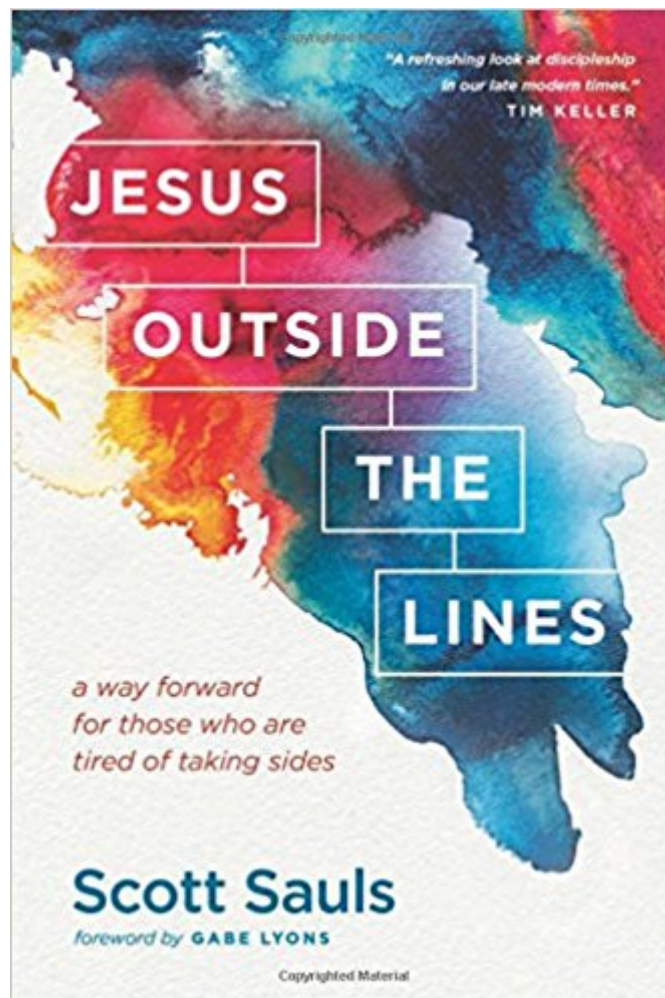




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Jesus Outside The Lines: A Way Forward For Those Who Are Tired Of Taking Sides



Synopsis

Whether the issue of the day on Twitter, Facebook, or cable news is our sexuality, political divides, or the perceived conflict between faith and science, today's media pushes each one of us into a frustrating clash between two opposing sides. Polarizing, us-against-them discussions divide us and distract us from thinking clearly and communicating lovingly with others. Scott Sauls, like many of us, is weary of the bickering and is seeking a way of truth and beauty through the conflicts. *Jesus Outside the Lines* presents Jesus as this way. Scott shows us how the words and actions of Jesus reveal a response that does not perpetuate the destructive fray. Jesus offers us a way forward - away from harshness, caricatures and stereotypes. In *Jesus Outside the Lines*, you will experience a fresh perspective of Jesus, who will not (and should not) fit into the sides.

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Customer Reviews

Scott seamlessly weaves together theology, cultural critique, Christian ethics, and character formation. The result is a picture of Christian living that should be attractive to believers and to many skeptics as well. Tim Keller says Scott has written one of the most needed books of our times, one that I fervently believe should be in the hands of every single Christian without exception. Ann Voskamp A compelling vision for how to follow the real Jesus in real life. *Jesus Outside the Lines* is a guide that helps followers of Jesus love God and the world around them. Darrin Patrick As people who have wrestled much with God's habit of redemptively "coloring outside the lines" in our own lives and experience, we are so grateful for the wisdom, care, and honesty with

which our friend and pastor Scott Sauls has approached this subject in this book. Steven Curtis and Mary Beth Chapman The kind of voice we increasingly need to help guide deep and respectful conversation around the claims of Jesus is one of humility, kindness, and humor. Judging by this book, Scott Sauls is beginning to emerge as one of our best voices. Sammy Rhodes Scott Sauls is a refreshing voice. He tackles topics that have long created division with such heartfelt hope that I'm more encouraged than ever about the future of the church. Rebekah Lyons Choosing sides in cultural conflicts has left us feeling stereotyped and caricatured. With theological insight, cultural astuteness, and the compassionate tone of Jesus, Scott has painted a way for the church to have influence without coercion and put the brilliance of Jesus on display in a pluralistic world. A worthy read. Jon Tyson

