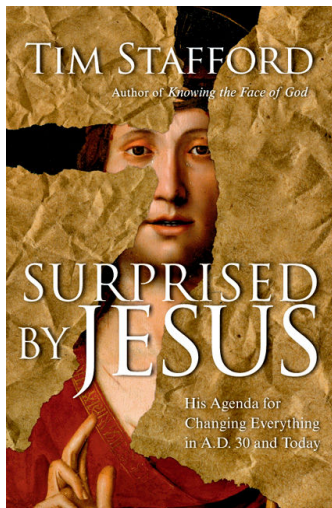


## How well do you know Jesus?



**Tim Stafford** is a senior writer for *Christianity Today*. Among his many books are *Knowing the Face of God*, *As Our Years Increase*, *The Student Bible* (with Philip Yancey), *Love, Sex and the Whole Person*, a trilogy of historical fiction (*The Stamp of Glory*, *Sisters* and *The Law of Love*), and *Never Mind the Joneses*.

\*\**Surprised by Jesus*, 253 pages, cloth, \$17, 0-8308-3340-4, July 2006

*“Why am I surprised to be, well, surprised, at Surprised by Jesus? My immediate response is how livable the life of Jesus is for us—livable in secularized North America and in our much-maligned church. Tim Stafford has given us Jesus without clichés, without moralisms. . . . Jesus not only as he was, but as he is.”*

—Eugene H. Peterson, translator of *The Message*

Tim Stafford writes: “As a result of seeing Jesus more clearly, I see my life—and human life—as deeper and grander. I see myself not as an isolated individual, a religious consumer who gets pleasurable spiritual experiences through Jesus. Rather I see myself bound into his family, joining in his astonishing flesh-and-blood mission to redeem the cosmos. I am part of a four-thousand-year-old movement that has outlasted empires and will, in the end, assume the administration of everything.”

In his new book *Surprised by Jesus: His Agenda for Changing Everything in A.D. 30 and Today* Stafford takes you beyond the Jesus you know—or think you know. He helps you to understand the historical and cultural context in which Jesus lived in order to convey the full reality of Jesus’ agenda. “If we settle for a superficial understanding of who he was and what he intended, we end up preaching a superficial gospel,” writes Stafford. “The ‘everybody knows’ version of Jesus too easily carries an individualistic, consumer-oriented appeal. . . . Jesus would never have recognized faith lived apart from history and place and neighbors—and neither will we, if we are grounded in his life.”

### **TALKING POINTS:**

- Why is it important to comprehend Jesus as a first-century Jew in order to understand his eternal significance?
- What difference does Jesus’ baptism, his teachings on miracles, and his death and resurrection *really* make for us today?
- In what ways do many people miss the fullness of Jesus’ agenda?