



Dostoevsky: Language, Faith, and Fiction (Making of the Christian Imagination)

By Rowan Williams

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Rowan Williams explores the intricacies of speech, fiction, metaphor, and iconography in the works of one of literature's most complex, and most complexly misunderstood, authors. Williams' investigation focuses on the four major novels of Dostoevsky's maturity (*Crime and Punishment*, *The Idiot*, *Devils*, and *The Brothers Karamozov*). He argues that understanding Dostoevsky's style and goals as a writer of fiction is inseparable from understanding his religious commitments. Any reader who enters the rich and insightful world of Williams' *Dostoevsky* will emerge a more thoughtful and appreciative reader for it.

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Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #1260249 in Books
- Published on: 2011-07-13
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x 6.00" w x .75" l, .94 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 304 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

"[*Dostoevsky*] is a wonderfully intelligent, stylish reading of the novels, with?as one would expect?fascinating things to say about the religious life at the heart of Dostoevsky's fiction, and about his handling of it. However well you think you know the novels, this book will show you new things you missed."?A. N. Wilson, *The Times Literary Supplement*

"This book is not at all what one expects it to be. Over five bold and compelling chapters, Rowan Williams performs a tour-de-force reading of Dostoevsky's major novels."?Robert Bird, University of Chicago, *The Journal of Religion*

"Williams takes us on a journey through a world where philosophy and theology are not dry on a page, but moist with tears of compassion. After reading this breathtaking book, we return to Dostoevsky with new insight on what it means to be human, and above all, to sense the dark and urgent presence of the living God."?N. T. Wright, Bishop of Durham

"After reading Williams' book, we return to Dostoevsky with new insight on what it means to be human."?N. T. Wright, Bishop of Durham

"Williams' examination of the extent to which Dostoevsky's Orthodox context informed his work is . . . a welcome contribution to both literary and theological studies . . . By considering the context of Eastern Orthodoxy in which Dostoevsky wrote, Williams enables the reader to look more perceptively into the depictions that emerge from Dostoevsky's literary and religious imagination."?David McNutt, *Books & Culture*

". . . compelling and relentlessly focused . . . [*Dostoevsky*] contains some of the most profound expositions of a truly spiritual existence that I have ever read."?Roger S. Gottlieb, *Tikkun*

"Combating the interpretation of Dostoevsky as preoccupied with the tension between belief and nonbelief, he argues the work is first and foremost a direct reflection of Dostoevsky's personal faith.... Recommended."?CHOICE

"Williams himself has presented a uniquely important and effective apologetic for the depth and timeliness of Dostoevsky's religious vision, especially where English-speaking theology is concerned, since this tradition (whether Roman Catholic or Protestant) has been remarkably slow to appreciate the rich theological resource represented by Dostoevsky's novels."?Bruce Ward, Laurentian University, *Pro Ecclesia*

"Rowan Williams, archbishop of Canterbury... has produced what is to date certainly one of the finest books on Dostoevsky's religious vision. Brilliantly, Williams demonstrates the connection between this vision, yes, even faith, and the art that Dostoevsky created."?Logos: A Journal of Eastern Christian Studies 50

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About the Author

Rowan Williams (Ph.D. Wadham College, Oxford) is the Archbishop of Canterbury. Having received his D.

Phil. From Oxford, he held a variety of academic posts in Oxford and Cambridge, before leaving the Lady Margaret Professorship of Divinity at Oxford to be successfully Bishop of Monmouth and the Archbishop of Wales. He has published 12 books, including, most recently, *Why Study the Past?* (2005), *Poems* (2002), and *Writing in the Dust: Reflections on the 11th September and Its Aftermath* (2002).

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