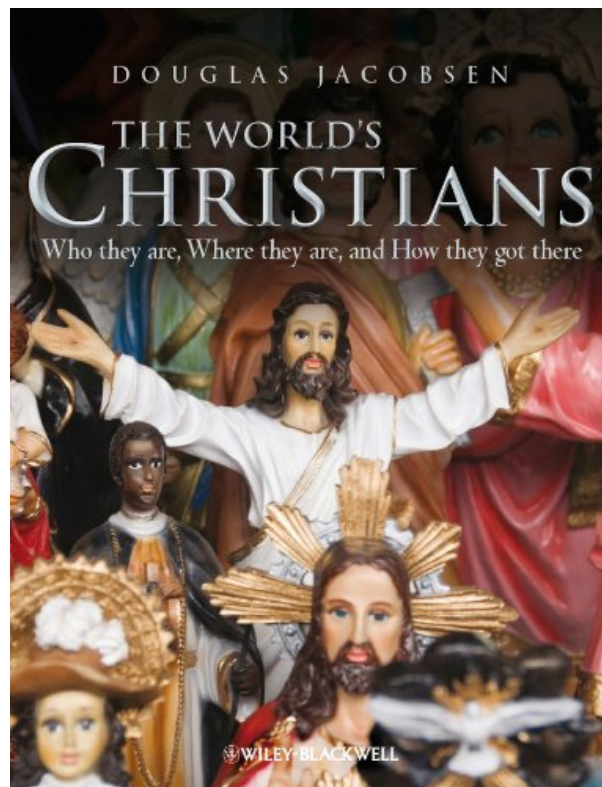
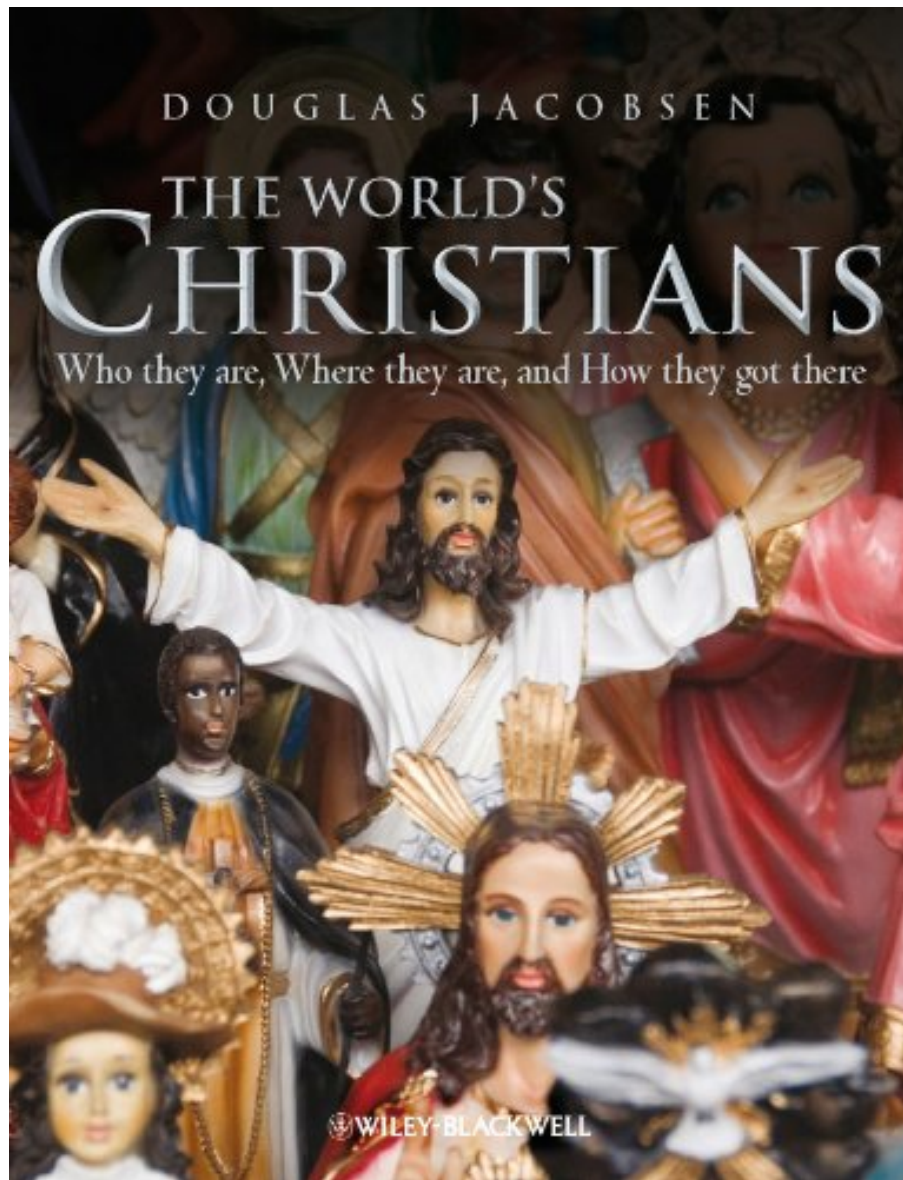


THE WORLD'S CHRISTIANS: WHO THEY ARE, WHERE THEY ARE, AND HOW THEY GOT THERE BY DOUGLAS JACOBSEN



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Review

"The result is a most useful comprehensive survey of Christianity, one that is especially appropriate for an introductory college course or a church study program. Summing Up: Recommended. Lower- and upper-level undergraduates, practitioners, and general readers." (Choice, 1 November 2011)

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"Douglas Jacobsen has written a remarkably thoughtful, insightful, lively and near-comprehensive account of

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Written by an award-winning author, this well-organized and comprehensive introduction to global Christianity illuminates the many ways the world's Christians live their faith today.

