How do we distinguish between truth and error? Which differences in belief should be tolerated? A leading researcher, Bowman shows how and where Christians must take a stand and calls for reasoned evaluation in love. Includes appendixes, a glossary of frequently misused words, and lists of other resources.

This short and accessible book introduces readers to the problems of heresy, schism and dissidence over the last two millennia. The heresies under discussion range from Gnosticism, influential in the early Christian period, right through to modern sects. The idea of a heretic conjures up many images, from the martyrs prepared to die for their beliefs, through to sects with bizarre practices. This book provides a remarkable insight into the fraught history of heresy, showing how the Church came to insist on orthodoxy when threatened by alternative ideals, exploring the social and political conditions under which heretics were created, and how those involved were 'tested' and punished, often by imprisonment and burning. Engaging written, A Brief History of Heresy is enlivened throughout with fascinating examples of individuals and movements. A short, accessible history of heresy. Spans the last two millennia, from the Gnostics through to modern sects. Considers heresy in relation to ecclesial separatism, doctrinal disagreement, church order, and basic metaphysics. Enlivened with intriguing examples of individuals and movements. Written by a leading academic in the field of Religious History.

The history of Christian theology is in large part a history of heresies, because Jesus and the claims he made . . . seemed incredible," writes the author. Heresies presents "the story of how succeeding generations of Christians through almost twenty centuries have tried to understand, trust, and obey Jesus Christ." Particularly concerned with christology and trinitarianism, the author calls on the four major creeds of the church--Apostles', Nicene, Athanasian, and Chalcedonian--to separate orthodoxy from heresy. He acknowledges that heresy has done much more than confuse and divide the church. It has also helped the church to classify orthodoxy. Just as heresy served this purpose historically, so it serves this purpose pedagogically in Heresies. This volume presents a clarion call to evangelicals to preserve tenaciously "the faith once delivered to the saints." Frank E. James III wrote in the Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society: "Brown deserves to be commended not only for his insightful scholarship and his readable style but also and more importantly for providing a sorely-needed jab to the soft underbelly of modern evangelicalism."

In Heresy, leading religion expert and church historian Alister McGrath reveals the surprising history of heresy and rival forms of Christianity, arguing that the church must continue to defend what is true about Jesus. He explains that remaining faithful to Jesus’s
mission and message is still the mandate of the church despite increasingly popular cries that traditional dogma is outdated and restricts individual freedom.

“Guilt by Association explores the creation, publication, and circulation of heresy catalogues by second- and early third-century Christians. Polemicists made use of these religious blacklists, which include the names of heretical teachers along with summaries of their unsavory doctrines and nefarious misdeeds, in order to discredit opponents and advocate their expulsion from the “authentic” Christianity community. The heresy catalogue proved to be an especially effective literary technology in struggles for religious authority and legitimacy because it not only recast rival teachers as menacing adversaries, but also reinforced such characterizations by organizing otherwise unaffiliated teachers into coherent intellectual, social, and scholastic communities that are established and sustained by demonic powers. This study focuses especially on the earliest Christian heresy catalogues, those found within the works of Justin, Irenaeus, Hegesippus, and the authors the Testimony of Truth and the Tripartite Tractate, with a special emphasis on the first two. Justin and Irenaeus receive special attention not because as so-called “fathers of the church” they occupy a privileged position in the historical record, but because by promoting and making use of a particular heresy catalogue, the Syntagma against All the Heresies, they popularized one specific heresiological model at the expense of others. By focusing upon the heresy catalogue, Guilt by Association not only accounts for the emergence of the Christian heresiological tradition; it also sheds new light upon the socio-rhetorical aims of the Pastoral Epistles, the circulation of early Christian literature, the emergence of a distinct Christian identity, and the origins of Gnosticism”--

