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King's Cross: The Story Of The World In The Life Of Jesus

TIMOTHY KELLER

READ BY LLOYD JAMES

KING'S CROSS

THE STORY OF THE WORLD IN
THE LIFE OF JESUS

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Synopsis

New York Times best-selling author and nationally renowned minister Timothy Keller unlocks new insights into the life of Jesus Christ. *King's Cross* is Timothy Keller's revelatory look at the life of Christ as told in the Gospel of Mark. There have been many biographies of Jesus, but few will be as anticipated as this one by Keller, the man *Newsweek* calls "a C. S. Lewis for the 21st century". In it, Keller shows how the story of Jesus is at once cosmic, historical, and personal, calling each of us to look anew at our relationship with God. Like Keller's other books, it has tremendous crossover appeal, but it is also ideal for the faithful, those who are looking for closer connections to Jesus and Christianity. Please note: This book has also been published under the alternate title *Jesus the King: Understanding the Life and Death of the Son of God*.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 8 hours and 1 minute

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Penguin Audio

Audible.com Release Date: February 22, 2011

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B004OWWDBE

Best Sellers Rank: #6 in Books > History > World > Religious > Buddhism #7 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Eastern > Buddhism > History #14 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Bible Study & Reference > New Testament > Biography

Customer Reviews

C.S. Lewis was the greatest Christian author in generations. Anyone, no matter what stage of life they are in, can read his books effortlessly. Lewis' words formed Christian doctrine, shattered Pharisaical religious myths, and evangelized the lost. Few authors are able accomplish this with their life's work; Lewis accomplished it in every book he authored. And now Tim Keller has authored a book that is just as sweeping, applicable, and paradigm shifting as Lewis' best work. *King's Cross* is a book about the life of Jesus as told in the Gospel of Mark. Keller, verse by verse, offers his thoughts on every major theme in Mark. There have been countless commentaries and just as many devotional works on the Gospels; *King's Cross* is both. For the new Christian, *King's Cross* will

bring the words of Jesus to life. Its easy to forget the power that Scripture has when you read it with fresh eyes. In King's Cross, Keller gives insight in the world of Jesus. He shows just how earth shattering the arrival of the Good News was. Keller will gently deconstruct the myth that the Bible is not a book that is inspired by God. You will walk away from King's Cross understanding just how radical the Gospel of Mark is. For the pastor and Bible study leader, King's Cross should be a joy to read. Keller is a dedicated pastor whose love for his people comes across in each paragraph. Its easy be trapped in the intellectual realm of seminary or the spiritual emotionalism that infects almost every church. Keller never loses sight of his true purpose: sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. He is able to write intellectually without going over the head of anyone, emotionally without any saccharine-sweet spirituality, and evangelistically without Bible thumping. His exposition of the text should inspire those who teach others in the church. For the Pharisee, King's Cross will convict you. Whether you are an old school Pharisee who still tithes off the mint and cumin or newer model that looks down on the people who are "too religious," Keller seeks to expose and redeem you with Jesus' words. Its easy to miss how much Jesus despises religionists when we pick a verse here or there. When you read any of the gospels in one sitting, it's hard to say what Jesus dislikes more. On page 47 Keller writes, "The gospel says that the humble are in and the proud are out. The gospel says the people who know they're not better, not more open-minded, not more moral than anyone else, are in, and the people who think they're on the right side of the divide are most in danger." Convicting for the Pharisee in all of us. For the non-Christian, this is a book that will show you why Christians have fallen in love with Christ. You will see Jesus as the original readers of the Gospels did. You will read the words of Jesus and be changed. Forgive Christians of the arguments and the apologetics and the attitudes that turned you against Jesus. Read this book, read the Gospel of Mark, and just ask yourself if it could be true. Could there really be one person who defines history with His life and death? If you have come to cherish the belief that Jesus was nothing more than a great person and a good teacher, a worthy example to follow, then this book will take that away from you. Jesus did not leave us that option. "Either he's a wicked liar or a crazy person and you should have nothing to do with him, or he is who he says he is and your whole life has to revolve around him . . ." (45, King's Cross) Keller has already written impressive works that are among the best in the last decade, including *The Reason For God* and *The Prodigal God*. King's Cross book does not fit into a certain category and exposes the power of the Gospel to modern readers. King's Cross is broad in its appeal, brilliant in its execution, and is Keller's best work to date. Buy at least two copies, because you will give it away.

I am not as theologically savvy as other reviewers and even though I was raised in the Christian family, I didn't understand what the Gospel is really like until I read Keller's first book: Reason for God. I just finished chapter two of King's Cross and could not stop my tears. Thank you. Pastor Keller, if you read this, please make this book available in my language (Indonesian language) so that I can share it with my family and friends back in my country.

