



Jesus-Shock

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"Jesus Shock is the second in a series of short works on seminal concerns of the impact that Jesus Christ made in the world. The first work, *The Philosophy of Jesus*, explored philosophy in light of Jesus, rather than the other way around. The present work investigates the reception Jesus received both in His lifetime and continuously to the present time, not only from His enemies, but from His friends, a reception of shock, astonishment, even disgust." *Jesus-Shock* shows the reasons why to this day the name of "Jesus" stirs up controversy, even revulsion, in polite society. In the true spirit of ecumenism, it also points the way toward a true rapprochement among His modern-day disciples.

Jesus-Shock Details

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Yvonne says

I have never looked at "beauty" the same way whether it be outside in the woods or looking at a great masterpiece after reading this book. Peter Kreeft always has me on my knees with his descriptions, insights and explanations into understandings of our Lord that I never thought about. He never ceases to amaze me.

Monica Aho says

This was a fabulous book, and one that I highly recommend. The only reason I didn't give it five full stars is that I felt like it borrowed too much from C.S. Lewis, who was obviously a huge influence on this author. Regardless - Kreeft is powerful. The image that stays the most with me is that of a Socrates hypothetically going to modern day Harvard and wondering where all the Christians are. "You've been struck by lightning... where are the burn marks?" Why are we still "normal" if we're claiming to be Christian??? I remember those moments in my own life when God became much more than a theoretical image in my head, became REAL, CONCRETE, with true SUPERNATURAL POWER. Yes, it makes me sound loony-bird. But it SHOULD, because Christianity is anything but rational. And it's anything but boring, and the status quo. If it's too rational, then I don't think we've truly internalized what we're claiming to be true. That GOD came down to EARTH in the form of a MAN! That's crazy!

Really, I'm going back and forth between giving this book 4 stars and 5 stars. I think if I would've read this before Mere Christianity, I would hands down give it a 5. Regardless, you all should read it.

Noonie says

A "must read" for any serious Christian. Kreeft is easy to understand, maybe too easy. Meaning: he gets into your head and it flows to your heart without being sappy or churchy. The shock comes to you as he opens your eyes and your mind to what the Church is really all about. And Who Jesus really is.

Katie says

I bought this book since it was #1 on Matthew Kelly's "books that changed my life". I finally finished this book after many months of trying to read it, giving up and reading something else, and then picking it back up. The author's writing style did not work for me. He has a very "intellectual" air and made me feel stupid much of the time. This really surprised me since Kelly's book are so reader-friendly. He also rubbed me the wrong way by having a chapter called "The Data" with no numbers! Perhaps this book is good for theologians, but not for engineers like myself.

Patrick says

Peter Kreeft is one of my favorite authors and speakers, and this brief book contains many of the thought-provoking ideas I've come to expect of Kreeft. Good overall. I must admit that, as a Protestant, I wasn't sure what to make of the extraordinary emphasis he puts on the Real Presence in the Eucharist. But I have to appreciate anyone who writes a book as Christ-centered as this one, even if I don't buy into all of its theology.

Stephen Weierman says

This book is a fine example of bad theology; it is Catholic apologetics at its worst.

I was excited by the premise, because the Gospel is radical, or "shocking." But the book rapidly degenerates into why the belief in the "real presence" of Christ in the Eucharist is the real shocker, why it's not idolatry (his argument on this is almost childish, saying Protestants are the real idolaters in their failure to recognize the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist), and why the Roman Catholic church is the one true apostolic Church.

He greatly generalizes Protestants, lumping them all into one category that very closely resembles modern "evangelical" Christians. He argues that no one challenged the authority of the Bishop of Rome until the Reformation (I guess he's never heard of the East-West Schism, or the Great Schism), that the Catholic Church is the only church that never fell victim to heresy (many Protestants would disagree). His discussion of the Eucharist makes no distinction between the notion of "real presence" and transubstantiation.

My greatest frustration with this work is the arrogance and lack of ecumenical understanding contained within. It fails in its apologetic task, in that it does not provide a compelling argument that would persuade non-Catholics to join the Roman Catholic Church. It only serves to preach to the choir.

Full disclosure: I am a former Roman Catholic. I left the Catholic church for the United Church of Christ in 2005.

Adam Ross says

This was an astonishingly good little book. Catholic theologian Peter Kreeft is always interesting to read, and this sharp, punchy little book is no exception. At times he came across as a cross between G. K. Chesterton and C. S. Lewis, a comparison I'm sure he'd appreciate.

The book is about how shocking Jesus is, how the mere mention of His name in conversation changes everything about that conversation forever. It is a means by which Kreeft tears down all our safe ways of "Christianizing" Jesus until He isn't quite so shocking any more. It's about how all truth and all theology and all of the Christian religion is ultimately about nothing more than an encounter with a living, resurrected, divine Person, and how we can lose sight of that fact too easily. He challenges the prevailing wisdom by pointing out that we meet with Jesus in the Church and her Sacraments (as a Catholic, he differs with my own view a bit, but his main point is that we must see Christ as really present in the Eucharist particularly, and the point is well taken).

I really recommend it as a book that will shake you up.

