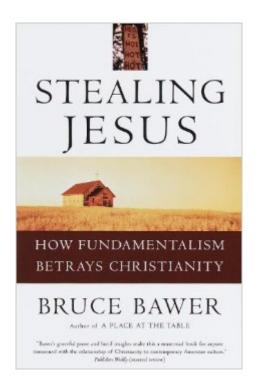
## The book was found

# Stealing Jesus: How Fundamentalism Betrays Christianity





## **Synopsis**

From the author of the widely acclaimed A Place at the Table, this is a major work, passionately outspoken and cogently reasoned, that exposes the great danger posed to Christianity today by fundamentalism. The time is past, says Bruce Bawer, when denominational names and other traditional labels provided an accurate reflection of Christian America's religious beliefs and practices. The meaningful distinction today is not between Protestant and Catholic, or Baptist and Episcopalian, but rather between "legalistic" and "nonlegalistic" religion, between the Church of Law and the Church of Love. On one side is the fundamentalist right, which draws a sharp distinction between "saved" and "unsaved" and worships a God of wrath and judgment; on the other are more mainstream Christians who view all humankind as children of a loving God who calls them to break down barriers of hate, prejudice, and distrust. Pointing out that the supposedly "traditional" beliefs of American fundamentalism--about which most mainstream Christians, clergy included, know shockingly little--are in fact of relatively recent origin, are distinctively American in many ways, and are dramatically at odds with the values that Jesus actually spread, Bawer fascinatingly demonstrates the way in which these beliefs have increasingly come to supplant genuinely fundamental Christian tenets in the American church and to become synonymous with Christianity in the minds of many people. Stealing Jesus is the ringing testament of a man who is equally disturbed by the notion of an America without Christianity and the notion of an American Christianity without love and compassion.

#### **Book Information**

Paperback: 340 pages

Publisher: Broadway Books; 1st Pbk. Ed edition (October 20, 1998)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0609802224

ISBN-13: 978-0609802229

Product Dimensions: 5.1 x 0.9 x 7.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.7 out of 5 stars Â See all reviews (152 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #484,061 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #110 in Books > Christian Books

& Bibles > Theology > Fundamentalism #2244 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Bible Study

& Reference > Criticism & Interpretation #2997 in Books > History > World > Religious >

Christianity

### **Customer Reviews**

Bawer's book starts out brilliantly and had me tentatively recommending it to people by the end of the first chapter. He makes some very insightful points, and he has the enviable ability to create a sound bite that actually has deep meaning; there were several points in the book where he sums up complex spiritual issues in one terrific sentence. Unfortunately, the book does not live up to the promise shown at the beginning. The points Bawer brings up about Fundamentalist Christianity are all valid, but his support for many of them is rather weak. He does not use footnotes, his references are incomplete, and the bibliography adheres to no style I've ever seen. This wouldn't matter if I wanted to accept his work as truth in and of itself, but I prefer to check sources. Bawer also tends to express opinion as fact. He twice makes the claim that legalist Christians (his term for Fundamentalist Christians) know their doctrines are untrue, although they will never admit it to themselves. To make such a claim is arrogant and uninformed-Bawer does not know the true feelings of individual legalist Christians. I know several people who fit Bawer's definition of legalists, and they hold their beliefs more dear than anything else, including things most people cherish such as family and career. If scientific or empirical evidence refutes these beliefs, the evidence is wrong, and the people who bring this evidence against Christianity are deceived. One could easily and truthfully say legalists are just putting their heads in the sand, but that doesn't mean they do not believe their doctrine. Bawer also rails against Pat Robertson, his editors, and his readers for not checking facts or having any knowledge about the subjects of his writing.

This is an important book that should be read by all Americans--whether of a religious persuasion or not. The agenda of American Fundamentalists (and their close cousins, conservative Evangelcals) is a true threat, not only to freedom of religion in particular, but to freedom of thought in general. It is not surprising that so many Fundamentalists are offended by this book--the truth sometimes hurts. But as many of the reviews on this post indicate, it doesn't always open eyes. I do agree with some of the criticisms aimed at this book--I disliked Bawer's choice of a general bibliography rather than more specific documentation; and he does, at times, sound a bit bitter. As to the former, I was raised in the Southern Baptist Church and graduated from a conservative evangelical college. I have followed the careers of many of the people Bawer discusses in this book and the activities of many of the organizations he mentions. Allow me to be a witness: he is right on the money. As to the latter, Bawer's experiences as a homosexual in a bigoted "church" have certainly earned him the right to a little bitterness. Comments made by admitted fundamentalists on this post only underscore Bawer's point. Consider such comments as "What you are not free to do is claim to be

OF US WHILE DENYING WHAT WE BELIEVE" and "...why continue the pretense of naming oneself Christian?" These are people who claim the authority to define what Christianity is. The rest of us either fit their definition or we are out of the picture. How sad and how devisive. This cannot be the church that Jesus intended.

#### Download to continue reading...

Stealing Jesus: How Fundamentalism Betrays Christianity Your Fatwa Does Not Apply Here: Untold Stories from the Fight against Muslim Fundamentalism The Power of Market Fundamentalism: Karl Polanyi's Critique Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity (Future of Christianity Trilogy) How Africa Shaped the Christian Mind: Rediscovering the African Seedbed of Western Christianity (Early African Christianity Set) Christianity and Western Thought: Journey to Postmodernity in the Twentieth Century: 3 (Christianity & Western Thought) Jesus Freaks: Stories of Those Who Stood for Jesus, the Ultimate Jesus Freaks Jesus Freaks: Martyrs: Stories of Those Who Stood for Jesus: The Ultimate Jesus Freaks Stealing All Transmissions: A Secret History of the Clash Mel Bay presents Chris Thile-Stealing Second CD Stealing Secrets: How a Few Daring Women Deceived Generals, Impacted Battles, and Altered the Course of the Civil War Stealing from God: Why Atheists Need God to Make Their Case Stealing Freedom Stealing Bases: A PrettyTOUGH Novel Streaming, Sharing, Stealing: Big Data and the Future of Entertainment (MIT Press) Hijacking the Runway: How Celebrities Are Stealing the Spotlight from Fashion Designers Stealing the Corner Office: The Winning Career Strategies They'll Never Teach You in Business School Stop Stealing Sheep & Find Out How Type Works (2nd Edition) The Map Thief: The Gripping Story of an Esteemed Rare-Map Dealer Who Made Millions Stealing Priceless Maps

<u>Dmca</u>