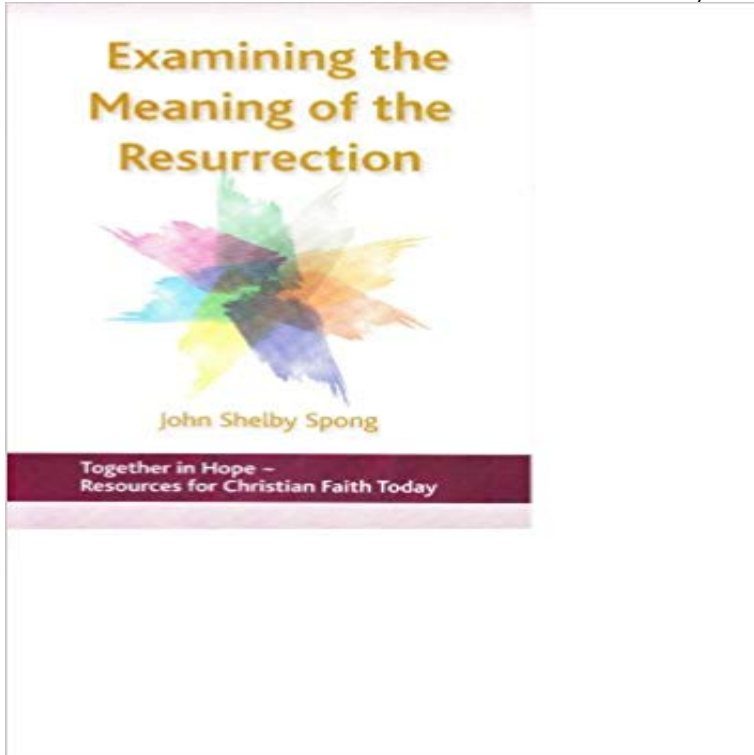


Examining the Meaning of the Resurrection (Together in Hope - Resources for Christian Faith Today Book 5)



Bishop Jack Spong has had a remarkable ministry both in the Episcopal Church of the United States, where he was Bishop of Newark, New Jersey until his retirement in 2000, and in the Church worldwide. Jack Spong has consistently called for a fundamental rethinking of Christian belief, especially the traditional theistic understanding of God as evidenced in the doctrines and creeds of orthodox Christianity. From 1973 to the present day, Bishop Spong's output of books has been prolific as has his tours across the continents, where people have flocked to hear his lectures. Not surprisingly Bishop Spong has provoked much opposition and hostility from more conservative Christian leaders, not least because of his uncompromising support of feminism, gay rights and racial equality within the church and society at large. Jack is a friend to the four organisations which publish this series of books. He was the guest speaker at the Modern Church conference held before the 1998 Lambeth Conference, when Jack nailed his own twelve points of reformation to the door of the Anglican Communion. He has been an invited speaker on a number of occasions at St Marks CRC in Sheffield, a guest of the Free to Believe conference and a good friend of the Progressive Christianity Network. In addition to his books, Jack has for a number of years written a weekly newsletter on-line and offers his readers a question and answer dialogue. This remarkably energetic output of essays continues to attract an international readership and is a tribute to Jack's zealous commitment to the promotion of a Christian faith credible for this third millennium. It is a series of on-line weekly essays that forms the basis of this book. The Resurrection of Jesus is central to Christian faith and hope for millions of Christians down the ages and across all cultures. Its historicity, nature and

significance have been debated since the time of the apostles and scholarly research has not diminished. 1994 saw the publication of Jack Spongs book, Resurrection: Myth or Reality? A Bishops Search for the Origins of Christianity. From May to July 2011, Bishop Spong published six essays on line, under the overall title: Examining the Meaning of the Resurrection, which revisit his thoughts and convictions about the significant meaning of the Resurrection for todays pilgrims. It is these six essays which form the chapters of this book. They bear the stamp of a continuous dialogue with the on-line readers and should be understood in this framework. Although this is but one particular way of interpreting the biblical account of the Resurrection (and there are references at the end of the book to other writings which our readers may find attractive), we hope the chapters will provoke interest and discussion about this important tenet of faith and belief. As usual we have appended to each chapter some questions to stimulate such discussion and thought. The text of these essays has of course remained unaltered apart from minor grammatical changes. Together in Hope is grateful to both Jack and Christine Spong for agreeing with our venture and to the Progressive Christianity Organisation in the USA and its President Fred Plumer for granting us permission to reproduce the essays.

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