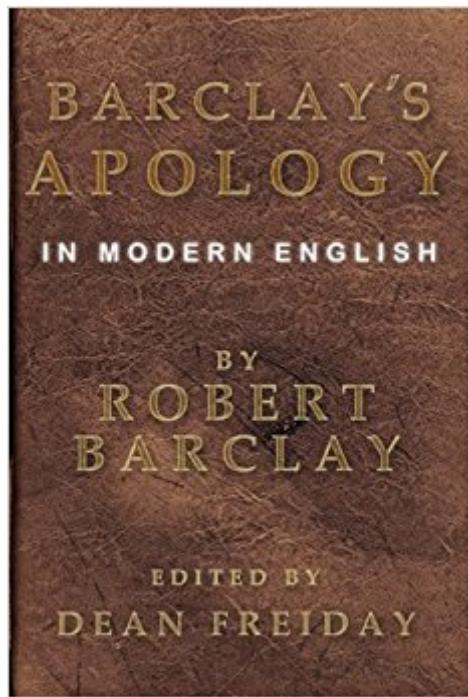


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Barclay's Apology In Modern English



Synopsis

Robert Barclay's Apology has been the classic systematic statement of the Quaker faith. But the lucid prose of the original suffered the same hardening of the linguistic arteries that overtook the King James Version of the Bible. In this edition, antique and obscure words and sentence structure have been eliminated and references to people and matters of faith come alive through the annotations. The nature of the church, its ministry and sacraments, and the relationship of church and state, with the consequent implications for religious liberty and Christian integrity, are key topics. If you are a Quaker seeking a better understanding of your own faith, or an ecumenist trying to understand beliefs that were significant to Methodism, challenging to Calvinism, and frequently in rapport with Catholicism, you will find Barclay's Apology enlightening.

Book Information

Paperback: 465 pages

Publisher: Barclay Press (April 1, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1594980187

ISBN-13: 978-1594980183

Product Dimensions: 9 x 6 x 1.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.4 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (9 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #922,705 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #128 inÂ Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Christian Denominations & Sects > Protestantism > Quaker #2775 inÂ Books > Textbooks > Humanities > Religious Studies > Christianity #182969 inÂ Books > Religion & Spirituality

Customer Reviews

My rating is not of Barclay's work but of Freiday's "translation" which has many serious flaws, from outright omissions, with no explanation, to completely wrong word choices, like changing "want" as in "lack" to "desire". For many years there was no alternative... since 2003 there has been, published by Quaker Heritage Press. In that volume the appendix discusses in detail the problems with Freiday's work. It's not sold on , but can be had from the publisher, and is available online.[...]

As a Friend of the unprogrammed species I have long wondered why we even bother to talk to Evangelical Friends. To my surprise and delight I discovered that Barclay in this day would probably

be classified as an evangelical, a fairly modern scripture follower, but a definitely "Jesus Saves" kind of guy. And since in his time he was accepted as having captured the essence of Quakerism, I found it necessary to take a new and more positive look at my evangelical roots. I am still what I was, but now much more open to finding meaning in our evangelical counterparts. (Which means at seventy-seven I can again say what my grandmother used to say.) But even more, my unprogrammed self was also strengthened by Barclay's clear exposition of what it means to Worship, and his clear understanding of ongoing revaluation and the voice of the Spirit. All of this is in a "translation" of 17th Century English that unmuddles the message. Bright and clear, in summary, that is my review.

Yes, the 1600's versions are more expressive and complete, that being said this is the best available alternative. Freiday captures the logic and simplicity of Quaker thought as expressed by Barclay. I believe George Fox would be very pleased with the version.

If you know what this is, this a respectful, scholarly version, which sensibly modernized the language. I did enough comparisons with the original to be satisfied the meaning is preserved. The Friends evolved organically a way of Christian Spiritual living. Barclay masterfully wrote it down. This and the Bible are the basis of my own spiritual practice. If you are looking for a comprehensive scripturally sound guide to a mature Christian life, you could do worse than the Apology. It has provided a baseline for Quaker practice for 400 years. And, Oh!, the Friends studied to re-establish the church as it was before "organized religion."

I'm afraid I have to take issue with the previous review stating this edition of Barclay's Apology is useful for nothing more than its footnotes. This book was my initiation into the study of Quaker theology, and just as there's a place in the world for translations of the Holy Bible other than the KJV, this book occupies an important place as well. For those not familiar with early English vernacular or others concerned with gaining knowledge with which to "debate," this book is a blessing in that it gives one an overall view of the essence of Quakerism. Does this edition contain errors in its translation? Perhaps, but I'm not a theologian so I can't address that. It's the same argument I hear regarding translations of scripture. My bottom line is this -- it's a wonderful starting point or refresher for anyone who wants a better understanding of who Quakers are, how they strive to live, and what they believe. And as a Quaker, I'm confident the Light can illuminate and guide past any minor issues of clarity.

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