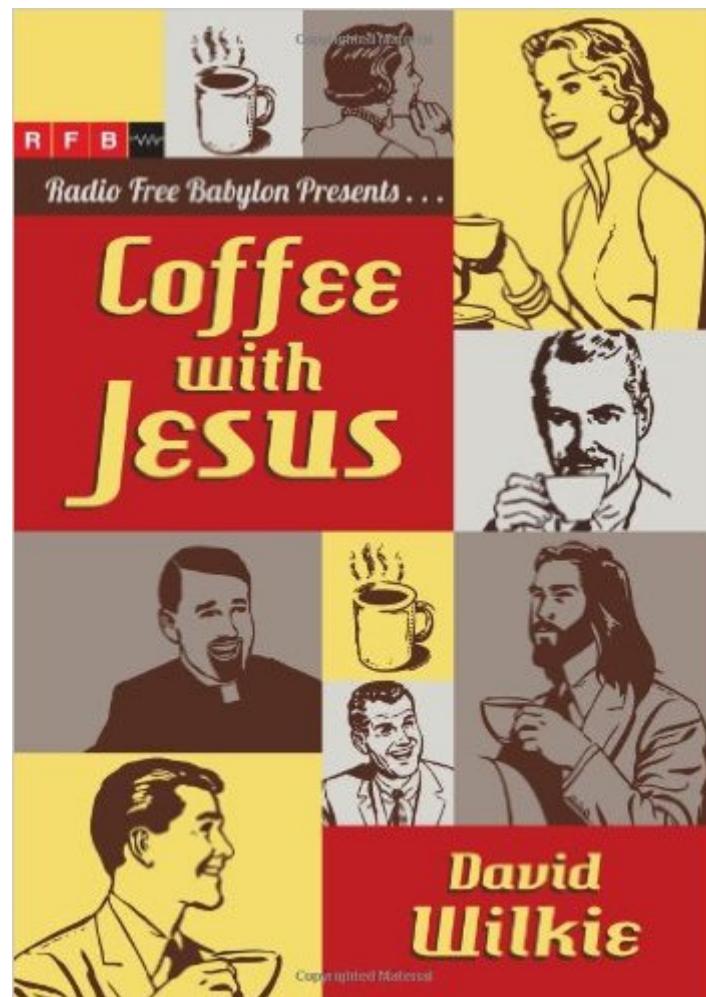


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# Coffee With Jesus



## Synopsis

One of Library Journal's "Best Books 2013" (spirituality/religion) ForeWord 2013 Book of the Year Award Finalist (Graphic Novels and Comics) 2014 Midwest Publishing Association Honorable Mention (Special Trade) Thousands of people start each day with a shot of Coffee with Jesus, the enormously popular online comic strip. Irreverent at times, yet always insightful, this volume features classic entries and all new, exclusive material that was born out of artist David Wilkie's frustration with the polarized political climate in America. "Originally created as a one-off, single-panel comic on my blog, utilizing old advertising clip art for the main characters and Sunday school clip art for the person of Jesus, I simply enjoyed the notion of Jesus appearing at table with these people (dressed as they were and sharing coffee with them) to refute their claims of how he might vote on any particular issue, to convince them that they cannot confuse their flag with their Godâ• to set them straight, as it were," explains Wilkie. But it didn't stop here. Soon the Jesus of Coffee with Jesus could be seen offering counsel to a recurring cast of characters on their personal and work lives. The charactersâ• Carl, Lisa, Ann, Kevin and Joeâ• all honestly engage with Jesus about their successes and failures and wants and needs, effectively showing what conversation with Godâ• or prayerâ• might look like. Poignant, pointed, and rife with good theology, Coffee with Jesus is organized around six themes: getting to know Jesus, spiritual disciplines, relationships, culture, church, and the challenges of life. With exclusive material like twelve-panel mega-strips and "behind the strip" reflections on life, faith and art, Wilkie inventively poses answers to the perpetual Christian speculation, "What would Jesus do?"

