



It's Not What You Think: Why Christianity is About So Much More Than Going to Heaven When You Die

Jefferson Bethke

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E-Book includes a special behind-the-scenes interview with Jefferson Bethke as he shares personal experiences and insights that inspired the writing of *It's Not What You Think*.

***New York Times* best-selling author of *Jesus > Religion* challenges the accepted thinking of contemporary Christianity with the world-changing message Jesus actually brought.**

Jesus was most upset at people for seeing but not seeing. For missing it. For succumbing to the danger and idolatry of forcing God into preconceived ideals. What if there were a better way? What if Jesus came not to help people escape the world but rather to restore it? Best-selling author and spoken word artist Jefferson Bethke says that Christians have the greatest story ever told but we aren't telling it. So in this new book, Bethke tells that story anew, presenting God's truths from the Old and the New Testaments as the challenging and compelling story that it is a grand narrative with God at the center. And in doing so, Bethke reminds readers of the life-changing message of Jesus that turned the world upside-down, a world that God is putting back together.

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Author : Jefferson Bethke

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Kris says

There's some good analogies in here, but once again I'm left wanting more from Bethke's writing. He needed to flesh things out.

For instance, he does not do a good job of explaining the difference between the Jewish sabbath on Saturday, and the Christian Sabbath on Sunday. He doesn't show how Sabbath was an inherent part of ancient Judaism and how Jesus fulfills that, and functions as our prophet, priest, and king.

In other places Bethke tries to be humorous. But the jokes are just bad and distracting. Three stars because there is some worthy material in here. But Bethke's writing is seriously lacking in richness and nuance.

Rachel Williams says

This one was better than the last book (and I recommend that one too). I love how he explains the overall narrative of the bible and the thematic elements that ought to change the way I personally approach my faith. For me, the biggest game changer was thinking about communion differently. I loved that it was originally intended as a part of a large meal surrounded by my community. I love that idea that coming together and sharing a meal is a restorative process and something Jesus did with great intentionality. This is a quick read and a good one for another with a few questions about the way we do church and faith today.

Carmen says

I loved this book. I knew I would like it since I liked his first one but I didn't imagine I would like it even more. Jeff always finds a way to speak the truth straight to you. Also, his Back to the Future references don't hurt.

Laurie says

Here is an excerpt from my review: "Once again, here is a book that all Christians should read but that those Christians who really need to read it probably won't. Maybe if enough buzz surrounds this book and its message, it will open the ears and, ultimately, the minds of Western Christianity."

You can read my full review here: <http://cookscrapcraft.blogspot.com/20...>

Joel Pinckney says

Though I appreciate the truth of much of what Bethke has to say, I have a few frustrations with this book and others like it. Extended review to come.

Wesley Roth says

"Life isn't about going to heaven when you die, it's about making heaven true on earth in every facet and level of our relationship with God, others, and self. The Christian life is asking, how can I make what's true of Jesus and his gospel true in whatever aspect of my life?" That is the key part of Jefferson Bethke's newest book, "It's Not What You Think". This was a good book, a commentary about an overview of the Bible, with his life experiences weaved in and his call for Christians to make heaven true on Earth in our lives. He reminds the reader that "Jesus is the only one who lays his life down for you first, before he asks for yours. He pursues, he dies, he gives up everything and then calls us to himself. There's no force, only wooing. His love is so great that it COMPELS us to lay down our lives in return. That's the only appropriate response when we understand just how great his sacrifice was for us."

A good book to read in your faith walk or for someone who doesn't have a relationship with Christ.

I won this book in a Lifeways blog giveaway, but in no way was influenced in my review.

Keli says

I've been a fan of Bethke since coming across his viral YouTube videos a few years ago. I thoroughly enjoyed his first book and like most of his fans eagerly awaited the second book.

Once the book finally arrived I was instantly convinced this would be a quick day read. But after only a few pages the truth nuggets were hard for me to swallow. I didn't want to hear his words because to be honest I NEEDED to hear them.

As some of the other reviewers noted it took me much longer to get through this book than I anticipated. But man was it worth it! I've only just finished and I know it's a book I'll come back to over and over again as I grow in my own faith.

Zann says

Fantastic! This author is so real. He tells it like it is, doesn't pull any punches, yet uses humor to keep you smiling while being informed. Loved this book. Will read it again and have already thought of someone to recommend it to! A mind opening book.

Samantha says

I read Jefferson's first book last year and was able to finish it in one sitting, conveniently while my husband and father-in-law were watching a Packers game. I thought it was inspiring and really thought-provoking, though I did believe the book was a little scattered. Since I got word of a new book, I've been waiting patiently. When I finally got my hands on an advanced reader copy, I thought I would be able to finish it in one sitting - just like the previous book.