I debated on whether to give Tim Keller's new book, "King's Cross," 4 or 5 stars and finally settled on 4. It's a compelling book that supplies a fresh reading of the Gospel of Mark, but in some places it's also a little mundane. What Keller does best is to take the Gospel of Mark and present its major themes in a new light, while maintaining a fidelity to the Bible as the Word of God and accurate record of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. Keller's book fills a much-needed niche: it's not as detailed or as technical as a commentary and it's not as personal as a devotional work but it helps the reader understand the Gospel of Mark by presenting it through a series of compelling ideas or images. While "King's Cross" doesn't elaborate on every passage, Keller gives his reader the big picture that is so often lacking in works on the Bible and in modern Christianity in general. He thus avoids the error of many devotional works that take random verses out of context while at the same time retaining a personal style and touch. "King's Cross" will help the reader understand the Gospel of Mark and the good news of Jesus Christ in a new, imaginative way that will be of great value to many readers. Hopefully, it will entice new disciples of Jesus Christ to Him and will help those familiar with Jesus Christ and the gospel to see them both in a new light. Maybe, by providing a slightly new perspective, it will wake many of us out of our complacency and take us from seeing the good news of Jesus Christ as merely advice and return it to being fantastic, life-changing news! Essentially, Keller takes the life of Christ, as told by Mark in the Gospel of Mark and presents it in terms of 2 main themes: "The King" and "The Cross," from which Keller gets the title of his book. By using a succession of images to capture the meaning of Mark's Gospel (and the life of Jesus Christ), Keller has given us an imaginative approach to God and His Word that will be welcomed by many readers. For example, in Chapter 1, "The Dance," Keller portrays the coming of Christ in flesh as the result of the interpersonal, giving love of the Holy Trinity. Keller thus portrays the life of the Christian as a dance involving God and contrasts it to a life that is merely going through the motions. The temptation of Christ is portrayed by Keller as an attempt to get Jesus to stop the dance with God. In this way, even the spiritual battles we have, as Christ had, are seen within the ultimate reality of The Dance. He also provides good background to many chapters, such as Mark's inclusion of the Holy Spirit as being like a dove in Mark 1. In Chapter 2, Keller portrays the

gospel as "The Call" and again begins by situating it the historical use of the word (as he did with the image of the Spirit as a dove in Chapter 1). He explains, for example, that "Gospel" means "history-changing, life-shaping news. Unlike other religions or no religion, which are just advice, Christianity is primarily "news"! The difference is that Christianity and the call of Christ are based on what Christ has done, and not on what we do. Repentance and the call of the gospel to Christ are intended to take us out of ourselves and bring us true freedom and life. Unlike other religions, in which we choose who to follow, Jesus calls His disciples to follow Him. In a similar way, in Part One, Keller takes on other topics associated with Christ as the King. Keller doesn't always relate them in an obvious way to Christ as King, and so sometimes the overall theme is lost. But each chapter is an engaging and helpful look at one aspect of Christ and His ministry. Not all of the chapters are as provocative or interesting (hence the 4 star rating), but there's something of value in each of them. In Chapter 9, "The Turn," Keller addresses Mark 8, in which the Gospel turns from the King to the Cross. It's in Mark 8 that Jesus begins to teach that He, the King, will end up on the Cross. In this chapter, Keller also addresses the need for Christ to go the Cross and frames it in terms of the debt we owed which Jesus paid. In the first half of the book, Keller deals with Mark 1-8 and Christ the King. But as soon as Peter makes his confession, the book, like the Gospel, deals with the purpose of Christ's coming. While the first half of Mark presents the call of Christ on us to follow Him, the second half of Mark presents a picture of all that this following Christ entails. In Chapter 11, for example, Keller deals with "The Trap" of riches and why Christianity always seems to migrate away from wealth and power (as witnessed, for example, by the growth of Christianity in Africa in the 20th century). I found Chapter 14 also particularly appealing, as Keller presents his chapter on "The Feast." In this chapter, Keller paints a compelling picture of the meaning of the Last Supper as a meal. You might think that a more narrative or imaginative reading of the Gospel of Mark would lead to a downplaying of the seriousness of sin. But Keller manages to maintain a biblical view of sin while at the same time helping us to understand why it's such a big problem and how we must get out of ourselves to access God's salvation from it. Throughout, Keller uses illustrations from many other works of literature, such as Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings," George MacDonald's "The Princess and the Goblin," and C.S. Lewis' Narnia series. He also draws illustrations from non-fiction writers, as well as from movies and personal anecdotes. These all help drive home the point he is making and make the book a pleasure to read. In spite of some more pedestrian parts, overall I highly recommend this book to Christian readers. Here's an outline of the book: Part One - The King - The Identity of Jesus 1. The Dance 2. The Call 3. The Healing 4. The Rest 5. The Power 6. The Waiting 7. The Stain 8. The Approach 9. The Turn Part Two - The Cross - The Purpose of Jesus 10.

The Mountain¹¹. The Trap¹². The Ransom¹³. The Temple¹⁴. The Feast¹⁵. The Cup¹⁶. The Sword¹⁷. The End¹⁸. The Beginning

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