In Modernist Heresies, Damon Franke presents the discourse of heresy as central to the intellectual history of the origins of British modernism. The book examines heretical discourses from literature and culture of the fin de siècle and the Edwardian period in order to establish continuities between Victorian blasphemy and modernist obscenity by tracing the dialectic of heresy and orthodoxy, and the pragmatic shifting of both heterodox and authoritative discourses. Franke documents the untold history of the Cambridge Heretics Society and places the concerns of this discussion society in dialogue with contemporaneous literature by such authors as Pater, Hardy, Shaw, Joyce, Woolf, Lawrence, and Orwell. Since several highly influential figures of the modernist literati were members of the Heretics or in dialogue with the group, heresy and its relation to synthesis now become crucial to an understanding of modernist aesthetics and ethics. From the 1880s through the 1920s, heresy commonly appears in literature as a discursive trope, and the literary mode of heresy shifts over the course of this time from one of syncretism to one based on the construction of modernist artificial or “synthetic” wholes. In Franke’s work, the discourse of heresy comes forth as a forgotten dimension of the origins of modernism, one deeply entrenched in Victorian blasphemy and the crisis in faith, and one pointing to the censorship of modernist literature and some of the first doctrines of literary criticism.

The history of Christian theology is in large part a history of heresies, because Jesus and the claims he made . . . seemed incredible," writes the author. "Heresies" presents "the story of how succeeding generations of Christians through almost twenty centuries have tried to understand, trust, and obey Jesus Christ." Particularly concerned with christology and trinitarianism, the author calls on the four major creeds of the church Apostles’, Nicene, Athanasian, and Chalcedonian to separate orthodoxy from heresy. He acknowledges that heresy has done much more than confuse and divide the church. It has also helped the church to classify orthodoxy. Just as heresy served this purpose historically, so it serves this purpose pedagogically in "Heresies." This volume presents a clarion call to evangelicals to preserve tenaciously "the faith once delivered to the saints." Frank E. James III wrote in the "Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society": "Brown deserves to be commended not only for his insightful scholarship and his readable style but also and more importantly for providing a sorely-needed jab to the soft underbelly of modern evangelicalism." "

This book breaks with three common scholarly barriers of periodization, discipline and geography in its exploration of the related themes of heresy, magic and witchcraft. It sets aside constructed chronological boundaries, and in doing so aims to achieve a clearer picture of what ‘went before’, as well as what ‘came after’. Thus the volume demonstrates continuity as well as change in the concepts and understandings of magic, heresy and witchcraft. In addition, the geographical pattern of similarities and diversities suggests a
A comparative approach, transcending confessional as well as national borders. Throughout the medieval and early modern period, the orthodoxy of the Christian Church was continuously contested. The challenge of heterodoxy, especially as expressed in various kinds of heresy, magic and witchcraft, was constantly present during the period 1200-1650. Neither contesters nor followers of orthodoxy were homogeneous groups or fractions. They themselves and their ideas changed from one century to the next, from region to region, even from city to city, but within a common framework of interpretation. This collection of essays focuses on this complex.

This polemic against the “Bauer-Ehrman Thesis” examines modern New Testament criticism against orthodoxy in early Christianity. Throughout, vigilance is shown toward the modern adherence to postmodern ideals of diversity.

"[]God had commanded"? Search the records of the whole world, find out the history of every barbarous tribe, and you can't find no crime that touched a lower depth of infamy than those the bible's God commanded and approved. For such a God I have no words to express my loathing and contempt, and all the words in all the languages of man would scarcely be sufficient. Away with such a God! Give me Jupiter rather, with Io and Europa, or even Siva with his skulls and snakes. Tenth. With having repudiated the doctrine of "total depravity." What a precious doctrine is that of the total depravity of the human heart! How sweet it is to believe that the lives of all the good and great were continual sins and perpetual crimes; that the love a mother bears her child is, in the sight of God, a sin; that the gratitude of the natural heart[]."

Utilizing the Apostles', Nicene, Athanasian, and Chalcedonian Creed--the author assesses the orthodoxy and heresy of diverse movements and peoples from the origins of Christianity to the present.

