

My Idea of an Agenda for the 90's

The Kingdom of God versus the kingdoms of this world is my issue these days; and as I study the Scriptures, I see it increasingly as Jesus' issue.

I think it is an issue that has been blurred as the Church has opted for evangelism rather than discipleship, for worshipping Jesus rather than following him.

I was startled to read recently in Fiorenza's work, In memory of Her,

While the earliest Jesus traditions eschew any understanding of the ministry and death of Jesus in cultic terms as atonement for sins, it was precisely this interpretation which soon took root in some segments of the early Christian movement.

I came of age in the battle of the historical Jesus versus the Christ of the Church, and I accepted Schweitzer's (sp?) definitive work that concluded all we had was the Christ of the Church. And then I met the recent work of a Roman Catholic scholar Albert Nolan, Jesus before Christianity, and I had my mind stretched again.

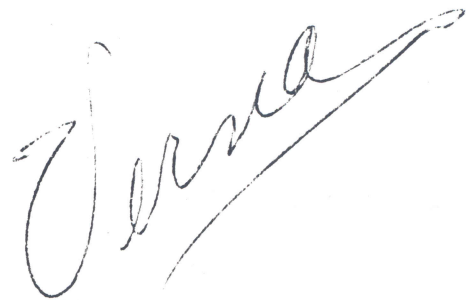
I decided I had to pay much more attention to Jesus of Nazareth, the Palestinian Jew who is remembered as having announced that the kingdom of God had come with him and that he was sent to set fire on the earth.

Another possibility is offered humankind, but it threatens the existing arrangements, and the existing arrangements will bend every effort to destroy it - water it down with religion or threaten it with disloyalty. The cross is not only symbol; it is the sign of the collusion of the kingdom of God and the kingdoms of this world.

I think that is what the temptation stories point to - Jesus' absolute commitment to the vision of God above every other commitment.

I think working out the meaning of such a commitment would make an exciting, troubling agenda for the nineties.

In the closing days of this century, what would it look like ✓  
to follow Jesus?

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Janna', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.