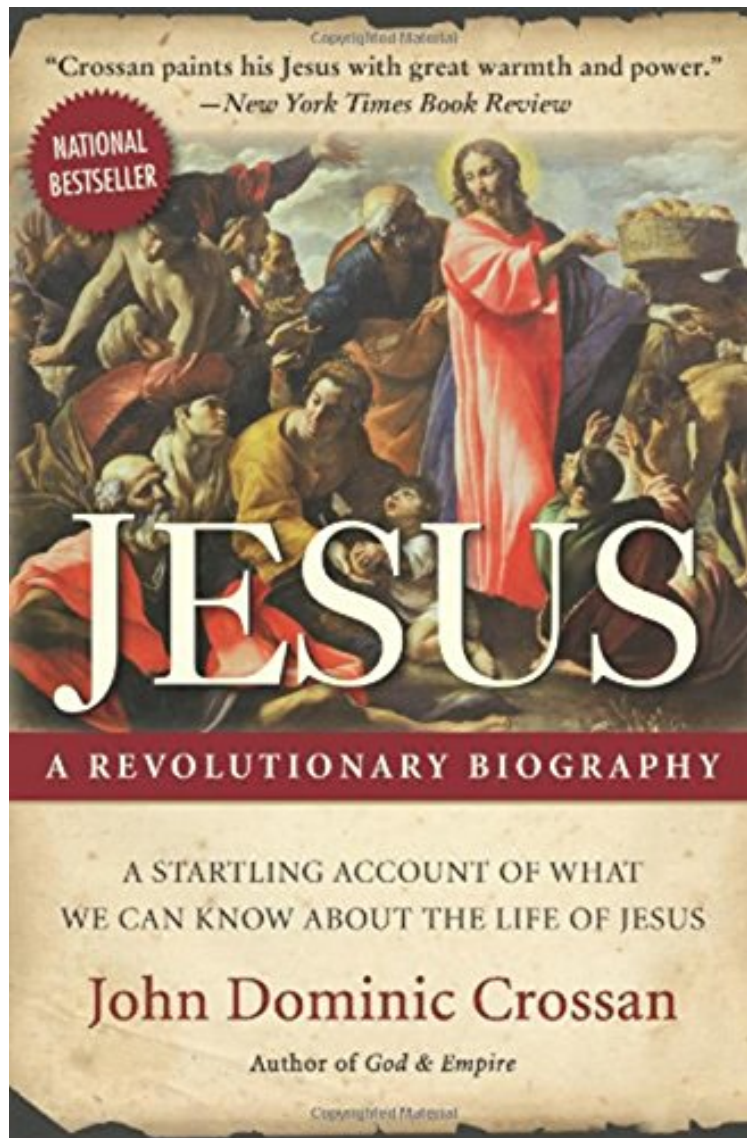


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## Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography

*John Dominic Crossan*

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#46515 in Books John Dominic Crossan 2009-10-13 2009-10-13Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.00 x .58 x 5.311, .43 #File Name: 006180035X256 pagesJesus A Revolutionary Biography | File size: 24.Mb

**John Dominic Crossan : Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Controversial AccountBy Edward J. BartonWritten by one of the most prolific authors on the subject of the "Historical Jesus", this book represents a shorter synthesis of Crossan's magnum opus, "The Historical Jesus". Using three scholarly elements: cross-cultural anthropology, Roman/Jewish history and textual criticism as the legs of his stool for development of a theory on the historical Jesus, Crossan

develops a picture of Jesus as a Jewish Cynic peasant, who was executed by the Romans in a relatively obscure and unremarkable way in the early first century of the Common Era. The controversies that Crossan raises and attempts to support head-on are the role of the Romans in the execution of Jesus, the primacy of Peter, the physical resurrection and ascension, the virgin birth and the nature of the healing miracles. In each case, Crossan takes a very secular or allegorical approach, and supports his position using the three elements mentioned above. The book covers a lot of ground quickly and somewhat superficially. This account is probably best seen as a primer to Crossan's theory, which can be explored in more depth in some of his other works. It is, however, an interesting and approachable read into a controversial topic.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Good insight into the life of Jesus

By jurgfella This is essentially an abbreviated version of Crossan's *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant*, and it contains a lot of very good insight from one of the World's leading historical theologians and scholars. Because of his academic background and origin in the larger work, I didn't find this book quite as accessible as Reza Aslan's more recent *Zealot: The Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth*, but the two books together, if you are sufficiently interested in the historical Jesus, make a very nice compliment to each other. In any case, Crossan is clearly deeply knowledgeable and often very insightful, and this book is well worth the time it took to read.