Ancient heresies have modern expressions that influence our churches and culture, creating cruel dilemmas for today's Christian in the form of error, sin, and various distortions on orthodox faith. In Cruelty of Heresy, Bishop Allison captures the drama and relevance of the Councils of the fourth and fifth centuries and shows how the remarkable achievements of these early struggles provide valuable guidelines for believers today.

James R. Payton, Jr. introduces us to Eastern Orthodox history, theology and practice. For all readers interested in ancient ecumenical Christian theology and spirituality, this book is especially open and sympathetic to what evangelicals can learn from orthodoxy.

Heresy is a central concept in the formation of Orthodox Christianity. Where does this notion come from? This book traces the construction of the idea of 'heresy' in the rhetoric of ideological disagreements in Second Temple Jewish and early Christian texts and in the development of the polemical rhetoric against 'heretics,' called heresiology. Here, author Robert Royalty argues, one finds the origin of what comes to be labelled 'heresy' in the second century. In other words, there was such as thing as 'heresy' in ancient Jewish and Christian discourse before it was called 'heresy.' And by the end of the first century, the notion of heresy was integral to the political positioning of the early orthodox Christian party within the Roman Empire and the range of other Christian communities. This book is an original contribution to the field of Early Christian studies. Recent treatments of the origins of heresy and Christian identity have focused on the second century rather than on the earlier texts including the New Testament. The book further makes a methodological contribution by blurring the line between New Testament Studies and Early Christian studies, employing ideological and post-colonial critical methods.

Apart from his detective stories, G. K. Chesterton is well known for his reasoned apologetics. Even some of those who disagree with him have recognized the wide appeal of his Theological Works. Chesterton routinely referred to himself as an "orthodox" Christian, and came to identify this position more and more with Catholicism, eventually converting to Catholicism from High Church Anglicanism. "Heretics" is a
collection of 20 essays and presents Chesterton's first book of Christian apologetics. Chesterton describes his understanding of the words Orthodox and Heretic as they apply to, and have changed in, the modern period. Chesterton argues that in modernity, "The word 'orthodoxy' not only no longer means being right; it practically means being wrong". He continues to make a point that society no longer tolerates a man's life philosophy or religion, yet is increasingly absorbed in "art for art's sake". "Orthodoxy" has become a classic of Christian apologetics. In the book's preface Chesterton states the purpose is to "attempt an explanation, not of whether the Christian faith can be believed, but of how he personally has come to believe it." In it, Chesterton presents an original view of Christian religion. He sees it as the answer to natural human needs, the "answer to a riddle" in his own words, and not simply as an arbitrary truth received from somewhere outside the boundaries of human experience. "The Everlasting Man" is the third of Chesterton's Christian apologetics book. It is, to some extent, a deliberate rebuttal of H. G. Wells' The Outline of History, disputing Wells' portrayals of human life and civilization as a seamless development from animal life and of Jesus Christ as merely another charismatic figure. Chesterton detailed his own spiritual journey in Orthodoxy, but in this book he tries to illustrate the spiritual journey of humanity, or at least of Western civilization.

Focusing on "heretics" — those who pride themselves in their superiority to conservative views — Chesterton appraises prominent figures from the literary and art worlds such as Kipling, Shaw, Wells, and Whistler.

Beginning with Walter Bauer in 1934, the denial of clear orthodoxy in early Christianity has shaped and largely defined modern New Testament criticism, recently given new life through the work of spokesmen like Bart Ehrman. Spreading from academia into mainstream media, the suggestion that diversity of doctrine in the early church led to many competing orthodoxies is indicative of today's postmodern relativism. Authors Köstenberger and Kruger engage Ehrman and others in this polemic against a dogged adherence to popular ideals of diversity. Köstenberger and Kruger's accessible and careful scholarship not only counters the "Bauer Thesis" using its own terms, but also engages overlooked evidence from the New Testament. Their conclusions are drawn from analysis of the evidence of unity in the New Testament, the formation and closing of the canon, and the methodology and integrity of the recording and distribution of religious texts within the early church.

