



The Passionate Intellect: Christian Faith and the Discipleship of the Mind

By Alister McGrath



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2011 *Christianity Today* Book Award winner! Alister McGrath, one of the most prominent theologians and public intellectuals of our day, explains how Christian thinking can and must have a positive role in shaping, nourishing and safeguarding the Christian vision of reality. With this in our grasp, we have the capacity for robust intellectual and cultural engagement, confidently entering the public sphere of ideas where atheism, postmodernism and science come into play. This book explores how the great tradition of Christian theological reflection enriches faith. It deepens our appreciation of the gospel's ability to engage with the complexities of the natural world on the one hand and human experience on the other.

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Editorial Review

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McGrath's objective is two-pronged. First, he wants to remind Christians that an intellectually vibrant theology is not inimical to Christian life, worship, and faith. He spends the first half describing theology as a discipline that informs and sustains the Christian vision of reality and as a passion of the mind to understand God's nature and ways. Second, McGrath wants to point out the benefits of a theology that includes an enrichment of faith and a deeper engagement with the culture and concerns of the modern world. It is this latter benefit that he hopes will help combat the contemporary critiques of religion from Richard Dawkins, Christopher Hitchens, and others. Indeed, the second half of the book is a counter to some of the claims of those he calls the New Atheists, though none of them will be convinced by any of McGrath's arguments. This will serve as a good introduction for Christians who may be uncertain about, or have been unwilling to engage in, theological reflection, and to reassure them that rebuttals to the claims of those who deride religious belief can be made. --Christopher McConnell

Review

"McGrath skillfully translates his own deep learning into a delightfully accessible and enjoyable reading experience. . . . I certainly experienced the soul-stirring thrill of a sharp, devout mind debunking the old familiar, dubious claims against Christianity's intellectual coherence and credibility." (Tony Richie, *The Pneuma Review*, Spring 2012)

"For McGrath, the study of theology isn't a disengaged and abstract exercise; rather, it finds its authentic purpose and best expression when put into practice in the local church." (Relevant, November-December 2010)

"McGrath, a prominent theologian and public intellectual, explains how Christian thinking can and must have a positive role in shaping, nourishing, and safeguarding the Christian vision of reality." (Kathleen Samuelson, *CBA Retailers & Resources*, August 2010)

"McGrath's attempt to show that science is not necessarily a foe to faith is admirable." (Trevin Wax, *Christianity Today*, August 2010)

"McGrath brings his prodigious intellect and broad learning to bear on a number of topics, including apologetics, science and religion, and the new atheism. He demonstrates that theology is 'intellectually stimulating and exciting.' This book should whet the reader's appetite for further exploration of theology." (Millard Erickson, author of *Christian Theology*)

"In *The Passionate Intellect*, Alister McGrath provides engaging, accessible, energetic help for Christians who are skeptical about the existential relevance of Christian theology, or who have come to doubt its credibility in the face of the attacks of new atheists and those wedded to a shallow scientism. This series of essays not only provides important support for believers seeking their footing in the current cultural morass, but can also stimulate a new curiosity about the intellectual and spiritual fruitfulness and integrity of the theological enterprise as a whole. It is obviously written by one who, well informed about alternatives to Christian faith, finds in that faith a source of life and of intellectual pleasure." (Marguerite Shuster, Fuller Theological Seminary)

"This book is not only about the passionate intellect; it exhibits the phenomenon on every page. Drawing on the rich heritage of Christian faith and practice, McGrath is as much on his home ground in engaging contemporary issues in faith and culture, especially the relation to science. The author argues that good theology not only explains but transforms, and in this well-researched and eminently readable work it's easy to see what he means. *The Passionate Intellect* is a feast that will delight, provoke and challenge as well as inform us all." (Michael Horton, Westminster Seminary California)

About the Author

Alister McGrath (DPhil, DD, Oxford University) is the Andreas Idreos Professor of Science and Religion at Oxford University. He previously held the chair of theology, ministry and education and was head of the Centre for Theology, Religion & Culture at King's College, London. He is in constant demand as a speaker at conferences throughout the world and is the author of many books including *The Dawkins Delusion?* and *Christianity's Dangerous Idea*.

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