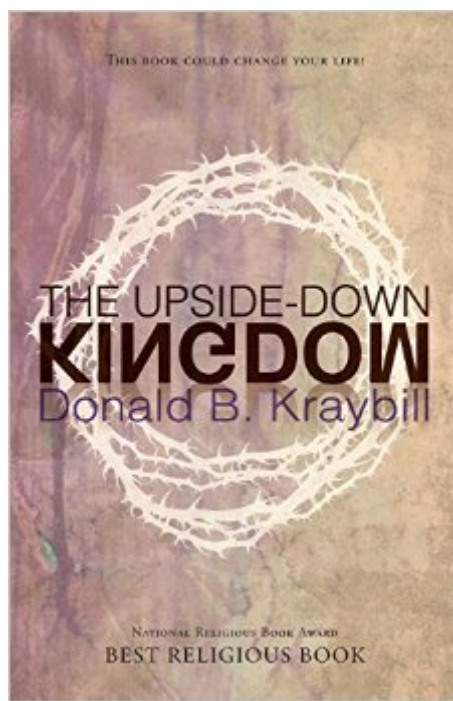


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# The Upside-Down Kingdom



## Synopsis

Completely revised in 2003, *The Upside-Down Kingdom* continues to change people's lives. In it, Donald B. Kraybill shows how the kingdom of God announced by Jesus appeared upside-down in first-century Palestine. Jesus wins by serving and triumphs by losing. Today, God's way still looks upside-down as it breaks into diverse cultures around the world. Translated into six languages, and with 100,000 sold, this book continues to call many to radical discipleship.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (27 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #96,162 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #2 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Christian Denominations & Sects > Mennonite](#) #147 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Theology > Ethics](#) #1353 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Bible Study & Reference > Bible Study](#)

## Customer Reviews

During my studies at Fresno Pacific University, a Mennonite university, *The Upside Down Kingdom* by Donald Kraybill was required reading for the completion of a degree in social work. Through a move across country the book was lost, and I was so pleased to discover a copy for my Kindle. I had been very impressed by the content of the book and reflected often upon the radical view of the social application of Jesus's teachings. It was a joy to be able to again have the book in my possession. Mr. Kraybill is Mennonite and the theme of passive non-violent resistance is elucidated through his setting forth the Kingdom of God as being a dynamic presence for good now and not at some future time. The Jesus of this writing is not some absolutist figure concerned with just the hereafter destiny of humanity; he represents a God of justice, compassion, and strength who is intimately involved in the revelation of the whole of creation made in His image and likeness, as set forth in the first chapter of Genesis. Kraybill sees salvation as including the very practical and tangible expression of divinity made manifest in humanity and in the establishment of an equitable

and just society. A thought provoking and ideal changing read for any individual passionate for equanimity and social justice and reform.

I purchased this book to give to a friend. I can think of no better way to explain the meaning of Christian faith. Donald Kraybill is both profound and totally accessible. A little like Jesus himself.

I think some of the chapters are great and very insightful. I like the chapter on nonviolence and nonresistance and the observations about women. I agree with much of what Kraybill says about being more careful of what we do with the wealth that God has entrusted to us. Jesus commanded us to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, give shelter to those without, visit the sick; these are things that Christians need to get better at doing (myself included). These are needs that if not met will result in death. However in my understanding of his text (specifically Ch 6), Kraybill seems to suggest that Christians ought to redistribute their wealth to the poor (even if the basic needs mentioned above have been met). I don't think Jesus intended us to take 40% of our salary and give it to someone who has these needs met, but is just not as comfortable as the middle class. Jesus chided the rich man for not helping poor Lazarus find a home to live in and food to eat. I agree with Kraybill that the gospel is not just about thoughts and agreements, but about doing; however, his text has some sections which seem to be too heavily influenced by secular sociology.

I echo the sentiments of every comment made thus far. Anyone who purports to be a Christian no matter what particular Christian denomination they ascribe to should read this book. It is one of the few books that I will read over and over again. Why? Because it gives me yet another perspective of the Christ--the Master--that makes me stand even more in awe of Him. And this book makes it very clear how far I have yet to travel along The Path before I can legitimately call myself a true "Christian" after the manner of Jesus the Christ. Thank you Mr. Kraybill, for writing this book.

I have heard some others describe this book as too much like a textbook (and indeed, it is used as a textbook at some seminaries), however, I don't agree with that assessment. As with any serious nonfiction book, the ideas discussed are not "too difficult" to understand, but taking time between readings to chew on the material may be beneficial. Kraybill has written about how the historical Jesus, both by his actions and teachings, essentially surprised his followers (and naysayers/opponents) by introducing them to the idea that "the world" is essentially an upside-down system from what God the Creator intended. Just as many non-scholars and non-theologians find

the nonfiction writings of C.S. Lewis to be helpful in their spiritual journey, this book by Kraybill may be read by most literate believers and increase their understanding, without erudite scholarly language that will scare them away. Highly recommended for the ideas presented, and the style of the writing.

I read this book when it first came out. Then, someone borrowed it and did not return it. I bought for a project I am working on. If you wish to understand why so many are fleeing the church, why spirituality and religion are being separated and how the church can recover its authentic good news story this book is a must read. Grounded in research but told in very clear language one discovers a Kingdom we moderns may have never heard of or certainly not experienced. Kierkegaard once wrote, "The Bible is very easy to understand. But we Christians are a bunch of scheming swindlers. We pretend to be unable to understand it because we know very well that the minuet we understand, we are obliged to act accordingly." This book is dangerous and a threat to Christianity as we know it. Thank God.

I first read this book years ago. I was an eye opener then as its one of the few books written from Donald's unique perspective. Using some of the social and religious disciplines most often ignored by most all writers..

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