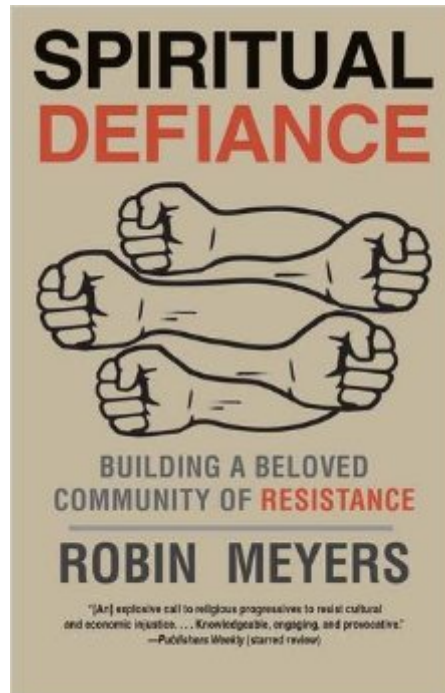


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Spiritual Defiance: Building A Beloved Community Of Resistance



Synopsis

A leading voice of progressive Christianity makes a powerful case for faith as a radical way of being in the world. During his thirty-year career as a parish minister and professor, Robin Meyers has focused on renewing the church as an instrument of social change and personal transformation. In this provocative and passionate book, he explores the decline of the church as a community of believers and calls readers back to the church's roots as a community of resistance. Shifting the conversation about church renewal away from theological purity and marketing strategies that embrace cultural norms, and toward embodied noncompliance with the dominant culture, Meyers urges a return to the revolutionary spirit that marked Jesus's ministry. Framing his discussion around three poems by twentieth-century Polish poet Anna Kamienka, Meyers casts the nature of faith as a force that stands against anything and everything that engenders death and indignity. He calls for active—sometimes even subversive—defiance of the ego's temptations, of what he terms the heresy of orthodoxy itself, and of an uncritical acceptance of militarism and capitalism. Each chapter is a poignant and urgent invitation to recover the Jesus Movement as a Beloved Community of Resistance.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Rarely have I read a book that started out so promisingly and ended up delivering so little. I agree with Meyer's basic premise that the Christian faith must provide resistance to the ego, to orthodoxy, and to empire. His section dealing with the ego had some worthwhile insights and the third section

was likewise o.k. although it was mainly a rehash of what Crossan wrote seven years earlier in "God and Empire - Jesus Against Rome, Then and Now." Where the author crashed and burned was in the chapter on orthodoxy. My first problem was that Meyer falls into the untenable position of favoring the Jesus of History over the Christ of Easter. He totally ignores the credible scholarship of the Jesus Quest (authors like Sanders, Meier, Allison, Crossan, Borg, Wright) who all show conclusively that everything set down in the Gospels about Jesus pre-Resurrection and post-Resurrection was written by post-Resurrection authors who believed that Jesus was Lord! My second problem was that Meyer seemed to confuse "belief" or faith on a personal level and "belief" as a system that any religion sets up to delineate who is on the team and who is not. I agree with Meyer that dogma based beliefs are not sufficient by themselves to guide a believer's life and that they have to be accompanied by a moral belief system and a liturgical/worship belief system, but that does not mean dogmatic beliefs are somehow of lesser importance. The most egregious example of Meyer's going over the deep end to illustrate his point occurs on p.75 where he writes: Jesus Christ is Lord. This was not a "belief" about Jesus, per se, so much as it was a confession of allegiance and obedience." Excuse me, Mr.

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