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I have followed the Radio Free Babylon page on Facebook for a while now while watching the Coffee with Jesus comics float by, often several times watching numerous friends share and share alike. They are usually four frame doses of reality needed by Christians. Often edgy, never preachy, but always spot on, creator David Wilkie highlights the often hypocritical and uninformed, but well meaning plight of the American Christian. Wilkie has assembled the best strips, presenting them in 6 chapters along with an appendix of special events, such as Resolutions. They are the comedic outtakes of what we'd expect Jesus to say. I like my Jesus with some sass. Maybe they are a bit snarky, but there is much truth hidden behind the few words we often take as sarcasm. Presented are everyday complaints from Christians we all know. Jesus answers them succinctly and satisfactorily well. What emerges are four-act sermons much more fulfilling than the Jack Chick tracts you find on truck stop bathroom walls. Included as well are character profiles and a conversation starter (a series of questions that may make you feel funny). American Christians, as a whole, take themselves too seriously. We believe our issues are those Jesus would march for or protest against. We believe our plight is dangerous and we are persecuted. We think we are the sum total of the Christian faith. American Christianity as a whole needs to be hit one good time in the ole kisser and thrown back on our heels. Coffee with Jesus doesn't quite do that, but it is a start. We know it is coming. Wilkie is a cartoonist, a satirist, a Christian, and a revealer (because prophet sounds cheesy) of our very public flaws. You cannot read this book without laughing and crying at the same time. These characters are us. A blurb insists the book is the best thing for evangelisation since "Mere Christianity." I disagree. Coffee with Jesus is the best thing for internal organizing since Saul Alinsky. This book is needed for the insider Christianity, the Kevins, Lisas, and Anns of the Church.

“*Coffee with Jesus*” is a remarkable comic strip, consisting of characters talking over coffee with Jesus. Obviously, this is a way of portraying prayer in a broad sense, including an ongoing conversation during the day. Many strips will speak to part of your life, and others will help you empathize with others. Almost always with a smile. Wilkie has developed a very interesting Jesus here, one that may rub literalists the wrong way. Jesus is a counselor with a sense of humor and not a little irony. At the same time, he does assert his prerogatives as God, and he’s not above trash talking with Satan. But don’t think this comic is only for Christians. Indeed, I first learned of this strip from an atheist friend, who is a big fan. Wilkie touches on issues everyone deals with, and you’ll identify with parts of each character. It has the same kind of life insights as another remarkable comic, “*Calvin and Hobbes*.” You don’t have to be a boy or a tiger to appreciate that, do

you? Artistically, this is the simplest comic you'll ever see with one exception, each character has only one pose, seen at two distances. A smile will occasionally become a closed mouth. Jesus almost always appears in the second and fourth panel, and one character in the other two. That's it. It's remarkably effective. Some features of the Coffee world will shape the reader's reaction to this material. Wilkie comes from an evangelical background that clearly stamps the kinds of Christianity he knows, the world of mega-churches, charismatic pastors, and a certain kind of Bible study. African Methodist Episcopalian and Catholics will recognize their neighbors here, but not their own church. When Wilkie talks politics, it's clear that his characters are G. W. Bush evangelicals though Wilkie is more inclusive. Indeed, Wilkie would rather get partisan politics out of the church entirely. Even so, whatever your church, whatever your politics, you'll find something here.

Taken individually, the CWJ strips are amusing, and sometimes insightful, thought-provoking, and/or convicting. Taken together as a body of work, they are nothing short of brilliant.

I have been a regular follower of the webcomic, Coffee with Jesus, for about a year. I saw earlier this year that they were pre-selling the comic in paperback form, and thought it would be a good purchase as a conversation starter for when friends came over. I could not have been more wrong! It is an amazing conversation starter, but that isn't even the beginning. This book is laid out in a way where it is easy to read in spurts or as a discussion book. I am already starting a curriculum to use a few of the comic story progressions in a Sunday school class. It is grouped in such a way that the comics on one page present a narrative that allows me to laugh one moment, seriously reflect the next, and then be inspired to go out and share the love of Christ over a cup of joe with a friend, so that maybe they'll get the feelings that these characters get. It isn't just laughs, but some serious issues. It doesn't present Jesus through a denominational lens, but as a Man with whom we can relate, a God who we can trust, and a Friend who comforts, protects, and even critiques us, when appropriate.

The best cartoons are those that make you think as well as laugh. Doonesbury, Pogo, Mallard Fillmore and others have done this really well. They hold a mirror up to us so we can see our foibles. Religious humor has not been so helpful, perhaps because we church folks are threatened by self examination. We don't want to admit we get it wrong because then we may be getting the big things wrong. The coffee with Jesus strip showed up on my Facebook timeline about 6 or 8 months. I

found it funny and thought provoking. As I shared it with my friends-most of whom are religious and maybe a little twisted, they all loved it. When I saw this collection of the strip was coming out, I had to have it. It did not disappoint.Funny, a great read, thought provoking-exactly what I needed to keep me honest

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