

"Ted Peters' new book, *Sin Boldly!* is richly engaging, offering fresh insights into stale theological concepts that many Christians had long abandoned as tired and out of date. His interpretations of scapegoating, self-justification, and the life of beatitude are particularly valuable. There is much in this book to reward both the interested layperson and the student of theology."

—**Kristin Johnston Largen**
Gettysburg Seminary

"*Sin Boldly!* connects historical and theological learning with the burning issues of the contemporary world. With a deep commitment to Reformation thought, Ted Peters shows how today's politics interacts with the broader dimensions of justice and love. This volume makes the original insights of Protestantism prominent in our current strive for a just society and good conscience."

—**Risto Saarinen**
University of Helsinki

"This book, *Sin Boldly!*, written with a sense of humor, is full of theological insight and spiritual wisdom. In its empathetic approach, it speaks to the falsely untroubled soul and to the soul that – for good reasons – feels simply desperate. It brings in the author's experiences from his life and faith journey and the accompanying voices of many contemporaries. At its very core, it harvests from deep biblical and Reformation insights."

—**Michael Welker**
University of Heidelberg

"*Sin Boldly!* This book honors the propensity of our time to understand the human condition in terms of psychology. But, it does so without sacrificing theology. In fact, it brings out the indispensability of theological thought for handling life, giving distinctive perspectives on social and political issues."

—**Antje Jackelén**
Archbishop of Sweden

"Ted Peters brings the theological jewel of the Reformation out of hiding in academic and ecumenical enclaves into the bright light of a new arena . . . the purpose and promise of justifying faith for a new era of believers and searchers. This book will inform and inspire your preaching, teaching, and believing in the crucified and risen Christ who justifies our faith, and in so doing, justifies the faith of the whole Church."

—**Claire S. Burkat, Bishop**
Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA

"The mysteries of justifying and liberating faith receive scintillating treatment from Ted Peters, with conversation partners throughout the centuries and across disciplines. Concerned with the fragility of the human soul, in search of its grounding and place in the moral universe, Peters diagnoses theologically the dimensions of the soul's brokenness, weaving in contemporary and autobiographical illustrations. He locates in the dwelling of Christ in faith the critical re-centering and transformation for the spiritually healthy soul with a renewed conscience for justice. Drawing from recent Luther research (including the Finnish Mannermaa school), and with critical perspectives from science and ethics, Peters kneads the Lutheran doctrine of justification by faith with some new yeast to propose a spiritually and ethically promising approach for living with a liberating faith and ability to love. A thought-provoking book, with original mapping and written with authenticity, from the heart."

—**Kirsi Stjerna**
Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg

"The history of ecumenical discourse since 1517 has been an exercise not just in interconfessional, but also in intraconfessional relationality. The obvious disputes between Catholics and Protestants, up to and including the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification (JDDJ) in 1999, were shaped in ways less obvious but no less powerful by disputes within each of these communities, notably between heirs to Gnesio and Philippist forms of Lutheranism and to Thomist and Molinist forms of Roman Catholicism. This remarkable and timely work by Ted Peters does not claim to resolve the interconfessional disputes, nor does it address the internal Roman ones. But, by provoking a renewed Lutheran and ecumenic discussion of the superior merits of indwelling over forensic justification for proclaiming the gospel not just to the fragile, but to the broken souls of today's conflictual (and still Girardian) world, Peters has not only written a new chapter of the Osiandristic controversy, but has offered Roman Catholics facing a new wave of polarization within their own ranks the relecture of a gospel interpretation that does not reckon with a temporal completion of the healing process."

—Richard Schenk, OP
Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, Germany

“Ted Peters approaches the doctrine of justification by grace through faith as a treasured gift awaiting discovery and appropriation by fragile and broken humanity. With the tools of a careful scholar and the language of a creative writer, he sensitively unwraps the gift and makes it accessible to those who long for healing, reconciliation, and wholeness. Without sidestepping the substantive issues and tensions among interpreters of justification, Peters prompts and guides the reader into deeper comprehension and experience of divine grace.”

—Kenneth L. Carder
Emeritus, Duke Divinity School

“In the beginning of the century, Bishop K. H. Ting (1915–2012), the most influential church leader of China, suggested that because of the misinterpretation by the Protestant missionaries to China, for the sake of reconstructing Chinese theology, the Chinese Church has to temper 'justification by faith' and to teach 'justification by love' instead. *Sin Boldly!* by Ted Peters is not merely a scholarly work that gives a clear Lutheran understanding of justification by faith; it has successfully connected faith and love. This work gives the key to the churches in China, so that living a life of faith can be in good harmony with living a life of love for the reconstruction of theology in China.”

