



# The Heart of Jesus' Teaching: The Key to Transforming Christianity & Our World

*Ruth Whitney*

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In this daring and hopeful book, theologian Ruth Whitney calls on Christians everywhere to re-awaken to Jesus' original message: that "the presence of the divine is within" all of us and all creation: we are all sacred. Jesus' second fundamental message is LOVE—we are to love ourselves, our neighbors, even our enemies, all nature ... and the Holy One .... with all our heart. Jesus lived what he taught, and we are encouraged to follow his self-less example. As a historian of earlier times, the author cautions against blindly following established belief systems or dogmas: for example, she advises we take the Bible seriously, but not always literally. The author purposefully re-awakens discussions that arouse age-old historical debates: Who really wrote the Gospels? How did the original group of Christians develop—what were their debates and controversies, and what was the role of women? And, she explores some intriguing questions: Was Jesus spiritually, but not physically, alive after his death? Are we all human and divine, not just Jesus? Do Heaven and Hell actually exist? Did Jesus die to save us from our sins (ignorance), or were we, are we, already "saved"? When we live these two basic teachings—by seeing the Sacred presence and radiating love—Christians and our religion, the author proposes, will become so "spiritually alive" that we will naturally begin to transform our world in many both practical and intangible ways ... and create a "revolution of love." "Writing with passion and courage, Ruth Whitney sets out to rescue Jesus from what Christianity has become. She offers fresh and radical thinking on the meaning of 'God' and afterlife, and she shows that Jesus may be the most misunderstood person in history. Whitney uncovers the moral and spiritual core of Jesus' teaching. This book is exciting and freeing." Daniel C. Maguire, Professor of Ethics at Marquette University and author and editor of thirteen books, including *Whose Church?* and *The Moral Core of Judaism and Christianity* "Ruth Whitney's new book, *The Heart of Jesus' Teaching*, is a radical rediscovery of the spiritual essence of Jesus' message, over against the long Christian history of dogmas about Jesus and his divine nature and redemptive work. For Whitney, the heart of Jesus' teaching is simply that God is present in all of us equally and we are all called to love and care for one another. If the Christian churches would put aside dogmas about Jesus and if Christians focus on doing Jesus' message, the world would truly be transformed." Dr. Rosemary Radford Ruether, theology professor, Claremont School of Theology, Claremont, California

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