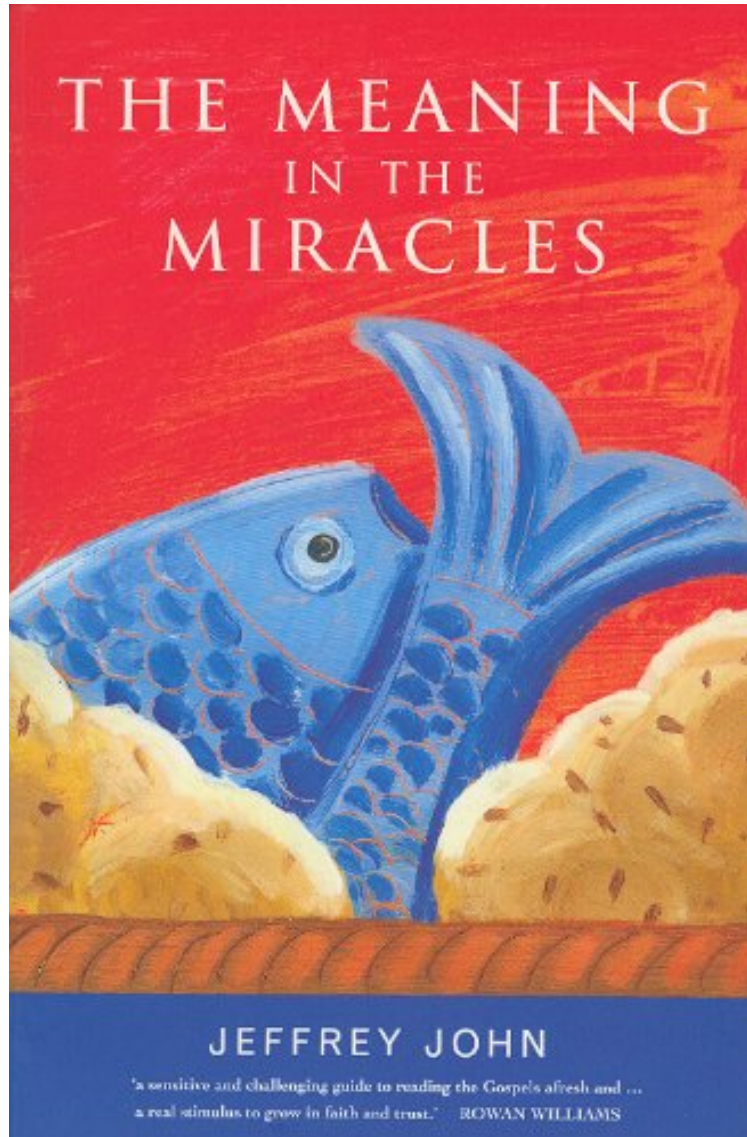


(Free and download) The Meaning in the Miracles: The Archbishop of Wales' Lent Book

The Meaning in the Miracles: The Archbishop of Wales' Lent Book

Von Jeffrey John

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Von Jeffrey John : The Meaning in the Miracles: The Archbishop of Wales' Lent Book before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Meaning in the Miracles: The Archbishop of Wales' Lent Book:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A kernel of truthVon FrKurt MessickThis book by Jeffrey John, Dean of St. Alban's Cathedral and one-time candidate for the bishopric in England, is a fairly popular book in Britain - I am surprised it is not better known in the United States.

John, experienced as a scholar and a pastor, has the intention of connecting church experience, learning and scholarship to local pastoral situations, and this book serves that purpose well. His introductory chapter highlights 'a tale of two cities' of a sort - the tale of two Religious Education teachers. Mr Davies was a strong, fundamental, literalist reader of the bible: 'had they only appeared in its pages, he would have believed in leprechauns, King Arthur and Father Christmas too.' On the other side was Miss Tomkins, who embraced modern scholarship in its skeptical sense - she tended to see miracles as convergences of natural phenomena, and healing as being done for those largely with psychosomatic illnesses: 'Miss Tomkins loved the word "psychosomatic",' John writes. These are two approaches that may seem diametrically opposed, but John sets forth a case whereby neither of the two really get to the heart of the matter. Beyond the debate of 'how' a miracle occurred, the deeper theological meaning comes from 'why' a miracle occurred, and what meaning is intended to be given to those of us who read the story of the miracle. John cites Augustine as having concern that 'hearers of the Gospel miracles habitually got stuck on the "wonder" element and on speculating whether such a thing could possibly have occurred.' John takes up several elements for discovering the meaning in the miracles - context (particularly that which comes from the Hebrew scriptures), the idea of inclusion of the excluded (a recurring theme in the New Testament message), a challenge for principalities and powers, and the issue of faith. John's book concentrates on gospel miracles - there are many more miracles beyond those which occur in the gospels, both in the Hebrew scriptures and in the New Testament writings outside the gospels. However, it is in the gospel that the most direct connection for Christians takes place. 'All the miracle stories contain profound teaching which is of indispensable relevance to Christians and the Church today, teaching that all too often gets passed over because we do not get past the "miraculous" packaging and the endless issue of "did it happen?"' John collects many of the miracles - the healing of the leper, the wedding at Cana, the feeding of the thousands, the various blindness and deafness healings, the withered fig tree, and even the resurrections (not Jesus own, but of others). These miracles are presented in chapters which explore context, text variations in the gospels to a small degree, commentaries from others, possible meanings for today's reader, and elements for prayer and meditation that relate to the story. There are eighteen short chapters, each devoted to a single miraculous incident or miraculous type. John, being a good Anglican, straddles the middle way between opposite approaches in many cases; he doesn't dismiss the literalist or the reductionist ways of reading miracles, but looks for deeper theological and pastoral meaning that goes beyond these opposites. John confesses that the combination of the Mr Davies and the Miss Tomkins types turned him off to church, religion and the Bible for a long time, as they were often mistaking the shell for the kernel of the truth. This makes a good book for private study, for group study, and for sermon preparation assistance.

Kurzbeschreibung Many explanations of the miracles recorded in the Gospels fall into one of two questionable categories: unthinking acceptance or debunking, which leaves only some vague moral lessons to be learned. In this text, Jeffery John sets the miracles of Jesus in a wider biblical context and shows them to be loaded with theological and prophetic relevance. This broad perspective, which brings together theological enquiry and the needs of personal faith, should come as a revelation to many Christians searching for a proper understanding of Jesus' miracles.

Pressestimmen 'a sensitive and challenging guide to reading the Gospels afresh ... a real stimulus to grow in faith and trust' ROWAN WILLIAMS

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