A compelling vision for how to follow the real Jesus in real life. Jesus Outside the Lines is a guide that helps followers of Jesus love God and the world around them. (Darrin Patrick) Scott Sauls is a refreshing voice. He tackles topics that have long created division with such heartfelt hope that I'm more encouraged than ever about the future of the church. (Rebekah Lyons) As people who have wrestled much with God's habit of redemptively "coloring outside the lines" in our own lives and experience, we are so grateful for the wisdom, care, and honesty with which our friend and pastor Scott Sauls has approached this subject in this book. (Steven Curtis and Mary Beth Chapman) Scott Sauls has given me fresh hope in this thoughtful and lively book. He gives us a new way of relating to each other—especially on divisive topics—in hopes of sweeter aroma to those who don't know Jesus. (Katherine Leary Alsdorf) In Jesus, my friend Scott Sauls sees a power that frees us to be bold without being brash, confident without being cocky, smart without being sassy, engaged without being enraged. Thank you, Scott, for saying what you say. It is much needed in our day. (Tullian Tchividjian) Choosing sides in cultural conflicts has left us feeling stereotyped and caricatured. With theological insight, cultural astuteness, and the compassionate tone of Jesus, Scott has painted a way for the church to have influence without coercion and put the brilliance of Jesus on display in a pluralistic world. A worthy read. (Jon Tyson) Scott seamlessly weaves together theology, cultural critique, Christian ethics, and character formation. The result is a picture of Christian living that should be attractive to believers and to many skeptics as well. (Tim Keller)

After seeing a lot of glowing reviews of this book from people I respect, I finally decided to read it. Let me add my own recommendation. This is just the type of book the world (and particularly the

Church) needs right now. As we live in an environment that seems increasingly polarized and divided, Scott Saul's has written a book that may help us all break down barriers and begin to talk again. And he does this without asking anyone to let go of their convictions. This has more to do with stopping the trend of dividing into camps or 'tribes', letting go of the idea that someone who thinks differently is an enemy, and working toward the goal of trying to understand and empathize with those who see the world differently, even if you continue to disagree with them. As we head into what looks like yet another divisive election year in the US (possibly even more so than in the past) and face a lot of important social issues, this book can be an important part of moving toward greater peace both inside the church and in the church's interaction with the world.

I was captured by this concept from the first time I heard Scott share about it, and the book is just as good as I hoped. In this age of outrage and bluster, this is a timely, needed message for the church ... and for me. It's a compelling call to let the gospel of Christ shape our hearts and passions instead of being driven by the political and popular appeals of the world. I nodded along and underlined even as I was frequently and deeply challenged. Not only are the book's ideas strong, the writing itself is thoughtful and enjoyable. Good points are made clearly and attractively, effective stories are told in support, wise quotes and perspectives are employed, and the pages flow by smoothly.

This book is written by a regular guy who is also a scholar and a thinker. Most of all, he's a lover of Jesus and people, I know that because Scott Sauls is my pastor. Being one of his congregants is not the reason I'm recommending the book however; it's that it has a profound message that could change the way we live our lives. The first few pages will pull you in like a shepherd's crook around your neck. It begins (paraphrased) "Are you tired of taking sides? Of labeling and being labeled? Tired of political caricatures and talk-show outrage? Tired of racism, classism, sexism, generationalism, denominationalism, doctrinalism tired of the endless quest to find something to be mad about? Are you tired of the ways that YOU, too, have succumbed to the against-ness of it all? (If the truth be known, perhaps we've come to enjoy the outrage! Maybe it becomes second nature to us, and we like our "tribe" just as it is, thank you very much.) At a time in history when Christians are perceived as argumentative, hard-headed, and inflexible, Scott Sauls dares suggest that all this brouhaha is not at all what Jesus taught and lived. He offers a new perspective on