10 of 11 people found the following review helpful. A life of Jesus that everyone can believe

By G. Polley Well-researched and controversial, this vision of Jesus' life shows him as the person he was: a Jewish peasant with a deep, prophetic commitment to the downtrodden and oppressed people of Israel, a man with a deeply experiential understanding of God and of God's commitment to human freedom from oppression and injustice, who was executed for threatening the religious and political powers of the day. In Crossan's view, which he shares with scholars like Marcus Borg, Jesus was not THE Son of God, born of a Virgin, died to atone for humanity's sins, and was raised from the dead on the third day. Jesus was an illiterate peasant who was executed, as so many people were, for questioning the authority and power of religious and political leaders. In my view, this makes Jesus and what he taught accessible to everyone, as Buddha is, without needing to affiliate with Christianity. And this makes him a teacher of universal appeal and application.

The controversial, bestselling account of what we can know about the life of Jesus.

From *Library Journal* Based on Crossan's acclaimed and controversial *The Historical Jesus* (LJ 2/1/92), this elegant new reconstruction popularizes and occasionally elaborates on that earlier work. Gone is the massive documentation. What remains is an engrossing, often startling exploration of key themes, in which Crossan weighs scriptural texts against anthropological, historical, and literary standards, sifting through accrued layers for evidence of earlier (if noncanonical) sources. He acknowledges his naturalistic assumptions ("I presume that Jesus... could not cure... disease"), which, together with his critical method, cause him to dismiss the virgin birth, say, or the passion/resurrection narratives, as historically invalid. Yet he also offers nuanced, powerful readings of Jesus' teachings. Bound to disturb some people and stimulate others, this is recommended for all libraries where lay readers are likely to be interested in the issues raised.

- Elise Chase, *Forbes Lib.*, Northampton, Mass. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From *Booklist* Based on Crossan's more scholarly text, *The Historical Jesus* (1992), this biographical study makes the author's view of Jesus as a social revolutionary available to a wider audience. Crossan clearly defines the problem of trying to locate the historical Jesus in the midst of myth, and he tells readers how he intends to find that Jesus: through cross-cultural anthropology, Greco-Roman and Jewish history, and literary and textual evidence. Compared to A. N. Wilson's *Jesus: A Life* (1992), which brought a real man to life, this account gives little sense of a flesh-and-blood Jesus, though Crossan offers some thought-provoking theories about the man and his mission. What is most interesting about the book, though, is Crossan's portrayal of the times and the milieu that gave birth to a new religion. While, at the end of the book, readers may still not be sure if Jesus was a savior or a sorcerer, they will certainly understand the cultural and historical dynamics that allowed him to step forward in that particular time and that particular place.

Ilene Cooper From *Kirkus* sRevisionist "biography" of Jesus, by New Testament scholar Crossan (*Biblical Studies/DePaul University; Raid on the Articulate*, 1976). Crossan's study--a popularization and extension of his *The Historical Jesus* (1992--not reviewed)--proves again the oft-made observation that biographies of Jesus reveal more about their authors than about the subject. Here, we get a politically correct Christ stripped of all mythology, a revolutionary social leader who taught "radical egalitarianism" but performed no miracles, except that of awakening social consciousness (Crossan reads Jesus' casting out of demons as a blow against colonialism). This is, then, the Jesus of liberation theology, not of the Christian scholarly mainstream (up to now, Crossan has been best known for another unconventional and little-accepted theory, positing the existence of a "cross gospel" that predates the passion narratives of the canonical texts). As usual, Crossan's scholarship is good, with a command of cultural anthropology, Greco-Roman history, and textual analysis. Eyebrows will rise often, though, as he goes beyond facts into conjecture: Jesus "did not and could not cure...disease" despite his laying-on-of-hands; Jesus never met Pilate or Caiaphas; the Barabbas tale is fiction (a dismissal based largely on Crossan's subjective reading of Pilate's personality), as are the Last Supper, the Raising of Lazarus, the Virgin Birth, etc. Moreover, at his most

extreme, Crossan suggests that Jesus' body, far from being resurrected, was probably buried in a shallow grave and eaten by dogs. Disappointing. The most reliable--read: cautious--guide to the historical Jesus remains John P. Meier's massive, on-going project, *A Marginal Jew* (1991- ). -- Copyright 1993, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.