Jill says

Sometimes we laugh about the fact that in a 2nd grade Sunday School class, the answer to every question, the safe answer which every kid can throw out if he doesn't know for sure because chances are, he'll be right, is "JESUS!!" And He is. He is the answer to everything, the subject of everything, the center of everything. For a Christian, all things ought to revolve around Him. In His light, all things are illuminated, made clear, put in perspective, given right importance. Dr. Kreeft points out that Protestants have the fire without the fireplace, while Catholics have the fireplace without the fire. We need to come together! But come to us, come to the Catholic Church. Why? Because the Catholic Church has something that no Protestant church has: Jesus present in bodily substance in the Eucharist. This is a game-changer, as Dr. Kreeft points out. We become like Christ as we eat Him, literally, as we eat Him, as He told us to do in John 6, over and over again. You can't be lukewarm toward the Catholic Church. To be perfectly logical, either the Catholic Church is a nuthouse with people bowing down to a white wafer of bread - idolatry!! - or it is the house of the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of the very God Himself. If you believe the former, run away and throw stones as you run. If you believe the latter, come in. Bring your wonderful enthusiasm for Jesus, your gorgeous hymns, your deep desire to share Him with others and remind Catholics what they have had for 2000 years: Jesus in their midst. Come! Come! We need each other so badly and the world needs Jesus so badly. End the divide, the protest. Come home.

Ruth Ann says

one of my new favorite books! a raw, emotional, concrete, convicting look at the Catholic faith. a must read for all Catholics and any protestant seeking to know more truth about Catholicism.

Patrick says

I'm told that "Kreeft" is Dutch for "lobster," and Peter the Lobster has written another keeper with this book, which he describes as an attempt to answer the question, "Why is Jesus the most controversial and most embarrassing name in the world?" (The short answer is that whether you believe Him or not, Jesus is the only man in history by whom you cannot be bored and to whom you cannot be indifferent; He cleaves even time in two).

Kreeft has a gift for shedding light on commonplace sayings. For example, all of the best writers in any genre wrestle ultimately with the good, the true, and the beautiful, but Kreeft contrasts those perfections with sentences like "Deep truth heals your mind, and deep goodness heals your will, but deep beauty wounds your heart." From there it's a short and inevitable step to his impassioned defense of medieval cathedrals ("Stonemasons did not build them; faith built them...They were His houses; that's why they had to be better than men could possibly do. They had to be transgressions of the possible and imports of the impossible. Like the Cross.")

Stylistic quirks keep this perceptive book from being ranked among my favorites, but -- to be fair -- those quirks are probably occupational hazards for any honest philosopher. I was flummoxed by Kreeft's insistence

on "Seven Beginnings" and "Seven Postscripts," and sometimes impatient with the baroque syntax that creeps slowly up the trellis of his fondness for alliteration. Although he strives to write simply and for a non-specialist audience, Kreeft can be maddeningly comprehensive.

On the other hand, Kreeft's gospel-grounded description of the different ways that Jesus shocks people and his chapter on the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist are masterful. "Jesus Shock" is a contribution to apologetics that punches far above its weight.

Teri says

I can't resist reading the books that are given to me by our faith formation director. I know he knows good stuff. Plus, I know Peter Kreeft's writing well enough to know that I will benefit from any of it. This book was a good little shot in the arm for my faith at this point in time - when I haven't read anything really convicting or challenging recently. I was tempted to skim past the stuff I feel like I know (haha) but I'm glad I didn't - and the majority of the book, especially the final part - was needed information. I wish every Catholic would read this, and every Protestant too - it would make for some great discussion.

Goodthelife says

From the quiz at the very beginning, this book grabs you and shakes up your priorities. It explains why the name of Jesus causes Shock wherever it is said. And it explains so wonderfully the role of the Eucharist. It also addresses -- and I've never seen this addressed before -- the role of beauty in the Church and why the members of the Church spent so much time and energy and money building the beautiful cathedrals of the middle ages, and why the Church still holds the role of beauty in this same way today. So much good meat in here... definitely want to read again.

Adam says

This was a good, short book. It started off kind of slow but it had some really good points in it. The author talks about how Jesus was received in his lifetime both from his friends and his enemies, usually with some sort of shock, astonishment or even disgust. The second half of the book focuses on how the Eucharist is the biggest dividing point between Catholics and Protestants. The author discusses this topic in depth and makes a lot of good points about how people view the Eucharist, both from a Protestant perspective and a Catholic perspective.

Joseph Serwach says

The title is startling. Why would you want to read a book called "Jesus Shock?" But I trusted the friend who gave it to me so I opened it up and read a fascinating point: Jesus Christ remains the most controversial man in human history: if you just utter his name, the temperature in the room will immediately rise or fall depending on who you're talking with.

Peter Kreeft, a Boston College philosophy professor, is a master at crafting arguments on how people of faith can interact with those who would rather not discuss someone as controversial as Jesus.

The former Calvinist turned Catholic is able to explain the differences between Catholicism and Protestantism in a single paragraph: debate over the importance and meaning of the Eucharist.

He is able to explain well what motivated Judas to betray Jesus and how similar feelings today divide individuals from the church and religion to this day.

If you have questions about faith, *Jesus Shock* is filled with compelling answers worth exploring.

Joyce says

This was a quick read, sprinkled lightly with Kreeft's usual humour.

This book was so Christocentric and to the point (the point being Jesus). It was a lovely reminder of the centre of our faith and of our lives.

Some worthwhile lines from the book:

"The Church is not in the world; the world is in the Church as the setting is in the play. God made the universe in order to make saints, and the Church is 'the communion of saints.' The universe is God's saint-making machine, and the Church is its product."

"I often wondered at the *cause* of those dreary, faithless Modernist parishes and 'Catholic' colleges whose religion is all vague, abstract slogans and ideologies ('compassion,' 'peace and justice,' 'sharing and caring,' 'celebrating community,' etc.). They always focus on *what we do*, both in the liturgy and in the world, instead of what God does. The faith in the Real Presence is so missing that they don't even know what's missing. They're so dead that they don't know they're dead."

There's also an excellent juxtaposition, about one or two paragraphs long, at the end of Chapter 4 between the Eucharist and the movement for "freedom" of one's body today.
