



# Not God's People: Insiders and Outsiders in the Biblical World (Religion in the Modern World)

*Lawrence M. Wills Ethelbert Talbot Professor of Biblical Studies Episcopal Divinity School*

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## **Not God's People: Insiders and Outsiders in the Biblical World (Religion in the Modern World)**

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In the Bible, there is a drama of defining who are truly God's people?and who are not. Using an array of biblical texts from both the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament, Not God's People explores how ancient Jews and Christians created their own identity in relation to others. The book analyzes how biblical texts define 'us' and 'them,' how these texts differ in the way they define group identity, and how this process continues to be re-created by Jews and Christians today. Not God's People asks questions such as: How is the outsider defined? Is the ideal insider defined as the opposite of the outsider? It follows up with related questions such as: How were these definitions of 'we' and 'other' in the ancient communities used by later Jews and Christians? Are the processes of community and enemy formation found in the Bible exhibited in most other cultures as well? Not God's People ultimately shows that though the Bible's definitions of the insider and outsider changes dramatically over time, the process are enduring, and eternally true.

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