



Spiritual Defiance: Building a Beloved Community of Resistance

Robin Meyers

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A leading voice of progressive Christianity makes a powerful case for faith as a radical way of being in the world

During his thirty-year career as a parish minister and professor, Robin Meyers has focused on renewing the church as an instrument of social change and personal transformation. In this provocative and passionate book, he explores the decline of the church as a community of believers and calls readers back to the church's roots as a community of resistance. Shifting the conversation about church renewal away from theological purity and marketing strategies that embrace cultural norms, and toward "embodied noncompliance" with the dominant culture, Meyers urges a return to the revolutionary spirit that marked Jesus's ministry.

Framing his discussion around three poems by twentieth-century Polish poet Anna Kamienka, Meyers casts the nature of faith as a force that stands against anything and everything that engenders death and indignity. He calls for active—sometimes even subversive—defiance of the ego's temptations, of what he terms "the heresy of orthodoxy itself," and of an uncritical acceptance of militarism and capitalism. Each chapter is a poignant and urgent invitation to recover the Jesus Movement as a Beloved Community of Resistance.

Spiritual Defiance: Building a Beloved Community of Resistance Details

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From Reader Review Spiritual Defiance: Building a Beloved Community of Resistance for online ebook

Lynn Green says

Robin Meyers issues a call for the church to once again become the agent for resistance to the Empire, the American Empire this time around, and to become an agent of distributive justice. I pray I have the courage to put his vision into action.

James R says

I experienced Dr. Meyer's book to be at turns both inspirational and frustrating. I agree with most everything he wrote. I accept his understanding of the history of the Christian Community, and his understanding of the mission and ministry of the historical Jesus. I completely agree with his assessment of the current state of our country, the role and collusion of Christian fundamentalism and corporate America in the attempted demise of our democratic republic. I agree that successful resistance to the destruction this consciously created empire has and will cause to our nation and the world will require a religious voice. I would be happy to see the Book of Revelation be replaced by King's Letter from the Birmingham Jail. I underlined and highlighted passage after passage, but in the end it left me feeling as hopeless about the possibility of change as when I started. I am a boomer. I was a young man during the civil rights movement, I suffered through the Vietnam War, I feel like all my life I and my generation has fought against the hate, ignorance, and greed that is now once again back in full throated power. I'm ashamed and appalled by members of my race, and the unbridled insatiable greed and lust for power that the wealthiest of them so irresponsibly and selfishly demonstrate. Frankly I'm exhausted by it all. And the glimmer of hope and reason Dr. Meyers extols while noble and encouraging, leaves me wondering if even it, even the voice of the historic Jesus, is enough to turn the tide. It's decidedly unfair to rate the book as I did on the basis of my pessimism.

If you are a reader unfamiliar with the scholarship that illuminates the history of the Jesus movement and its implications for our broken country, then for you this would be a five star read. And for you I urge you to read it. If you are a minister of a church who feels trapped and unable to voice the truth you were taught in seminary. Follow Dr. Meyers's example. Please. I applaud the courage he shows by writing this manifesto and that he can speak from a pulpit in Oklahoma is astounding. But I am left with a great feeling of dread even as I look around and ask, "Now what? What do I do next?"

Heather Harding says

Such a beautifully stated call to more seriously consider what it means to actively follow Jesus, instead of just going through the motions and fitting in with "the empire." I loved this about mission work, "Mission work in the third world should not be a cover for evangelism and conversion. It should be for the love of God with no strings attached. When we feed, head, and house the last and the least, all that is "left behind" is amazing grace."

Liz says

A must read for anyone wondering what has happened to the church of rebels.

Yvonne S says

Excellent; recommended to anyone who cares about building vital beloved community keeping faith with the spirit of life. Encourages resistance to the corruptions of ego, of orthodoxy, and of empire.

Jason Crane says

I cannot recommend this book highly enough. If there were a church near me with someone who spoke this way, I'd be there every week. In its absence, this is a powerful call to reimagining the communities we build.

Joe Henry says

I read this book with my Tuesday morning men's group at FUMC. We came to it immediately after a read of Martin Luther King Jr.'s Letter from a Birmingham Jail, which Meyers references. The book is based on his Lyman Beecher Lectures at Yale Divinity School in 2013, in which he is pitching to divinity students the aching need and yearning for the prophetic word and deed in our world. Really, it is something of an indictment of and challenge to all Christians.

In his "Note to the Reader," he mentions that the lectures are posted on YouTube.com, which makes it possible to "hear him." He also mentions that the lectures as delivered were expanded by about 1/3 for the chapters in the book.

The unifying theme is resistance:

- > Resistance to Ego
 - > Resistance to Orthodoxy
 - > Resistance to Empire
-

Constance Chevalier says

not as good as the first...made reference to first book...still made me think

Rob Saunders says

A powerful call to the church and to the faithful to "for the love of God, resist." The book will appeal to lay and clergy alike. Author Robin Meyers writes "...we have been talking about faith as resistance - to ego, to

orthodoxy....and to culture. About few things are ministers more anxious, or more prone to hypocrisy, than where we are denouncing the evils of the empire that protects us, enriches us, and gives us special tax breaks."

Sharon says

Robin Meyers reminds us here of how Jesus lived and our own responsibilities to work for social justice. This is not always an easy message to hear, but he is compelling....

Karin says

This is a book every Christian should read. And every non-Christian who wants to know what Christianity is supposed to be: a band of rebels whose only country is the kingdom of God, anarchists whose only rule is love.

Erin *Help I'm Reading and I Can't Get Up* says

2nd read in 2017: Still spectacular. Interesting to see how much of this book has become a part of me... I was less amazed as I read it and more... *re-empowered*.

I would give this book six stars if goodreads allowed it. It took me ages to read this book, but not because it was a slog; rather, I wanted to savor every word. This is a must-read for every pastor in America. Do not pass it by. I predict I will be returning to this book for every sermon I write in the coming months, even years.

Kelly Brill says

Robin Meyers combines a scholar's mind with a pastor's heart. He cares deeply about the state of the church (especially churches like the one he serves: mainline Protestant) and calls on the church to reclaim the spirit of defiance which Jesus embodied. "...followers of Jesus have always been called to resist, with heart and soul and mind...the very oppressive systems we live in, work for, and are enriched and protected by, and whose material abundance we conspicuously consume - no easy task." No, but vitally important. I'm grateful for this book's witness.

Jared Stine says

Thought provoking look at the current state of the church. A call to reimagine Jesus, and all who claim to follow him, as trouble makers for justice and a community of resisters. Very inspirational for young

Christians fed up with the status quo, especially young clergy. A must read!

Frank Ogden says

Highly Recommended.....what to shake up your religious comfort, read this book. I dare you!
