

What if modern American Religion has its Christian history wrong? What difference would it make to get it right?

In *Craft Brewed Jesus*, Michael Camp traces a fascinating journey more reminiscent of a religious thriller than nonfiction.

It's Dan Brown meets Indiana Jones, where Jones is a stay-at-home historian who hangs out in microbreweries.

A group of disillusioned Evangelicals and Catholics are weary of their faith traditions' wacky beliefs—exclusive salvation, eternal damnation, the return of Christ in final Judgment, a literalist view of the Bible, and commitment to an authoritative church full of spiritual abuse or sexual scandals.

They decide to meet in pubs and each other's homes to examine the history of the Jesus epic and try to uncover the true core of his message... and what went wrong.

Over brews and spirited discussion, they discover forgotten historical facts learned from reputable historians and biblical scholars. Their findings rock their world but set them free and point them to a new spiritual path based more on reality.

If you've ever wondered how the Jesus saga's simple message of good news and love got so mangled this book will open your eyes to original meanings that have been buried for centuries by misguided churches and voices—both conservative and liberal. Learn why exclusive religion was never part of it.

"...instructional...poignant...insightful."

- MICHAEL HARDIN

"...[readers] will greatly benefit from the wealth of historical information and spiritual insights..." - THOMAS TALBOTT

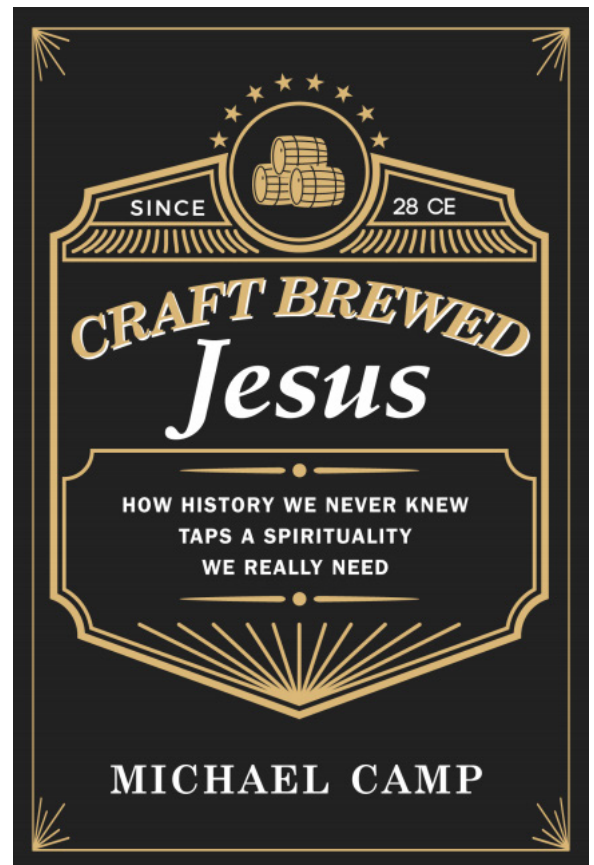
"I read it like a starving person at a five-star restaurant."

- WENDY FRANCISCO

About the Author



MICHAEL CAMP spent twenty-five years in the evangelical movement, including as a missionary to Muslims, a development worker in Africa, and a lay leader in independent, charismatic, and Baptist churches. Today, as a business leader, he writes, blogs, attends pub theology gatherings, and facilitates microfinance projects through his local Rotary Club in Bainbridge Island, WA. He is the author of *Confessions of a Bible Thumper* (2012). Learn more at MichaelCampBooks.com.



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Sample Interview Questions

What are your 3 biggest ideas in this book?

That (1) history matters, (2) without good history people believe the wackiest things, and (3) an accurate view of Christian history taps a refreshing spirituality beyond conservative or liberal definitions—one based more on reality. An earth-shattering love ethic & inclusive faith that accepts belief and doubt.

Give us an example of why history matters?

Primary historical sources show us there never was an institutional church the way moderns think of it. Or, studying the views of the early church fathers (and some later mothers), tells us that many—at times most of them—were Universalists.

What are some of these wacky theologies?

The doctrine of hell or eternal conscious torment. That Jesus will physically return in final Judgment to destroy the earth and condemn unbelievers forever. That the Bible is the inerrant Word of God. That only “born again” Christians will be saved.

How can you be so sure your conclusions are right?

I can't. No one can be certain. Neither can fundamentalists, evangelicals, or the liberal or secular-minded. But history tells us what's most probable and its culture and language sheds light on the original meaning of Jesus and the earliest church.

So, are you saying the Bible is wrong?

No. For sure, it contains inspiration. But history teaches us it's not infallible, it has some inaccuracies. It's not some perfect Rulebook. It's how people use it that's wrong and unhistorical. The Bible has much that's factual but also much that is debatable. The early church viewed the scriptures this way.

Why do you cite Eastern streams of Christianity?

Traditions like the Eastern Orthodox and the lost tradition of the Eastern Nestorians reveal more inclusive theologies than the West on things like original sin and atonement and the church-state. These are lost or forgotten views we need to recover.

Why do you have a craft beer theme in the book?

One, microbreweries are free from large corporations--free to brew any style. Followers of a craft brewed (historically-based) Jesus are free from “corporate” church and aren't compelled to believe a certain way. Two, truth is more accessible in a pub than in a church or institution, which often stifles free inquiry.

Sounds like cheap grace. Doesn't God judge evil?

Yes. Who says He doesn't? Historical/biblical scholarship reveals God's judgment is restorative, not retributive or eternal.

What is the history of beer in the Bible and church?

Ancient Israelites drank lots of beer, beer was included in their daily sacrifices to Yahweh, and God commanded they buy it for celebrations. The monks of old brewed beer for the public, themselves, and the poor, which they called “Charity Beer.”

Audience: Restless evangelicals, post-evangelicals, the emergent/missional church, progressive Christians, and the spiritual-but-not-religious. **Anyone who wants to learn historical and biblical reasons to reject misguided religion.**

Statistics:

- 26% of the American population are evangelicals (80 million people).
- Out of those, 25% are in the emergent church (20 million people).
- 18% of Americans (56 million people) are considered “mainline” progressive Christians.
- 33% of Americans (72 million people) consider themselves spiritual-but-not-religious.
- Barna Group reports a 43% drop in church attendance for millennials.
- More than six in 10 millennials support same-sex marriage
- Pub theology and alternate **“church” gatherings in pubs are on the rise.**

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