

Marcus J. Borg & John Dominic Crossan  
**The First Christmas**  
*What the gospels really teach us about Jesus's birth*  
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Here is a valuable resource for any Christian who is tired of Christmas! We have succeeded, in the opinion of many, in making of the feast something sentimental, incomprehensible, hackney-ed and wearying. This, when it is remembered that the incarnation of God is the distinctively good news of the gospel, and the annual occasion for a public awareness of the church's claims, is not as it should be.

Borg and Crossan restore the biblical nativity narratives to a state of credibility, and give them a significance in their communication of the good news, far beyond that of telling us 'what happened'. The first two chapters of Matthew and Luke are to the stories which follow what the overture is to the opera, what a parable is to the truth it enshrines.

The argument, which takes into account the genealogies of Jesus Christ in Matthew and Luke, is presented in fascinating, and to most scholars convincing, detail. The reader is left with a Christmas which sheds light on the mystery of God's birth as a baby, and thus confirms faith and inspires worship.

*Anselm SSF*