—Pilgrim Lo
Lutheran Theological Seminary, Hong Kong

“Ted Peters's new book is an accessible theological treatise from an ecumenical perspective offering a thorough and vigorous analysis of ailments of the soul reaching to world politics and culture. It is at the same time a judicious diagnosis of the relationship between faith and quality of life—fragile and broken. His perspicacious treatment of the human condition is an affirmation of his reputation as one of the most lucid and compelling voices in contemporary theology. This book is a must-read for both theologians and pastors.”

—Vitor Westhelle
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

“Many are able to teach and write about theology, but few can tell a theological story as Ted Peters does in this book. With a Lutheran emphasis and ecumenical spirit, these pages let us into a conversation where voices from the north and the south, male and female, Christian and non-Christian, chime into a story that Peters magnificently interlaces. It is the story about a God that can only be told from the perspective of broken and fragile souls. This story is what the Reformation codified as justification by grace through faith, and Peters masterfully inflects this treasure of the church in view of the overlapping horizons that constitute our postmodern public square. Peters incisively illuminates the existential, social, psychological, and political corners of our world from the disruptive yet affirming perspective of the gospel. This is a read that is both traumatic and hopeful. *Sin Boldly!* is beautifully written, persuasively argued, thoughtfully composed, and theologically stirring.”

—Guillermo Hansen
Luther Seminary

“In the bold and prophetic spirit of Martin Luther, Ted Peters's provocative *Sin Boldly!* elaborates justifying faith and the indwelling of Christ by articulating the theology of grace for fragile and broken souls. This book is a crowning achievement for Peters to expand and apply the horizon of grace of justification and justice in an ecumenical and global context, while sharply analyzing the political rhetoric of self-justification and unraveling the mechanism of scapegoating through a dynamic interpretation of the law-gospel dialectic. Embedded within the life of beatitude, Peters envisions proleptic ethics from God's future—a promise characterized by restorative justice imbued with divine love and symbolized by new creation in the kingdom of God.”

—Paul S. Chung
Luther Seminary

“In this long-expected sequel to *Sin: Radical Evil in Soul and Society* (1994), Ted Peters investigates into the Christian reflection of sin as forgiven in Christ and experienced as justified in faith from a critical, philosophical, and spiritually inquiring perspective. Consequently, this book is not only a contemporary interpretation of the Christian concept of justification of faith, but much more, namely an example of how justification works, since as Peters shows the Christian concept of justification reflects the experience of transformation of the pure critical and the pure open, uncritical approach to life. These two approaches can be seen as two different human experiences of sin, namely the purely critical, reflective approach to oneself, in which nothing is ever good enough, and the fully uncritical, inquiring, spiritually open approach, in which everything is always good. Peters shows how the concept of justification

reflectively contains and transforms these problematic experiences and how it moves beyond itself as a concept and makes room for new reflections on oneself. Exceptionally clear thought and equally communicated, this book is more than a worthy sequel and real Peters!"

—Johanne Stubbe Teglbjærg Kristensen
University of Copenhagen

"Read this remarkable book! Peters has charted with amazing accessibility a long-needed contemporary account of the meaning and connections between justification, faith, robust moral life, and daily spirituality in a Lutheran vein. Moreover, he does so by engaging the hard questions, the questions and conundrums that permeate contemporary culture. Peters brings to bear years of 'ecumenical engagement,' that is, dialogue and creative mutual interaction with human experience and 'knowing' both inside and outside the Christian church. The conversation list ranges from religion and science, to theories of justice, to 'spiritual but not religious,' fundamentalists, UFOs, progressives, new atheists, ethicists, ecumenical relationships, to theologians of every stripe, and more. Read this book! The lines of a deeply confessional response are evident to those who know what to look for but the whole is presented with a stunning simplicity that at turns engages, provokes, delights, challenges, and inevitably leads to 'ahas' He has something to challenge everyone—a something that will yet leave you utterly grateful you journeyed with this deceptively profound engagement."

—Roger A. Willer, Director for Theological Ethics
Office of the Presiding Bishop, ELCA

"Ted Peters invites us into an exploration of how self-justification, in all of its forms, simply wraps duct tape around our fragile souls, protecting us from reality and the gospel itself. There were moments when I thought that he was simply intent on irritating or angering each of the academic disciplines and the full range of the political spectrum. Then it became clear. This is a book about the pastoral care of fragile and broken souls and their distinctive journeys. Ted Peters explores the depth of the human condition and power of the gospel to heal and save."

—Steven L. Ullestad, Bishop
Northeastern Iowa Synod, ELCA