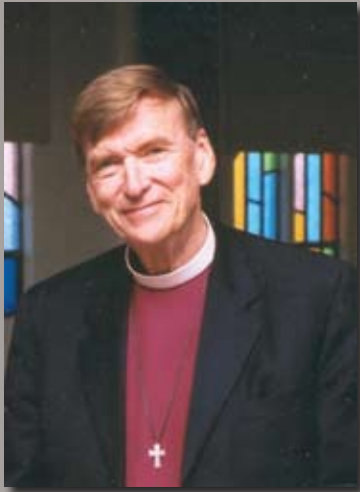


## 2011 Lecture Series

# SPAFER

Birmingham, AL • Southside Baptist Church • NOVEMBER 4TH & 5TH  
Tupelo, MS • The Link Centre • NOVEMBER 6TH, 2011



**His** challenges to the church have also made Bishop Spong the most vilified of modern clergyman. The target of hostility, fear, and death threats, he has been called anti-Christ, hypocrite and the devil incarnate. In what may come as a surprise to his critics, his new book, *A New Christianity for a New World*, is a statement of Christian faith and love for the church. Calling himself "a joyful, passionate, convinced believer in the reality of God," he seeks not to create a new religion, but to reform the church he loves. "I am a Christian and will go to my grave as a member of this household of faith," he writes.

Bishop Spong challenges the church to move with him, convinced that if the church remains where it is now, the Christian faith will die. "I hold steadfastly to the truth of the assertion first made by Paul that 'God was in Christ,'" he says. He yearns for the reformation, he says, so that his grandchildren too can say, "God is real to me, and Jesus is my doorway into this reality."

Since his retirement, Bishop Spong has taught at Harvard University, where he delivered the William Belden Noble lectures; and at Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, CA. In demand as a lecturer around the world, Bishop Spong just completed a tour to the U.K., Europe, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand and Canada, where he delivered lectures based on his new book to standing-room only crowds.

Bishop Spong is the author of several bestselling books which have sold more than 650,000 copies combined, including *Rescuing the Bible from*

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South Point Association for Exploring Religion PRESENTS

## Bishop John Shelby Spong

The pre-eminent voice for liberal Christianity, John Shelby Spong, 79, was the Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Newark for 24 years before his retirement last year. His admirers acclaim his legacy as a teaching bishop who makes contemporary theology accessible to the ordinary lay person—he's considered a champion of an inclusive faith by many both inside and outside the Christian church.

### Birmingham, AL

### Tupelo, MS

#### "Eternal Life"

**Session 1: "Developing a New Angle of Vision"**

**Friday, Nov. 4, 7pm–8:30 pm**

The old symbols are based on pre-suppositions no longer widely believed. We must separate the quest for eternity from those symbols.

**Session 2: "The Inter-connectedness of Life and the Birth of Self-Consciousness"**

**Saturday, Nov. 5, 9am–10:30am**

From a single cell of life we have journeyed in our evolving history into self-consciousness.

**Session 3: "Jesus — A Step Beyond Self-Consciousness into a Universal Consciousness"**

**Saturday, Nov. 5, 11am–12:30 pm**

Entering the mystical experience at the heart of life and meeting eternity.

**Place: Southside Baptist Church, 1016 19th St. S., Birmingham, AL 35205**

**Price:** \$40 Friday and Saturday, \$20 Friday Night only, \$30 Saturday only

#### "Jesus for the Non-Religious"

**Session 1: "Human Life: Fallen or Incomplete?"**

**Sunday, Nov. 6, 2 pm**

**Session 2: "Salvation: Rescue from a Fall or Expansion of our Humanity?"**

**Sunday, Nov. 6, 4 pm**

**Place: The Link Centre, 1800 West Main Street, Tupelo, MS 38801**

**Price:** \$20

#### Purchase Tickets

To purchase advance tickets, go to [www.spafer.org](http://www.spafer.org) and click on the Lecture Series link and select tickets. You can pay with your credit card or your PayPal account. You can also print off a ticket order form, fill it out, and mail with your check to: SPAFER, P. O. Box 130267, Birmingham, AL 35213. All tickets are picked up at the door, and no confirmations will be sent out.

## South Points Association for Exploring Religion presents Bishop John Shelby Spong

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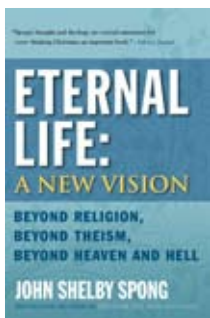
*Fundamentalism, Why Christianity Must Change or Die, and Here I Stand*, a memoir of his journey to the reasoned, loving Christianity he has preached for decades.

Bishop Spong has received numerous honors, including being named Quatercentenary Scholar by Cambridge University in 1992 and Humanist of the Year in 1999. His extensive media experience includes appearances on "60 Minutes," "Good Morning America," "Fox News Live," "Politically Incorrect," "Larry King Live," "The O'Reilly Factor," William F. Buckley's "Firing Line," and "Extra."

Bishop Spong lives with his wife, Christine Mary Spong, in Morris Plains, NJ.

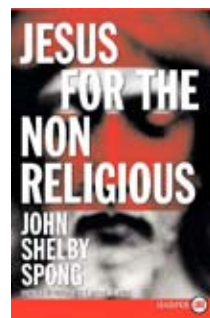


*Other popular books by John Shelby Spong.*



### Eternal Life - A New Vision: Beyond Religion, Beyond Theism, Beyond Heaven and Hell

In this challenging, intellectually rigorous book, retired Episcopal Bishop John Shelby Spong tackles the biggest question of all, and gives a compelling argument for the creation of a new religious paradigm. Spong reviews a lifetime of passionate engagement with biblical study and with questions of faith, charting his growing discomfort with language that seemed limited, falsifying and inadequate. Spong suggests an understanding of God not as a person, but as the process that calls personhood into being. **This book will be the topic of his three lectures in Birmingham, AL.**



### Jesus For The Non-Religious

Bishop Spong details in this impassioned work both his "deep commitment to Jesus of Nazareth" and his "deep alienation from the traditional symbols" that surround Jesus. Spong says scholarship on the Bible and a modern scientific worldview demonstrate that traditional teachings like the Trinity and prayer for divine intervention must be debunked as the mythological trappings of a primitive worldview. Spong says Jesus' followers inflated to the point of describing him as a deity masquerading in human form. **This book is the topic of the Lectures in Tupelo, MS.**

### Parking @ Southside Baptist Church

Southside Baptist Church is located in the Downtown Birmingham area near the Five Points District and for that reason parking may be tight on Friday night of this lecture series. The church has a private lot that will be available on the east side. On street parking is also available in the area as are other lots that may not be in use Friday night. The lot just west of the church is available for a fee that must be placed in the lock box at the far east end of the lot or your car will be booted. You may have to park and walk a couple of blocks to the church. The earlier you arrive the more parking close by will be available for you.

SPAfer - a non-profit all-volunteer forum for exploring religion  
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