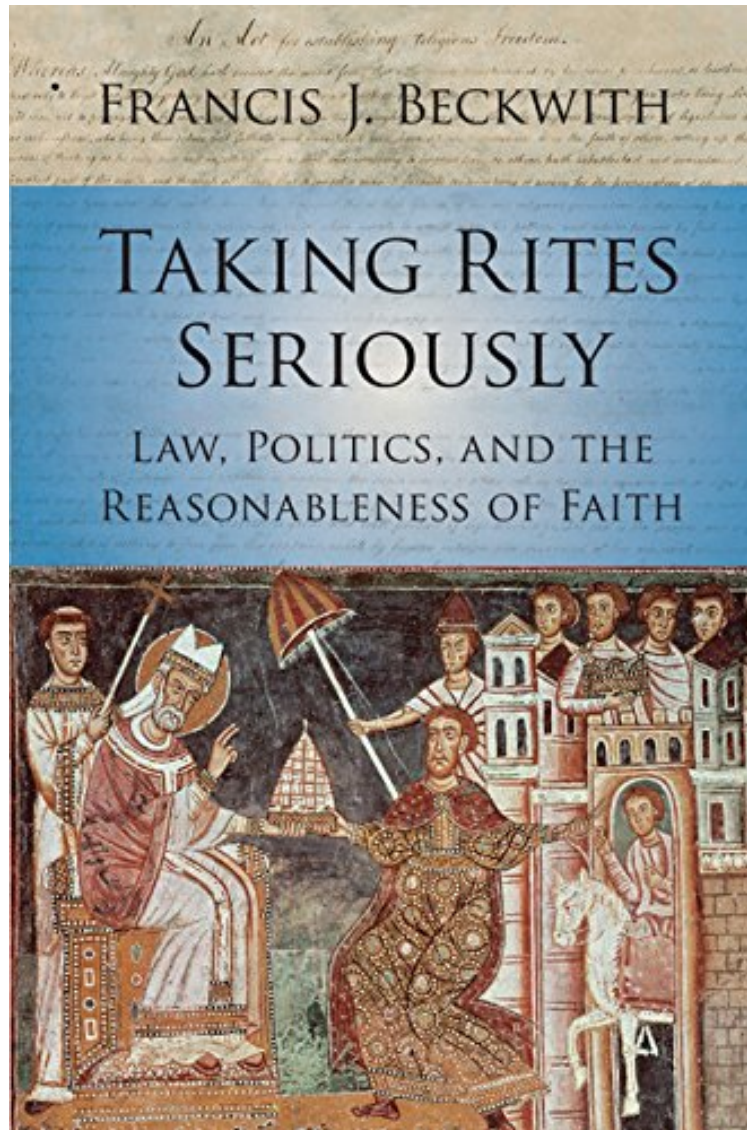


# Taking Rites Seriously: Law, Politics, and the Reasonableness of Faith

Francis J. Beckwith

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**Francis J. Beckwith : Taking Rites Seriously: Law, Politics, and the Reasonableness of Faith** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Taking Rites Seriously: Law, Politics, and the Reasonableness of Faith:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Tonya Roberts Thank you! 15 of 16 people found the