Christian living, a new paradigm if you will, that will change us into the kinds of persons that will draw others to the Savior. "There was something about Jesus that people wanted, that they knew they needed," Scott says. "Jesus recognized God's divine imprint in all of us, and offered honor and dignity not just to those who believed but to those who walked away as well. Case in point: the rich ruler who walked away from Jesus' invitation to follow him. This is a microcosm of truth I had missed. Scripture says that Jesus looked at him and was generous and the rich ruler walked away not feeling judged or put in his place. (I hate to say it, but had it been one of us, we might have hit him over the head with our Bibles, and body wrestled him to church or worse or we might have made that nasty, judgmental tsk-tsk sound we make with our mouths, thrown up our hands, and shaken our heads in pity and disapproval.) Never for a minute does Sauls back down from the Gospel of Jesus, or the truths of Scripture. Never for a minute is he asking us to minimize our core beliefs. Never for a minute does he negate upholding the tenants of the faith, nor does he suggest compromise when it comes to right and wrong. In fact, just the opposite. He simply reminds us of Jesus' example, asks us to observe how he treated his fellow-citizens. He encourages us to run a personal diagnostic of our heart, and then emerge as a new kind of Christian; one who is so encouraging of our fellow man, that they can't help but be drawn into the loved into the Kingdom of God. This book is motivational; a refresher course on the fruits of the spirit. It's about getting the chip off your shoulder, and learning when to walk away without having to prove your point. Unless, of course, your point is to love your neighbor as yourself, and follow the Golden Rule. Scott gleans material from pop culture, columnists and comedians, philosophers, existentialists, contemporary authors and historical authors, atheists, Catholics and protestants. I tell you that to say this is a book that will appeal to the thinking person; to someone who likes a good brain sweat; yet it's simple enough for one who is as spiritually challenged as I am. I must admit, I came to a place in the book where I didn't agree. I threw it at the wall, stomped around, made big signs to picket the church! Then I realized that's what this book is about. About graciously accepting our differences, in both word, tone of voice, and body language and NOT having to prove your point. Buy it! Read it! Get it for your pastor, your children, and please recommend it to your circle of influence. Above all, start living it!

Scott Sauls' book takes us beyond the limiting and divisive "us versus them" mentality that is driving

so many out of and away from the church today. In "Jesus Outside the Lines" you will be given a refreshing Christ-like view of the world, the lost, and the wounded, and be reminded how Christ came not to insist upon His own way, but to live fully yielded to the Father. When we truly understand the identity Christ has given us in Him, perhaps then we can have a conversation with those that disagree with us and, rather than shake our heads and point fingers, love them anyways.

Scott Sauls is an instrument of the Holy Spirit as evidenced by his writing this book. He speaks not only to me, but our children and their children. He urges us to concentrate on the basics of the Gospel and avoid the distractions of peripheral issues (still important). Until we are marinated in God's grace, mercy and judgment, how can we face the tough issues? This is a book for believers and non-believers today and tomorrow. Easy reading and powerfully presented.

What if we've been expressing the Christian faith in ways Jesus never intended? What if our "orthodoxy" is more rooted in American politics and denominational dogmas than in the life of Jesus? It's clear to most that these criticisms are well deserved for the church today. Scott illuminates a path forward on all the issues that have stalemated conservatives, liberals, and everyone in between. And what is so thoroughly refreshing is that this path presses forward in the footsteps of Jesus. Deep down it's what we all want. A faith that centers us on the Son of God rather than dividing us on social issues. Only then can we begin to live as agents of social change in a way that will seem alien and yet ring true to the way of Jesus.

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