Christian dualism originated in the reign of Constans II (641-68). It was a popular religion, which shared with orthodoxy an acceptance of scriptural authority and apostolic tradition and held a sacramental doctrine of salvation, but understood all these in a radically different way to the Orthodox Church. One of the differences was the strong part demonology played in the belief system. This text traces, through original sources, the origins of dualist Christianity throughout the Byzantine Empire, focusing on the Paulician movement in Armenia and Bogomilism in Bulgaria. It presents not only the theological texts, but puts the movements into their social and political context.

Written by an L. A. County homicide detective and former atheist, Cold-Case Christianity examines the claims of the New Testament using the skills and strategies of a hard-to-convince criminal investigator. Christianity could be defined as a "cold case": it makes a claim about an event from the distant past for which there is little forensic evidence. In Cold-Case Christianity, J. Warner Wallace uses his nationally recognized skills as a homicide detective to look at the evidence and eyewitnesses behind Christian beliefs. Including gripping stories from his career and the visual techniques he developed in the courtroom, Wallace uses illustration to examine the powerful evidence that validates the claims of Christianity. A unique apologetic that speaks to readers' intense interest in detective stories, Cold-Case Christianity inspires readers to have confidence in Christ as it prepares them to articulate the case for Christianity.

In recent years, an internal debate has arisen in Saudi Arabia on the legitimacy of Saudi religion and the foundations of Islam. Sparked by concerns such as the absence of divine intervention in the Syrian civil war, the question of the Muslim monopoly on heaven, and politically subversive differentiations between "Saudi religion" and Islam, the challenge within Saudi Arabia to religious orthodoxy has never been greater. Tweeted Heresies explores the emergence of these patterns of non-belief and the responses to them from the Salafi-Wahhabi religious institutions. Previous studies have focused on formal institutions and their role in religious change. Abdullah Hamidaddin
focuses on individuals who took advantage of social media during a period of relative freedom of expression to criticize religion and question the most fundamental aspects of Saudi society: its politics, religion, social justice, gender and sexual relations, and the future of the country. These individuals mounted a direct challenge to religious orthodoxy, whether through calls for religious reform or, even more provocatively, debates over concepts of deity, morality, and duty to Allah. For the foreseeable future criticism is limited to virtual spaces, and the conversation was especially active on Twitter. Tweeted Heresies examines a large body of tweets, as well as interviews with Saudis about how their understanding and critique of religion have developed over the course of their lives. The result is a uniquely revealing portrait of an otherwise hidden current of religious change that promises to ultimately transform Saudi society.

In The Great Heresies, Hilaire Belloc takes the reader on a fast and furious tour of European history seen through the lens of its chief religious conflicts - Arianism, 'Mohammedanism' (Islam), Albigensianism, the Reformation, and what he terms 'The Modern Phase.'

Heresy studies is a new interdisciplinary, supra-religious, and humanist field of study that focuses on borderlands of dogma, probes the intersections between orthodoxy and heterodoxy, and explores the realms of dissent in religion, art, and literature. Free from confessional agendas and tolerant of both religious and non-religious perspectives, heresy studies fulfill an important gap in scholarly inquiry and artistic production. Divided into four parts, the volume explores intersections between heresy and modern literature, it discusses intricacies of medieval heresies, it analyzes issues of heresy in contemporary theology, and it demonstrates how heresy operates as an artistic stimulant. Rather than treating matters of heresy, blasphemy, unbelief, dissent, and non-conformism as subjects to be shunned or naively championed, the essays in this collection chart a middle course, energized by the dynamics of heterodoxy, dissent, and provocation, yet shying a critical light on both the challenges and the revelations of disruptive kinds of thinking and acting.