following review helpful. Fair and Hard-Hitting. Read This Book. By Nick Peters In the interest of full disclosure, I want to say at the start that I was provided with this review copy by Beckwith himself to see if I wanted him to come on my podcast. Rest assured, I do. Beckwith's book is not just a book I want to get in the hands of many Christians I interact with, but also in the hands of many atheists I interact with. Beckwith's main contention is that we have often misunderstood arguments and said that as long as we say that they are "religious" or have a religious motive, then that means we do not need to consider them as real intellectual arguments. This is simply false. It could be someone holds a position for religious reasons and it could even be that someone holds a position (Such as the wrongness of homosexual behavior) just because the Bible says so, but that does not mean that that is the only reason that there is or the only motive that there is. Something I like about Beckwith's book is that he tries to give everyone a fair shake. Even if it is a position that he disagrees with, he tries to give it a fair look. When looking at some court rulings, even if the ruling would be favorable towards his position, Beckwith can still point out why he thinks it is an unwise ruling. This is something that we should all learn from. Just because the conclusion agrees with us does not mean that the decision was the right one. You can make the right decision for all the wrong reasons. Some readers will also be surprised to find that Beckwith disagrees with Intelligent Design. I in fact would find myself closer to his position seeing as I think that we have married Christianity to modern science and what happens if this is explained another way? Wouldn't it be best to have our apologetic built on something that cannot be shown false by scientific discovery? Why not base our theism on metaphysical principles, especially since the question of God is not really a scientific question but a metaphysical one. (This does not mean it does not have ramifications for science, but the final arbiter is metaphysics.) Also, the reader will find some very helpful points on the issue of redefining marriage. This is one of the major issues of our time and Beckwith rightly shows that in reality, the people that are not being tolerant and not allowing liberty are more often the ones on the left. Beckwith has a great familiarity with the literature on both sides. One will also find similarity with the abortion debate as well. If there was one thing I'd like differently in Beckwith's books, it'd be that I'd like reading them sometimes to be more like listening to him speak. It's my understanding that Beckwith grew up in the Las Vegas area and knows about the comedians and if you hear him speak, it is absolutely hysterical. Andy Bannister has managed to pull off great humor in a book. It would be interesting to see Beckwith do the same. Still, this is a book that should be read by anyone interested in religious debates. As I said earlier also, Beckwith has the great virtue as well of wanting to treat the arguments of his opponents seriously as well. Beckwith is not just wanting to reach right conclusions, but wanting to reach them the right way and will settle for nothing less. In Christ, Nick Peters

Taking Rites Seriously is about how religious beliefs and religious believers are assessed by judges and legal scholars and are sometimes mischaracterized and misunderstood by those who are critical of the influence of religion in politics or in the formation of law. Covering three general topics - reason and motive, dignity and personhood, nature and sex - philosopher and legal theorist Francis J. Beckwith carefully addresses several contentious legal and cultural questions over which religious and non-religious citizens often disagree: the rationality of religious belief, religiously motivated legislation, human dignity in bioethics, abortion and embryonic stem cell research, reproductive rights and religious liberty, evolutionary theory, and the nature of marriage. In the process, he responds to some well-known critics of public faith - including Brian Leiter, Steven Pinker, Suzanna Sherry, Ronald Dworkin, John Rawls, and Richard Dawkins - as well as to some religiously conservative critics of secularism such as the advocates for intelligent design

"Beckwith's legal perspective and clarity make this short survey of the role of religious reasoning in American jurisprudence a valuable contribution to the defense of religion's place in public life." Elliot Milco, First Things "In Taking Rites Seriously, Francis Beckwith clears away many of the misunderstandings of religion that have marred discussions of faith and public life and corrupted the constitutional law of church and state. Of course, there are some academics and activists who are so deeply in the grip of secularist ideology that they have no desire to learn. Most Americans, however, whether they are believers or secularists, would like to be better informed about religion. For them, this book is a gift." Robert P. George, McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence, Princeton University "Sophisticated, learned, and committed, Francis Beckwith argues coolly for a reasoned faith even as he smites the Philistines hip and thigh on behalf of human life and dignity." Lenn E. Goodman, Andrew W. Mellon Professor in the Humanities, Vanderbilt University About the Author Francis J. Beckwith is Professor of Philosophy and Church-State Studies at Baylor University, where he also serves as Associate Director of the Graduate Program in Philosophy and Co-Director (with Trent Dougherty) of the Program in Philosophical Studies of Religion. He has held visiting faculty appointments at Princeton University and the University of Notre Dame and has published extensively on social ethics, applied ethics, legal philosophy, and the philosophy of religion. Named the 2007 Person of the Year by Inside the Vatican magazine, his most recent books include Politics for Christians: Statecraft As Soulcraft (2010) and Defending Life: A Moral and Legal Case against Abortion Choice (2007).