- Covers the entire globe: Africa, Asia, and Latin America as well as Europe, North America, and the Pacific
 - Provides impartial, in-depth descriptions of the world's four major Christian traditions: Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant, and Pentecostal/Charismatic
 - Utilizes the best available sources to produce an up-to-date profile of demographic trends in the Christian population
 - Blends history, sociology, anthropology, and theology to create a rich, multi-layered analysis of the world Christian movement
 - Features clear maps and 4-color illustrations throughout the volume
-
- Sales Rank: #731479 in eBooks
 - Published on: 2011-06-28
 - Released on: 2011-06-28
 - Format: Kindle eBook

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3 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

Just the Right Tempo and Timbre

By Gene B. Chase

Jacobsen's history of worldwide Christianity illustrates a musician's sense of the tempo of fine pedagogy and the timbre of careful historiography.

As to his tempo of pedagogy, Jacobsen writes engagingly. He knows when to provide specific clarifying examples: the statement read aloud by Spanish conquistadores (335), or a world map showing how a pope divided the world between Portuguese and Spanish Catholics (360). He knows how to catch the ear of the reader with alliteration: "crack cocaine, crime, and crumbling" (238), "family, friendship, and faith" (239), and "martyrdom to monasticism" (283). He knows how to write simply to avoid any impression of "snowing" the reader, as in "10-yearly" instead of "decennial" (261). He is kind to repeat definitions without expecting us to remember them across multiple chapters: glocalism (358, 373), Theotokos (15, 343), and millet (71, 305).

As to his timbre of historiography, Jacobsen focuses on centers, not on boundaries (269), as he points out that Irenaeus did (274). He is tentative rather than dogmatic, as in the "supposed" schism of 1054 (336). He is about as even-handed and non-Eurocentric as it's possible to be, irenic even in his treatment of the Crusades. When he does mention a really minor point like the Italo-Catholics in Sicily, it ends up being a supporting point later, in this case about the Crusades (336). He has always in mind Christianity on the ground and not just the Christianity of scholars. For example, even though scholars knew the world was round even in classical Greek times, and had even calculated its diameter, Jacobsen is right that "no one really knew what it meant to live on a globe" until modern times (346).

In addition to being a musician, Jacobsen is also a magician in what he chooses to reveal and to conceal. I'm

glad that he mentioned Pandita Ramabai (60), Alpha courses (134), Cursillos (140), Thomas Jefferson's "Bible" (351), Raymond Lull (332), and Friedrich Schleiermacher (351). I wished only for two examples that would have exemplified his themes that I missed: Catholic "new evangelism" (205) includes Pope John Paul II's emphasis on Theology of the Body, and Charles Lwanga of Uganda is honored as a saint by both Catholic and Anglican communities.

A book like this risks becoming obsolete fast, but in the past year the only change that needs to be made so far is to redraw maps to include South Sudan.

Who should read this book? Students of the history of Christianity, whether in a formal course or not. It can be read out of order because of its careful modular approach, yet it is strongly coherent in its vision.

The index is good, but when a word is missing there (say for example, "comity") a full-text search can be done on Amazon.com. I only found three typographical errors: Aquinas' birth year is 1225 (29), there were 27 books in the NT as of c. 360 (271, Fig. 14.1), and 1179 marked the third not the second Lateran Council (320, Fig. 16.1). Authors don't create or proof indexes, but Symeon Stylites is conflated with Symeon the Theologian in the index (397).

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

culture, theology and geography - toward the development of Christianity

By Greg Smith (aka sowhatfaith)

One third of the world's population is Christian. *The World's Christians* explores how this came to be by tracing the development of the faith over time with considerable attention to culture, theology and geography. While the volume itself is lengthy and comprehensive, it is an entry level text designed to be accessible to all readers. I highly recommend the text for church libraries, for individuals who want a richer understanding of the history of the faith, and as a resource guide for those teaching small groups or Sunday school classes (especially those studying Christian traditions other than their own).

The book is divided into three parts:

(1) *Who They Are* tells the story of the four traditions: Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant, and Pentecostal/Charismatic. Each of these brief chapters includes sections on the tradition's spirituality, understanding of salvation, structure, and history. Jacobsen also offers a sense of the relative size of each group, relying on his own best guesses and explaining how he arrived at each.

(2) *Where They Are* examines the history and contemporary status of Christianity in the world's nine regions. These chapters are ordered to reflect the chronology of when Christianity arrived in each region, beginning with the earliest: the Middle East and North Africa; Eastern Europe; Central and South Asia; Western Europe; sub-Saharan Africa; East Asia; Latin America; North America; and Oceania.

(3) *How They Got There* explores what was happening during each of four time periods: (1) The Ancient Tradition: Beginnings to 500; (2) The Great Division and the Age of the East: 500 to 1000; (3) The Rise of the West and the Decline of the East: 1000 to 1500; and (4) Christianity in the Global Era: 1500 to the Present.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Bought this Book for my daughters University class – Great Price!

By Amazon Customer

I was really happy to be able to purchase this book for my daughter's University class. It was a much lower price than the University bookstore plus it arrived at her University mail box in just a couple of days.

Excellent - I recommend it highly!

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