Eighty years ago, Walter Bauer promulgated a bold and provocative thesis about early Christianity. He argued that many forms of Christianity started the race, but one competitor pushed aside the others, until this powerful "orthodox" version won the day. The victors re-wrote history, marginalizing all other perspectives and silencing their voices, even though the alternatives possessed equal right to the title of normative Christianity. Bauer's influence still casts a long shadow on early Christian scholarship. Were heretical movements the original forms of Christianity? Did the heretics outnumber the orthodox? Did orthodox heresiologists accurately portray their opponents? And more fundamentally, how can one make any objective distinction between "heresy" and "orthodoxy"? Is such labeling merely the product of socially situated power? Did numerous, valid forms of Christianity exist without any validating norms of Christianity? This collection of essays, each written by a relevant authority, tackles such questions with scholarly acumen and careful attention to historical, cultural-geographical, and socio-rhetorical detail. Although recognizing the importance of Bauer's critical insights, innovative methodologies, and fruitful suggestions, the contributors expose numerous claims of the Bauer thesis (in both original and recent manifestations) that fall short of the historical evidence. With contributions from: Rodney Decker Carl Smith William Varner Rex Butler Bryan Litfin Brian Shelton David Alexander Edward Smither Glen Thompson

While it has often been recognised that the development of Christian orthodoxy was stimulated by the speculations of those who are now called heretics, it is still widely assumed that their contribution was merely catalytic, that they called forth the exposition of what the main church already believed but had not yet been required to formulate. This book maintains that scholars have underrated the constructive role of these heretical speculations in the evolution of dogma, showing that salient elements in the doctrines of the fall, the Trinity and the union of God and man in Christ derive from teachings that were initially rejected by the main church. Mark Edwards also reveals how authors who epitomised orthodoxy in their own day sometimes favoured teachings which were later considered heterodox, and that their doctrines underwent radical revision before they became a fixed element of orthodoxy. The first half of the volume discusses the role of Gnostic theologians in the formation of catholic thought; the second half will offer an unfashionable view of the controversies which gave rise to the councils of Nicaea, Ephesus and Chalcedon. Many of the theories advanced here have not been broached elsewhere, and no synthesis on this scale had been attempted by other scholars. While this book proposes a revision in the scholarly perception of early Christendom, it also demonstrates the essential unity of the tradition.
Traces the decline of Christianity in America since the 1950s, posing controversial arguments about the role of heresy in the nation's downfall while calling for a revival of traditional Christian practices.

Since what Christian doctrine denies can be as important as what it affirms, it is important to understand teachings about Jesus that the early church rejected. Historians now acknowledge that proponents of alternative teachings were not so much malicious malcontents as they were misguided or even misunderstood. Here a recognized expert in early Christian theology teaches orthodox Christology by explaining the false starts (heresies), making the history of theology relevant for today’s church. This engaging introduction to the christological heresies is suitable for beginning students. In addition, pastors and laypeople will find it useful for apologetic purposes.

What don't Christians believe? Is Jesus really divine? Is Jesus really human? Can God suffer? Can people be saved by their own efforts? The early church puzzled over these questions, ruling in some beliefs and ruling out others. Heresies and How to Avoid Them explains the principal ancient heresies and shows why contemporary Christians still need to know about them. These famous detours in Christian believing seemed plausible and attractive to many people in the past, and most can still be found in modern-day guises. By learning what it is that Christians don't believe--and why--believers today can gain a deeper, truer understanding of their faith. --! From back cover.

A lively examination of the heretics who helped Christianity become the world's most powerful religion. From Arius, a fourth-century Libyan cleric who doubted the very divinity of Christ, to more successful heretics like Martin Luther and John Calvin, this book charts the history of dissent in the Christian Church. As the author traces the Church's attempts at enforcing orthodoxy, from the days of Constantine to the modern Catholic Church's lingering conflicts, he argues that heresy--by forcing the Church to continually refine and impose its beliefs--actually helped Christianity to blossom into one of the world's most formidable religions. Today, all believers owe it to themselves to grapple with the questions raised by heresy. Can you be a Christian without denouncing heretics? Is it possible that new ideas challenges Church doctrine are destined to become as popular as Luther's once-outrageous suggestions of clerical marriage and a priesthood of all believers? A delightfully readable and deeply learned new history, Heretics overturns our assumptions about the role of heresy in a faith that still shapes the world. "Wright emphasizes the 'extraordinarily creative role' that heresy has played in the evolution of Christianity by helping to 'define, enliven, and complicate' it in dialectical fashion. Among the world's great religions, Christianity has been uniquely rich in dissent, Wright argues—especially in its early days, when there was so little agreement among its adherents that one critic compared them to a marsh full of frogs croaking in discord." —The New Yorker

