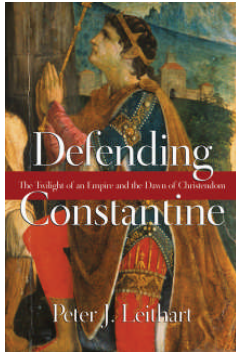


TALKING POINTS



*Defending Constantine:
The Twilight of an Empire
and the Dawn of
Christendom*
367 pages, paperback,
978-0-8308-2722-0, \$27

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“Constantine has been sketched luridly, as the man who corrupted Christianity. . . . At long last we have . . . a writer who knows how to tell a lively story but is also no mean shakes as a scholarly historian. This intelligent and sensitive treatment . . . is a trustworthy entrée into Roman history that loses none of the romance and rambunctiousness of the events of the era, . . . but which also explains why Constantine matters . . . to the development of Christianity. . . . For setting the record straight, and for providing a sense of the complicated lay of the land, this book comes most highly recommended.”

—John A. McGuckin,
Columbia University


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Constantine in Context

What is the “standard story” about the life, the faith and the significance of Constantine?

What historical elements are essential for a proper understanding of what Constantine did and how it affected Christianity?

Leithart uses the phrase “political theology.” What does he mean by this phrase? Can you describe a Roman political theology leading to the time of Constantine?

According to *Defending Constantine*, how did sacrifice factor into Roman political theology? How did Constantine change this?

Leithart questions modern pacifists’ reliance on a particular version of the “Constantinian shift” in attitudes toward violence, military service and the Roman Empire. What does Leithart set forth as the accurate historical picture of these changes?

The material of *Defending Constantine* may challenge present-day political theologies that rely on history for justification. Does it do so? If so, in what ways?



Peter J. Leithart (Ph.D., University of Cambridge) is a senior fellow at New Saint Andrews College in Moscow, Idaho, and pastor of Trinity Reformed Church. Leithart has written numerous articles for publications such as the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, *First Things*, *Modern Theology*, *Journal of Biblical Literature* and *The Westminster Theological Journal*, and he serves as a contributing editor to *Touchstone* magazine. He is the author of several books, including *Deep Exegesis: The Mystery of Reading Scripture*, *Solomon Among the Postmoderns* and *1 & 2 Kings* in the Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible.

Media Contact | For more information and to schedule an interview with our featured author contact:
Krista Carnet, broadcast publicity, at 800.843.4587 ext. 4013 or kkcarnet@ivpress.com
Heather Mascarello, print publicity, at 800.843.4587 ext. 4012 or hmascarello@ivpress.com
Adrianna Wright, online publicity, at 800.843.4587 ext. 4096 or awright@ivpress.com
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