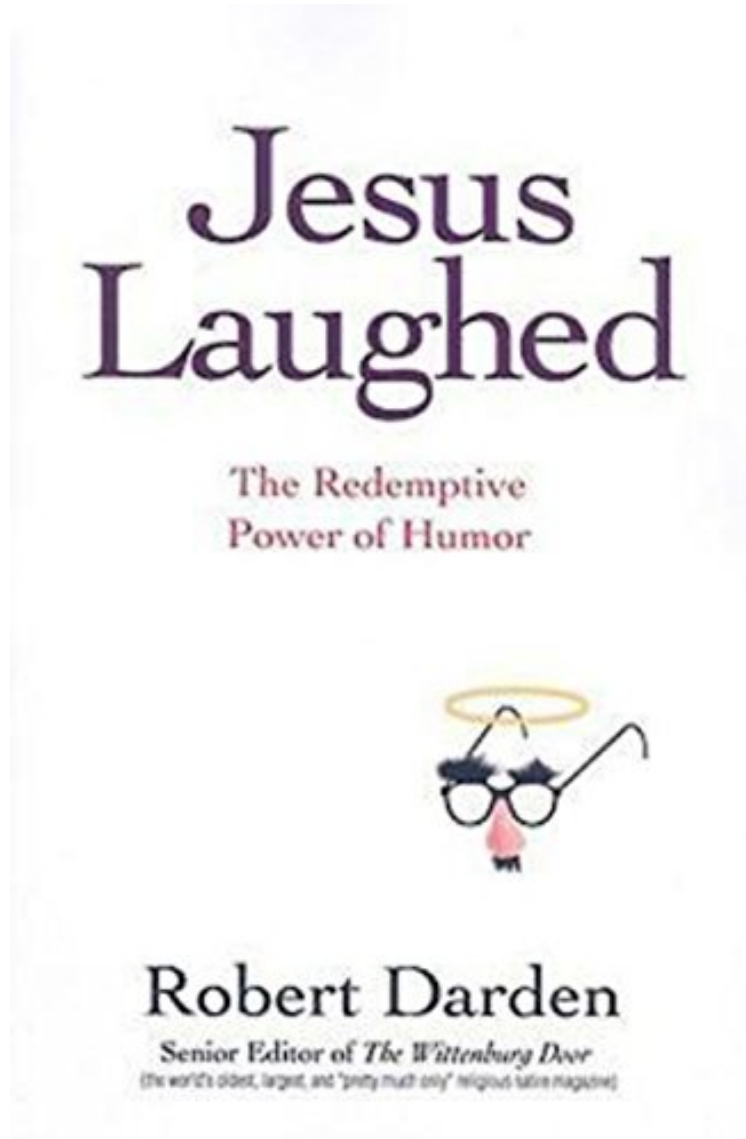


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Jesus Laughed: The Redemptive Power of Humor

Robert Darden

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Robert Darden : Jesus Laughed: The Redemptive Power of Humor before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Jesus Laughed: The Redemptive Power of Humor:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A Scholarly Approach to Humor in Christianity By E. House This book doesn't tell jokes; this book explains jokes. This isn't a criticism; as the author points out, so much of the bible is so familiar--or so culturally unfamiliar--that sometimes Christians truly need to have the humor explained. (Some may even be so accustomed to a certain view of expected Christian behavior that they don't feel like they have

permission to laugh.) Though the author explores many types and aspects of humor in the Bible, a substantial portion of the book is devoted to how other scholars have reacted to humor and expressions of humor in the Bible and within Christianity. So, this may not be what you're after--but it is a worthwhile read, particularly for those who've experienced the (increasingly uncommon, thank God) gloomy, dour, and unsmiling approach to worship, and who want a clearer understanding of how it happened, and some good reasons and a good biblical basis for choosing a different approach. A young pastor taking on an older congregation for the first time (or vice versa) might get a lot out of reading this; someone looking for a light, humorous devotional might want to look elsewhere! 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Great Basis For Presenting The Eucharist. By Yoshiame This book more than satisfied my need. I found it to be the perfect basis for a discussion with a group of Eucharistic Ministers. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Thought provoking By jpaulday Relevant scriptural references, quotes, and strategies to joyous living through incorporating humor to express one's faith in dealing with others.

"Agony and hilarity," said Norman MacLean, "are both necessary for salvation." We Christians seem to know a lot about the agony part, but what about hilarity? Why do we have to remind ourselves so often that the Bible is full of funny and ridiculous stories and situations? Why do so few of the pictures we've drawn of Jesus show him laughing? Because we've forgotten the redemptive power of humor, that's why. In *Jesus Laughed*, Robert Darden—senior editor of *The Wittenburg Door*, the world's oldest, largest, and pretty much only religious satire magazine—draws on his years of experience deflating religious pomposity and making the faithful laugh to show why humor is so central to the faith, and how to make it a big part of your daily walk with God. Click here to listen to Terri Gross's interview with Robert Darden on NPR's *Fresh Air* about the Black Gospel Music Restoration Project. Darden runs the project at Baylor University where he is a journalism professor. The purpose of the project is to identify, acquire, preserve, record, and catalogue the most at-risk music from the black gospel music tradition, primarily between 1945 and 1970. Robert Darden is Associate Professor of Journalism at Baylor University in Waco, Texas. He served for 12 years as Gospel Music Editor for *Billboard* magazine, and since 1988 has been Senior Editor of *The Wittenburg Door*, the world's oldest, largest, and "pretty much only" religious satire magazine. He is the author of more than 25 books, including the definitive *People Get Ready! A New History of Black Gospel Music*, which has been featured on National Public Radio, and *Reluctant Prophets* and *Clueless Disciples*, also published by Abingdon Press.

Senior editor of *The Wittenburg Door* for 20 years, the periodical that describes itself as "the world's pretty much only religious humor and satire magazine," Baylor journalism professor Darden knows something about wit. Combining passion for humor and his scholarly sensibilities, his new offering is and isn't a laughing matter. In an often breezy style, this historical, biblical, philological and psychological treatise is "a call to reclaim Holy Laughter for the church." Darden examines the ingredients of humor and ferrets out what's funny in scripture. After documenting how the Church lost its sense of humor, he champions the reasons "the redeemed ought to look more like it." Darden's reach is broad, embracing first-rate thinkers and writers such as Karl Barth, Elton Trueblood, C.S. Lewis, Annie Dillard and Anne Lamott, whose idea that "laughter is carbonated holiness" much captures his fancy. Insisting that a vital part of the human spirit needs to be brought to center stage within and without the walls of the Church, Darden maintains, "I believe with all my heart that God laughs and plays." Quoting Mark Lowry to bolster his case, Darden hammers home his point with "What healthy father doesn't love to hear his children laugh?" Clergy and laity should find reasons to rejoice in this important, timely book. --*Publisher's Weekly, Religion BookLine*, July 23, 2008 About the Author Robert Darden is Associate Professor of Journalism at Baylor University in Waco, Texas where he also runs the Black Gospel Music Restoration Project. He served for twelve years as Gospel Music Editor for *Billboard* magazine, and since 1988 has been Senior Editor of *The Wittenburg Door*, the world's oldest, largest, and "pretty much only" religious satire magazine. He has been featured on National Public Radio and authored more than twenty-five books on a wide array of subjects, from football to David Koresh, including *Reluctant Prophets* and *Clueless Disciples*, published by Abingdon Press, and the definitive *People Get Ready! A New History of Black Gospel Music*.