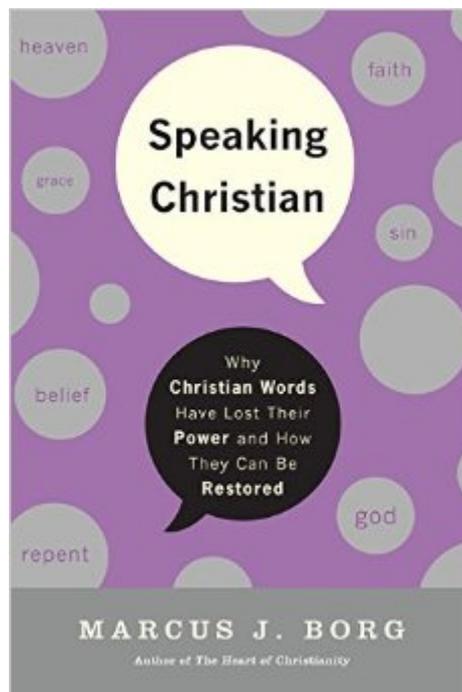


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# Speaking Christian: Why Christian Words Have Lost Their Meaning And Powerâ€”And How They Can Be Restored



## Synopsis

In *Speaking Christian*, acclaimed Bible scholar Marcus Borg, author of *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time*, argues that the very language Christians use has become dangerously distilled, distorted, and disconnected from the beliefs which once underpinned it. Stating a case that will resonate with readers of N. T. Wright's *Simply Christian*, Borg calls for a radical change to the language we use to invoke our beliefs—the only remedy that will allow the Church's words to once again ring with truth, power, and hope.

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## Customer Reviews

"This book could start a revolution. Borg cracks open the encrusted words of faith and pops them into fresh language that people can understand..." Anne S. Howard

There is no doubt that the revolution was already started in 1963, by former Anglican bishop of Woolwich, John Robinson, who was a major force in shaping Borg's liberal and progressive Christianity. His controversial million-copy bestseller, "Honest to God" was not so much an attempt to reshape Christianity, but a trial of concepts and modern language that conformed Christianity to a modern pro-scientific world view. There can be little question that Robinson wished to reduce Christianity's dependence on belief in legendary accounts and on the supernatural. Some conservative Christians were, and others are still terrified by the same 'Jesus Seminar' attitude. They see in this approach an appeal for a secularized Christianity or even worse, an appeal for secular humanism.

Acclaimed Bible scholar Marcus Borg, revisits same issues again after a half century. He argues that contemporary

Christian language has become non inclusive, disconnected from and not representing the beliefs which once substantiated it. Defending his case with allusion to N. T. Wright's "Simply Christian," Borg calls for a radical change to the language Christians use to express their beliefs. For Borg, as was for Robinson, it is the primary remedy that will permit the Church's words to once again communicate Biblical truth, faith, and hope. Borg is addressing what he wrote earlier in, "Reading the Bible Again for the First Time." By taking the Bible Seriously, But Not Literally he shares Robinson's main perspective.

\*\*\*\*\*"A historical approach is greatly illuminating. Language comes alive in its context. ... Thus a historical approach makes Christian language relative and not absolute." Marcus Borg, Speaking Christian

The early Church Fathers followed primarily one of two methods of interpretation: Allegorical (spiritual) or literal. Going beyond literalism, Origen advanced allegorical Bible exegesis, early in the third century, claiming that it hides the truth from those blinded by sin and pride, while revealing it to the renewed eyes of believers. Up to the Reformation, the Bible was not usually interpreted in a strictly literal way. Marcus Borg, who pursued the search for the real historical Jesus, with the Jesus Seminar for the first decade of its work, now expositis an alternative understanding by restoring authentic biblical meanings. Dr. Borg believes Christian language needs to be set free from its contemporary literalism. He wrote some of the most thought provoking books of which Speaking Christian is the most recent. His vision, as he stated, "I think we're living in a time of transition within Christianity that's been going on for half a century... where what I call the common Christianity that most Christians ...took for granted is no longer persuasive and compelling." Some Biblical historians believe that Biblical literalism came about with Sola Scriptura, at the rise of Protestantism. So, Dr. Borg coaches the reader, with the book conclusion, asking if literal interpretation was part of the foundation he would like to shake, in the words of Paul Tillich, one of the century's most influential Christian thinkers. The author now persuades you into a discussion, helping you recover true belief.

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