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CLARION REVIEW ★★☆☆☆ RELIGION

I Am God

Jesus Christ
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Anyone who delves into this book will be faced with numerous difficulties, the most perplexing of which is what to make of the author, who identifies himself as none other than Jesus Christ. From the first page to the last of this nearly 800 page tome, the question of how to view the author will repeatedly arise. Is the man who refers to himself as the "Second Coming of Christ" to be taken seriously, or should the self-described "Godman extraordinaire" be viewed as a post-modern prankster? Does the man who unabashedly refers to himself as Jesus Christ mean to imply that a Christ figure exists within him as some say it does in every human being, or does he mean that he is, in fact, Jesus Christ? One will search this book in vain for unequivocal answers to those questions.

Assuming the author's words should be taken at face value, the self-portrait of Christ that arises from these pages is not one that most readers will recognize. Though he claims his overarching goal in life is to bring salvation to the world, this is a Christ who also takes a lot of illegal drugs and watches vast amounts of pornography, both of which he describes as necessary steps in his quest to discover his true identity and plumb the depths of human sexuality. This is also a God who exists in a peculiarly vague environment. One never learns exactly where the Godman lives, which of the "world's foremost universities" he attended, what jobs he held, which countries he traveled to, or the names of his parents and brothers and girlfriends. All the details that lend a sense of solid reality to a man's life are utterly absent from this work, which only adds weight to the suspicion that this book is not the work of nonfiction the author claims it to be.

To make the task of reading *I Am God* even more daunting, the writing is difficult to parse. The author's early claim that people have always "listen[ed] intently" to his words is not borne out by the garbled syntax of his prose. Here, for example, the alleged Christ talks of his disenchantment with the God of Israel: "By being the Son of Man loving all Mankind with all his heart, who stood for and as God himself loving all Mankind with all his heart, I believed I existed above Jesus the Son of God and the impoverished lineage of belief that he had lived within which had once spoken about God's relationship limited to one tribe of humanity."

Conversely, when the text is not distressingly convoluted, it is almost insultingly trite. One does not expect God to announce: "If I must say so I am pretty wonderful."

Alleging to be the words of God himself*, I Am God* will no doubt prove offensive to many and bewildering to one and all.

DIANE TAYLOR (March 25, 2011)

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