



## Getting Right with God

**Joseph C. Way**

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*Salvation comes through teachings about loving God and one's neighbor, according to Getting Right with God, an engaging religious book with a humanized concept of Jesus.*

Joseph C. Way's religious book *Getting Right with God* lets Jesus set the terms for what matters in life and faith.

Each person, the book suggests, builds their lives on a "box" that's filled with assumptions and presuppositions. It says that these boxes become problematic, though, when the topics are God and faith. Its hope-filled message is that it is possible to reconfigure people's boxes to allow for new ideas and understandings about the truth behind the Bible and the Christian message. To help, the book explores foundational ideas about God to locate a very human Jesus and a church that desperately needs to change in response to the modern world.

The book makes the intriguing claim today's Christians have inherited beliefs about God and Jesus that need to be reexamined—they may not be as Christian as is often assumed. These inherited beliefs include traditional ideas such as that God is a god of creation; that God is love; that God is omnipotent and omniscient; and that the Bible is inerrant. The book progresses from considerations of the human need for God toward questions about what God looks like. First, it suggests its own alternative, "proper" view of God; then, it deconstructs each named, problematic approach to God. In addressing the thorny conflict of God being all-knowing against the fall of humanity, for example, the book notes that the combination suggests that God needs protection from humanity, making God less than a god.

Humor lightens the book's tone, including an anecdote about a Mississippi pastor who got complaints about preaching outside of the King James translation of the Bible, and who so decided to give his next sermon from the original text—in Greek—to reveal that people's assertions about preferencing the "original text" are often folly. Also provocative is a note that Hebrew Bible presuppositions were handled with "experience, revelation, reason, and faith"—a nod to the Wesleyan Quadrilateral.

This systematic, theological look at Christianity is most powerful in its first two sections, though, which leverage insights from the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament alongside Way's personal experiences, including as part of the military, to construct a compelling image of God and Jesus that's unencumbered by tradition. Its final section is without the same rhetorical punch, resting in descriptions of what following Jesus has tended to mean, rather than focusing on prescribing, clearly, what it should mean now. More exciting are its explorations of so-called problematic beliefs, wherein it addresses complex theological problems with logic and insights.

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