Boy was I wrong. It didn't take me a long time to read the book but it was very intellectually and scripturally dense - at least compared to his first book. The book was very concise and well-written. In Jefferson's previous book, I don't remember scripture taken up a lot of pages. In this book, I can't say the same thing. You can really compare the books to see how much he has grown in his faith and knowledge of God's word.

The best part is that it wasn't a boring read. I find that Christian books usually fall into two categories...exciting, passionate, and barely mentions scripture...or boring, long, and has tons of scripture. I'm not trying to say that having a lot of scripture in a book is bad but Jefferson was able to work with the Word in a way that opened your eyes and made your mouth drop - instead of making your eyes close and your mouth yawn.

My favorite part of the book was the entire chapter 7 - The Kingdom's Not What You Think. I believe I saw on his social media that chapter 7 was a mutual favorite of many...and I can see why. It's the build up of the entire book. It's why we picked up the book in the first place, right?

I would try to share a quote of my favorite part, but it's a little too long. It starts on page 149 when Jefferson is explaining how crazy Jesus sounded to the people listening to him while he was preaching on the mount...when He talks about loving your enemies. Jefferson makes a great analogy using 9/11, the white house, and america being taken over by the middle east - and how hearing a leader tell us to love them and to serve them joyously would make us upset...because we want revenge and we want to use violence to take back our home. It was the same thing that Israel was going through when Jesus was preaching that sermon. They thought he was insane but his words were so powerful.

I'm totally butchering my favorite part, so you guys should read it yourselves. And maybe read the first book as well.

David Eiffert says

I'm not a perfect man, but dang it, I try to always shoot straight when it comes to books.

And I was expecting to not like this one. It was a gift and all I knew about Jefferson was that he's that one guy who made that annoying YouTube video.

WELL HOLD THE GOSH DARN PHONE!!

I actually really really liked this book. Granted, a lot of these ideas are not exactly original. But to Jefferson's credit, he gives credit where credit is due, mostly. Lots of credit in that sentence.

Way to go Jefferson!

Lena Morrison says

I do my reviews in the form of a letter, which is why they are written like this.

Dear Jefferson Bethke,

I loved this book. I really liked the first one you wrote, but this one is even better. I liked the fact that this one was written in a more professional way.

I can honestly say that you changed and challenged the way I viewed many things. I absolutely loved how you used Jewish history and taught us how to interpret a lot of what the Bible teaches.

You wrote passionately and accurately about the Bible, and I could tell that you really care about people. Our culture has sucked a lot out of Christianity, and few authors actually take a stand and state it.

Anyways, thank you for writing such a fantastic book.

Sincerely,

Lena Morrison

B.J. Richardson says

I have to admit that I went into this book not thinking I would like it all that much. I had heard some good reviews, but I absolutely cannot stand the youtube video that made this guy famous.

Stepping into the first chapter or two, my expectations only dropped. Once again, in his intro, he goes on this tirade against religion and the church. I almost dnf'd the book right then and there. He misquotes one of my favorite authors (the quote is accurate, but he used it to come to almost the opposite conclusion), there are multiple typos and grammatical errors, and there is a horrifically cringe-worthy moment in chapter eight where I cried out loud, "Where is your editor?!?"

When you put all that aside, this book is probably an excellent one for its target audience. If you are a fringe Christian in the West, someone who is familiar with the faith, but not prone to dive deep, then this book would be right up your alley. It will motivate and encourage you to dig deeper and go further with your walk with God. If you are more serious about your faith, there probably won't be much new or revolutionary material here. If you are from an unchurched background, you will probably not understand a lot of the Christianese you see here. And if you are not from America or possibly Western Europe, a lot of the analogies and metaphors will mean nothing to you.

In all, Bethke's heart is in the right place and his theology is solid, but this is a cookies on the bottom shelf type of book. At least, it is for me.

Jonathan says

Wow what a great read! Let me elaborate. This book is deep. I would describe it as a view of the Bible so far

zoomed out that it gives you new perspective to common stories, messages, and themes. Sometimes we may have too close of a view of Scripture, but Jefferson shows some of the actual intents behind what God is saying. Honestly, it took me awhile to wrap my head around some of what was being said because I generally have a very analytical mindset, but once I grasped the overview and yet the depth of what he was saying, I was honestly blown away. I would highly recommend this book to anyone wanting to go deeper in their faith and learn more about how much God loves them and desires them.

Heather says

Bethke doesn't claim to have all the answers, nor does he claim his thoughts are the right ones, but he is honest and seemingly genuine. Like many blogger authors, the book is written in that style, so sure, the thoughts are going to jump around a bit-feeling more like a conversation, than a text. Overall he brings up some really great points, organizes around some unique themes, and his passion and love for Jesus are a great inspiration and motivation for 2016.

Laura says

This was a great book. I give it 4.5 stars! I love the research into Jewish history!! Learned so much from that! The cultural context truly affects what we take from Jesus' message. This book was challenging without being over my head, which I appreciate. Favorite chapter was Sabbath. Highly recommend!
