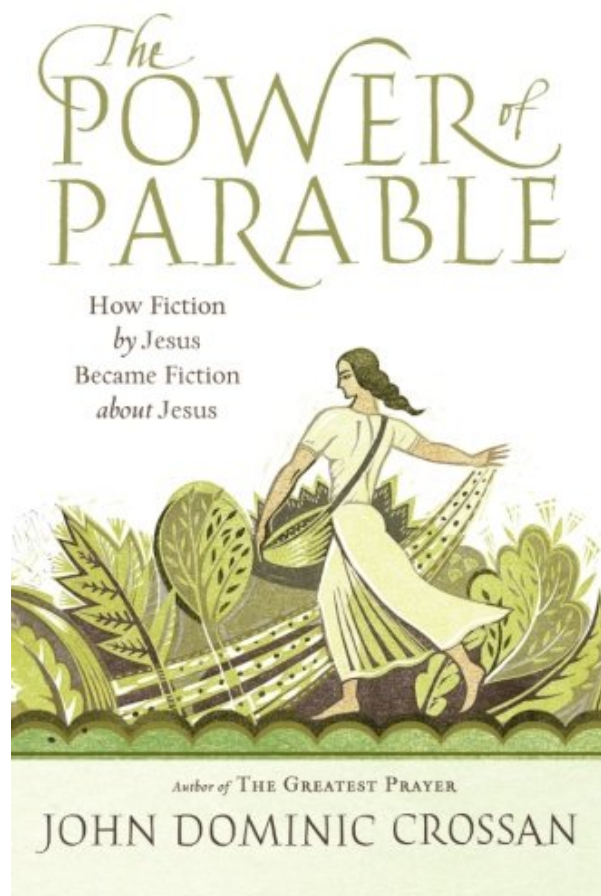


**THE POWER OF PARABLE: HOW FICTION  
BY JESUS BECAME FICTION ABOUT JESUS  
BY JOHN DOMINIC CROSSAN**



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# *The* POWER *of* PARABLE

How Fiction  
by Jesus  
Became Fiction  
about Jesus



*Author of* THE GREATEST PRAYER

JOHN DOMINIC CROSSAN

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The world's foremost Jesus scholar John Dominic Crossan shows us how the parables present throughout the New Testament not only reveal what Jesus wanted to teach but also provide the key for explaining how the Gospels' writers sought to explain the Prophet of Nazareth to the world. In this meaningful exploration of the metaphorical stories told by Jesus and the Gospel writers, Crossan combines the biblical expertise of his *The Greatest Prayer* with a historical and social analysis that harkens closely to his *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography*, creating an illuminating and nuanced exploration of the Scripture that fans of Marcus Borg and Bart Ehrman will find fascinating and essential.

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## Features

- Great product!

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6 of 6 people found the following review helpful.

The book in question is not an easy reading unless one is equipped with critical intelligence and/or ...

By Arbor

When I bought the book "The Power of Parable" by J. D. Crossan, I vaguely expected an interpretative compendium on the parables in the New Testament. As my naïve expectations were thwarted, I was nevertheless reawakened in the consciousness of Mr. Crossan's oeuvre and of his judicious direction of biblical research. The book in question is not an easy reading unless one is equipped with critical intelligence and/or a certain psychological open-mindedness to be fair to the author. What I encountered was rather a brief reading of parable texts and an extensive examination of their characteristics as to whether they should individually belong to a category of example, challenge, or attack parables. Well, in reading through the book step by step, I felt like experiencing a new 'paradigm shift' - in the manner after Thomas Kuhn - in the general history of biblical interpretations. One is first reminded of Erasmus and Luther, who started to look at the Bible, especially the New Testament as a text. That was the beginning of textual criticism, which later developed into biblical hermeneutics with Schleiermacher in the 19th century. In the same breath, one witnessed the advent of David Strauss with his book "The Life of Jesus (Das Leben Jesu)" for his emphasis on the historicity of Jesus, and then of Ludwig Feuerbach with his book "The Essence of Christianity (Das Wesen des Christentums)" upholding God as being nothing else but the outward projection of man's best inner qualities. As our contemporaries, we are reminded of Rudolf Bultmann with his demythology (Entmythologisierung) as well as of Hans Küng, to whose waves of paradigm shift Mr. Crossan's earnest, critically intelligent research, whereby no stone in the whole Bible is left unturned, should be adjoined. The book in question as a whole was a very enriching reading experience for me.

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful.

Not for the faint of heart

By Robert A. Ladner

John Dominic Crossan is part of the Jesus Seminar group from the 80s, and he comes along with Marcus Borg and Bart Ehrmann as a deconstructionist with an interesting premise: it's not just the parables of Jesus that represent instructive fiction, it's much of the life of Jesus that can be seen that way as well. I'm an old Methodist pastor, and I don't find this book particularly objectionable -- if you have read Borg or Spong, you have looked into the maw of chaos already, and either you get vertigo or you don't -- and a lot of what Crossan says about the stories about Jesus being just as much instructional tale-telling as the stories BY Jesus rings true. This is a book to read by yourself if you want to go "off road" a little bit in your study of the Gospels, fun to read, provocative, but migod, don't take it to Sunday School and use it to teach the parables. Not the right application. Read it personally, highlight the things that make sense -- and you will find many things to highlight -- and argue with Crossan in the margins if you want to. If you want something more historical, read Reza Aslan's "Zealot,: This is theology, not history.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

Crossan Condensed

By J. Randolph

With a lifetime of research, scholarship, and volumes of writing devoted to responsible, informed understanding of the Jesus of history, Crossan integrates his life's passion in an accessible, highly readable text. While some background and familiarity with Crossan's highly disciplined approach helps appreciation for content and conclusions in *The Power of Parable*, the lay-person will grasp key concepts and implications. Full integration of this knowledge appears dependent upon one's own ability to approach Biblical scholarship with an open-mind, letting evidence inform one's understanding as opposed to tradition. The heart of the text illustrates the "Challenge of Collaboration" restoring power back into "The Kingdom of God." Understanding Jesus in real history clarifies the most important premise of Christian teaching. Instead



of idly waiting on the promise of an enchanted kingdom after death, legitimate scholarship empowers the parables' true voice, compelling action. Parables paint a much different picture from the evangelical "free gift" understanding. If parables emanate from the Jesus of history, the struggle turns from attempting to believe in Santa-Claus-type mythology to taking up one's own cross faithfully living and participating in a collaborative effort fortifying the Kingdom that is "among us."

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