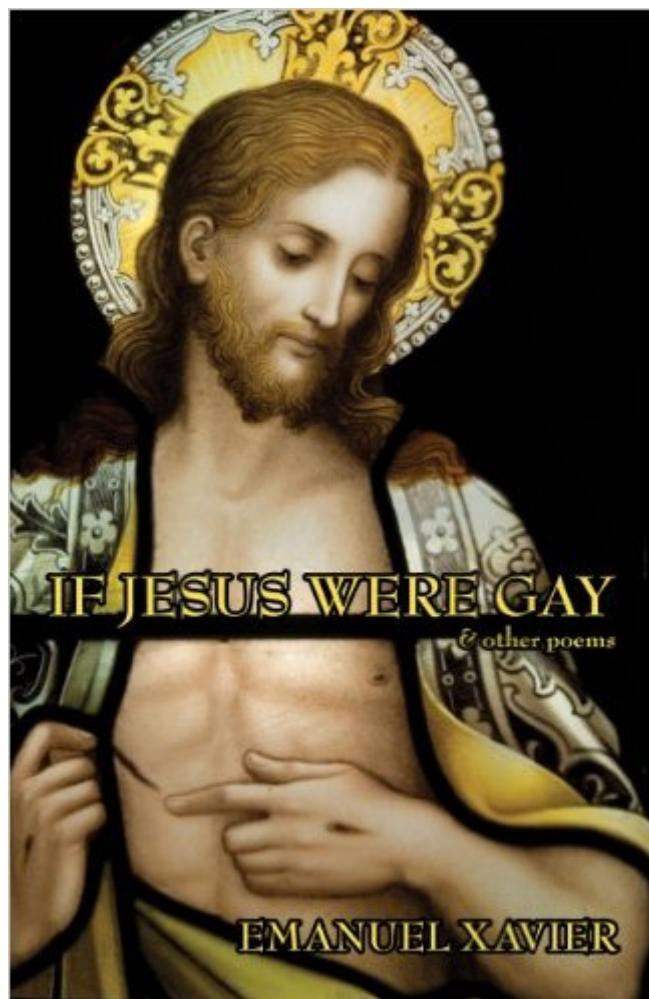


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# If Jesus Were Gay & Other Poems



## Synopsis

Emanuel Xavier's *If Jesus Were Gay* & other poems pulls no punches and is brutally frank about his views on sexuality, politics, and religion. Yet as deeply personal as these poems are, they are universal enough to move any reader. Both sacred and profane, it is a compelling and confessional collection from a daring and ambitious voice in contemporary poetry.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Both sacred and profane, "If Jesus Were Gay and Other Poems" by Emanuel Xavier is a new book that expresses Christ in a refreshingly queer way. Xavier makes sweet poetry out of his experiences as a gay Latino whose painful past includes sexual abuse at age 3 and rejection by his Catholic mother for being gay at age 16, leading to homelessness, drug dealing, prostitution -- and at last to poetry. His background is Puerto Rican and Ecuadorian, and his poems are sprinkled with Spanish. The title poem "If Jesus were Gay" questions whether people would still love and worship Jesus if he was gay. But Xavier also uses that title for the whole first section of the book, more than 60 poems comprising three quarters of the volume. Many of them do not specifically mention Jesus, although their soulful and spiritual quality is palpable. While reading "If Jesus Were Gay and Other Poems," I found myself caught up in the tragic sense of a life being wasted, a kind of crucifixion. If Jesus were gay in America today, would he do more than just hang out with prostitutes as he did in ancient Israel? Would anti-gay abuse actually turn him into a street hustler, as Xavier openly and graphically describes himself in these poems? Jesus is without sin, but the poet-prostitute who

wrote this book seems "more sinned against than sinning," as Shakespeare put it. At least for this reader, the unspoken question that enlightened every poem in the book was, "Could this be Jesus speaking?" For example, if Jesus was gay in America now, would he say these lines from "FYI:" "I don't really care to know how many others you have been with or how many times you have fallen in love.

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