This volume in honour of Adelbert Davids, professor emeritus of Patristic studies at the Faculty of Theology of the Radboud University Nijmegen and former editor-in-chief of The Journal of Eastern Christian Studies, was first published in that same journal in 2008. As this issue is sold out the book is here reprinted in the companion series of Eastern Christian Studies. Heretics and Heresies in the Ancient Church and in Eastern Christianity opens with a biographical note (by P. Nissen) and contains eighteen essays by friends and colleagues of the honoree that all deal with one or another aspect of the crucial question of how the Early Church and the Eastern Church have defined heresy and orthodoxy. The contributors are B. Dehandschutter (heresy and the notion of tradition), A. Hilhorst ('heretical' martyrs), A. van den Hoek (Heracleon's hermeneutics), F. Ledegang (the Ophites), J. van Amersfoort (the Ebionites), K. Demoen (fourth-century theology on the notion of heresy), J. Leemans (Gregory of Nyssa on orthodoxy and heresy), J. Verheyden (Epiphanius' Panarion), D. Muller (persecution of heretics under Justinian), R. Van Deun (editio princeps of tractate CPG 7697,25 by Maximus the Confessor), A.A.R. Bastiaensen (the notion of perfidus/perfidia), M. Parmentier (editio princeps of CPL 560, a guideline against heretics), G. Bartelink (Cassianus's De incarnatione), D.W. Winkler (Nestorian controversy in the seventh century), H. Haufohl (regulations against heresy and heretics in canon law in the Eastern Churches), H. Teule (Barhebraeus), F.B. Poljakow (traces of gnosticising thought currents in early twentieth-century Russia), B. Groen (dealing with anti-judaism in Byzantine liturgy today).

"Heretics is a collection of 20 essays originally published by G.K. Chesterton in 1905.G. K. Chesterton, the ""Prince of Paradox,"" is at his witty best in this collection of twenty essays and articles from the turn of the twentieth century. Focusing on ""heretics"" - those
who pride themselves on their superiority to Christian views - Chesterton appraises prominent figures who fall into that category from the literary and art worlds. Luminaries such as Rudyard Kipling, George Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, and James McNeill Whistler come under the author's scrutiny, where they meet with equal measures of his characteristic wisdom and good humor."

In every generation, the Christian church must interpret and restate its bedrock beliefs, answering the challenges and concerns of the day. This accessible overview walks readers through centuries of creeds, councils, catechisms, and confessions—not with a dry focus on dates and places, but with an emphasis on the living tradition of Christian belief and why it matters for our lives today. As a part of the KNOW series, Know the Creeds and Councils is designed for personal study or classroom use, but also for small groups and Sunday schools wanting to more deeply understand the foundations of the faith. Each chapter covers a key statement of faith and includes a discussion of its historical context, a simple explanation of the statement’s content and key points, reflections on contemporary and ongoing relevance, and discussion questions.

"Christianity, Judaism, and Islam is the first comparative survey of heresy and its response throughout the medieval world"--

There is a lot of talk about heresy these days. The frequency and volume of accusations suggest that some Christians have lost a sense of the gravity of the word. On the other hand, many believers have little to no familiarity with orthodox doctrine or the historic distortions of it. What's needed is a strong dose of humility and restraint, and also a clear and informed definition of orthodoxy and heresy. Know the Heretics provides an accessible “travel guide” to the most significant heresies throughout Christian history. As a part of the KNOW series, it is designed for personal study or classroom use, but also for small groups and Sunday schools wanting to more deeply understand the foundations of the faith. Each chapter covers a key statement of faith and includes a discussion of its historical context; a simple explanation of the unorthodox teaching, the orthodox response and a key defender; reflections of contemporary relevance; and discussion questions.

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