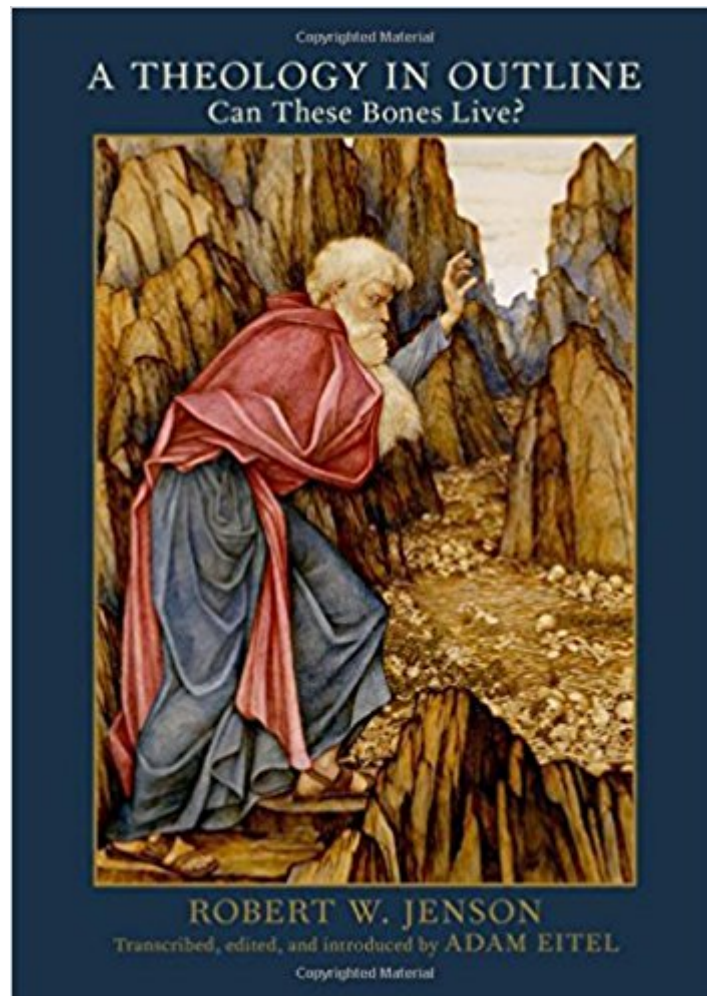




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# A Theology In Outline: Can These Bones Live?



## Synopsis

A Theology in Outline: Can These Bones Live? began with an undergraduate course taught by Robert W. Jenson at Princeton University in the spring of 2008. Based on a series of twenty-three course lectures, it offers a concise and accessible overview of Christian theology while retaining the atmosphere of Jenson's classroom. Much as does Jenson's Systematic Theology, A Theology in Outline treats a standard sequence of doctrines in Christian theology--God, Trinity, creation, humanity, sin, salvation, church, among others. However, its organizing principle and leitmotiv are less traditional. Reflecting his recent interest in theological interpretation of scripture, Jenson frames the whole of Christian theology as a response to the question posed to the prophet Ezekiel: "Son of man, can these bones live?" For Jenson, to ask this question is to ask whether Christian theology itself is a pile of dead bones. Can the story that God lives with his people be told today? From first to last the chapters of this book proceed under the impelling pressure of this question. They thus comprise a single sequence of illustrative conversations for the purpose of introducing beginners to Christian theology.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"I would recommend Jenson's book as a quick read for all who want to think about teaching the Christian faith in a post-Christian culture...his account is an engaging and insightful outline of theology for the contemporary world."--Concordia Theological Journal"

"The oneness of God is the oneness of the story he lives with his people.' This is the kind of straightforward remark that makes this book so special. In these lectures presented to undergraduates Jenson states the basics of the

Christian faith with the theological insight that has characterized his work from the very beginning. We now have a book we can give friends who ask, 'What is all this Christian stuff about?'"-Stanley Hauerwas, Gilbert T. Rowe Professor Emeritus of Divinity and Law, Duke Divinity School "Robert Jenson has always been a master teacher. His books rightly carry the label of being classics. He writes theology with a clarity unmatched in the English-speaking world. This little gem of a book is both a study in theological clarity and an instant classic. It will become a basic text for introducing undergraduates to the study of theology and hopefully the Christian intellectual life."-Willie James Jennings, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology and Africana Studies, Yale University "As Karl Barth observed long ago, 'greatness' is not something a theologian should aspire to; it is an honorific which may be bestowed by others but not something to be sought. But it is right and proper, then, for me to say of Robert Jenson that he is, in my view, the greatest living Protestant theologian in the English-speaking world. What is given to us here is an 'outline of dogmatics'--and much more... We all owe a great debt to Adam Eitel for transcribing and editing these lectures so that so that we might have them in monograph form." --Bruce McCormack, Charles Hodge Professor of Systematic Theology, Princeton Theological Seminary

Robert W. Jenson was most recently Senior Scholar for Research at the Center of Theological Inquiry in Princeton. He has taught Christian theology at Luther College, Gettysburg Seminary, St. Olaf College, Oxford University, and Princeton University. He is the author of the landmark, two volume work *Systematic Theology*, (OUP 1997, 1999). Adam Eitel is Assistant Professor of Ethics at Yale Divinity School.

"A Theology in Outline" is composed of edited transcripts of Jenson's lectures in an undergraduate course at Princeton University. The lectures by perhaps America's greatest living theologians are an honest introduction to Christian faith that does not presume Christian faith. The book, brief and accessible, would make a wonderful gift for young persons who do not know the shape of Christian faith and who share cultural skepticism about religious faith in general. Jenson's lectures do not try to convince, but rather to present historic Christian tradition while respecting disbelief, doubt, and misconceptions.

This lecture series was probably not your local pastor's systematic theology class. Calling this book an "outline" is appropriate. In fact, it is not even a complete outline, in that it picks and chooses resulting in an abbreviated list of systematic topics on which to comment. You learn from the

introduction that the book is transcribed lectures from a 2008 undergraduate class on systematic theology. Being a fan of clarity and terseness, I couldn't be more happy with Jensen's Outline. There is hardly a word wasted. Jensen's method is to take a topic, be it theology, Jesus, the Church, etc., explain the history and tradition, while performing a reinterpretation and presenting it as a viable option for present life as it is - answering "Can These Bones Live?" or is theology still relevant today?. Read it yourself, the book is short. There is a comprehensive bibliography of Robert W. Jensen's writings and an index. It says above that I purchased the hardcover, that is in error. I purchased the Kindle PC2 version with no problems.

A supreme introduction to the Christian faith. His chapters are clear and concise, and yet engaging and deeply rich. Jensen is a master theologian!

excellent copy

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Jens makes a claim I would have scoffed at a year or two ago, that our biggest challenge today is nihilism. I now think that in the post-truth, Trump era he's on to something.

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