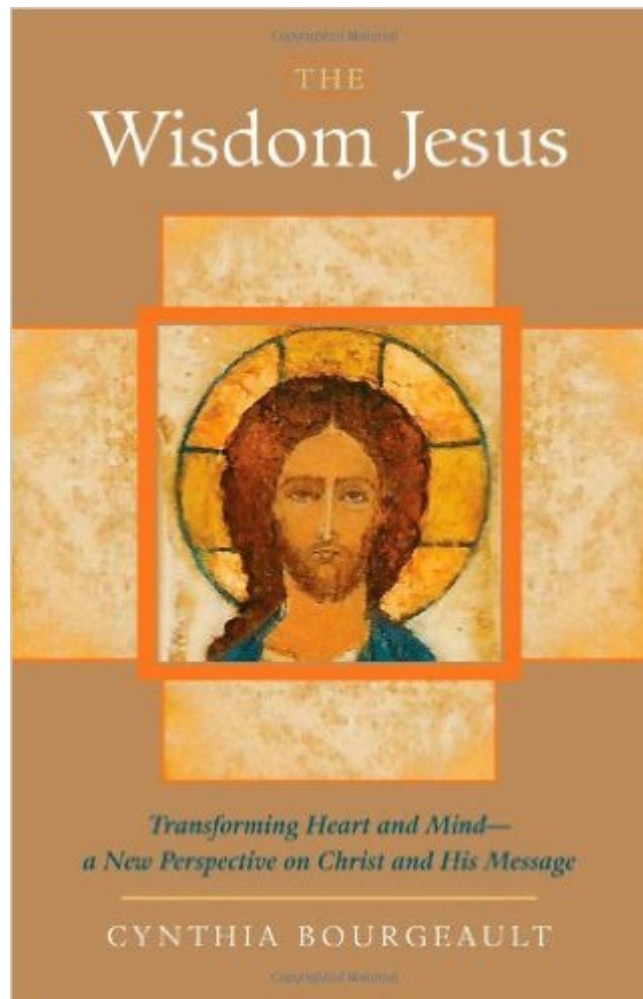


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The Wisdom Jesus: Transforming Heart And Mind--A New Perspective On Christ And His Message



Synopsis

If you put aside what you think you know about Jesus and approach the Gospels as though for the first time, something remarkable happens: Jesus emerges as a teacher of the transformation of consciousness. Cynthia Bourgeault is a masterful guide to Jesus's vision and to the traditional contemplative practices you can use to experience the heart of his teachings for yourself.

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Customer Reviews

While I wasn't overly impressed by Bourgeault's "Mystical Hope", her true potential as Episcopalian minister/guru emerges in "The Wisdom Jesus" which to my mind is the single best work on the practice of lectio divina and contemplative prayer since Thomas Keating (that "great patriarch", as she calls him) first introduced it to the majority of Catholics in the United States. The majority of the book is spent on Bourgeault's the very vital theme--for people of any denomination or faith--of "kenosis", an ancient Greek word meaning "self-emptying" but commonly used in Christian theology as the definition of what Christ did when he was on earth. By virtue of his love for others he emptied himself more and more, became increasingly more humble until he was at the bottom of the social, economic and cultural level--and then rose up as infinity of this emptiness. In Philippians 2:7 it is written that: "Jesus made himself as nothing." Bourgeault stresses that even simple and very necessary virtues like humility, love for neighbor, etc will not place us in this state unless we prayerfully ask for it to happen. She is always aware that this will be an uncommon desire for anyone, particularly the comfortable people of faith who are content with what she calls "dogma, a

fabricated religious identity, or sectarian complacency."The last chapters of the book are devoted to furthering the practice of Sacred Scripture reading in our daily lives and the tradition of centering prayer which she demystifies in a fashion I have not yet seen matched. The complications of daily meditation in our busy lives and the simple lack of motivation that even the most outwardly devout Christian has to the practice are given gentle but serious treatment. Recommend for all people of faith!

Cynthia Bourgeault is a hidden treasure. When I first read her, I encountered, for the first time, the Jesus and the Christianity I had always looked for and longed for. This was confirmed to me yet again with the publishing of the her new book, "The Wisdom Jesus."With the publication of this book, I was moved to do something I never do: give a religious book to a Catholic priest. And the results have been stunning. The priest was blown away by Bourgeault's synthesis of Jesus and his time on earth. He found new angles on both the Eucharist and the Beatitudes. He can't stop thinking about the book and was moved to give it to another priest. This priest read it and said, "Who is this woman, and why have we never heard of her?" He, too, felt changed by the beauty of Bourgeault's work and promptly bought all her books. He passed it on to another priest, and the story continues.Cynthia Bourgeault needs to be read by everyone trying to make sense of a Christianity that has been tainted over the centuries. She returns us home. Her wisdom gives me great hope for my faith and my world.

"If you are searching, you must not stop until you find. When you find, however, you will become troubled. Your confusion will give way to wonder. In wonder you will reign over all things. Your sovereignty will be your rest." With this quote from the Gospel of Thomas, Cynthia Bourgeault begins the Wisdom Jesus and then provides a path for those who seek knowledge of The Way beyond what the western church has promoted. You may find that what seems "new" is an affirmation of what you already knew in your heart, as holes within the traditional picture are filled in through interpretation and explanation that allow for a deeper, richer understanding of who Jesus is and what his call is for each of us.Bourgeault's words are an artform, and a delight to read; what could be dense and unfamiliar terminology and theology is translated into a language all can understand. For those with "eyes to see and ears to hear", this book is much more... truly it is manna from heaven! Taste, eat and be filled...

If your heart leaped for joy when you read Marcus Borg's Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time,

you will love The Wisdom Jesus. Building on her earlier explorations of centering prayer and the Wisdom Way of Knowing, Bourgeault comes fully into her own with this highly readable and transformational introduction to a Jesus who is fully present to each of us; who serves as a guide to the unitive and compassionate center of being that he calls the Kingdom of Heaven. Beginning with an enlightened look at the teachings of Jesus (with special attention to some of his sayings in the Gospel of Thomas), Bourgeault then looks at the key events of Jesus' life from this new perspective, and concludes with practical guidelines for those who wish to more fully know the wisdom Jesus, with specific instructions concerning centering prayer meditation, Lectio Divina, Chanting and Psalms, the Welcoming Practice (which will particularly resonate with fans of Pema Chodron) and, last but far from least, an in-depth look at the practice of communion from her unique perspective as a Christian contemplative and an Episcopal Priest. If you used to go to church and got tired of all the hype and hypocrisy yet still long for that deep heart of faith, the Wisdom Jesus is a Jesus you can believe in again, and this is the book for you.

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