

[PDF] The Brother Of Jesus And The Lost Teachings Of Christianity

Jeffrey J. B - pdf download free book

Books Details:

Title: The Brother of Jesus and the
Author: Jeffrey J. B
Released: 2005-01-25
Language:
Pages: 240
ISBN: 1594770433
ISBN13: 978-1594770432
ASIN: 1594770433



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Description:

From Publishers Weekly Bütz, adjunct professor of world religions at Penn State University and an ordained Lutheran minister, explores the place of James, the brother of Jesus, in the tradition and teaching of the church. He suggests that ecclesiastical authorities have deliberately suppressed the role of James in order to minimize the Jewishness of Christianity while emphasizing the theology of Paul. Bütz sees the theologies of James and Paul as contradictory in many points, with Paul distancing himself from his Jewish roots and thus creating a religion that Bütz contends was not envisioned by Jesus. Paul, Bütz asserts, relegated good works to a secondary position, contrary to the teachings of Jesus. In calling attention to this dichotomy, Bütz raises a major question: "In other words, if the first followers of Jesus—including the apostles and Jesus' own family—were thoroughly Jewish in their belief and practice and opposed to Paul's interpretation of the gospel, then just what

is 'orthodoxy' and what is 'heresy'?" This volume is eminently readable and accessible to nonscholars while being thorough in its research. It raises the specter of a revised Christianity and challenges readers to rethink the nature of both orthodoxy and heresy. (*Mar.*)

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From James, the brother of Jesus and head of the church in Jerusalem, gained prominence several years ago when an ossuary was found ostensibly carved with his name. Now the authenticity of that artifact has been questioned, just as the role of James in the founding of the church has always been controversial. Butz does an excellent job of synthesizing all the information about James and presenting it in an informative, highly readable manner (something that eluded scholar Robert Eisenman in his 1997 book *James, the Brother of Jesus*). Using both canonical and Gnostic gospels as well as the writings of historians and church fathers, Butz sheds light on the religious issues that divided James and Paul (with Peter often in the middle), and in a step-by-step approach, he clarifies what Christian writings said about the concerns that roiled the nascent church. Readers on both sides of topics such as whether Jesus repudiated Judaism will find things with which to disagree, but it is the exhilaration of the debate that makes the book such a worthy acquisition. *Ilene Cooper*
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