

Who is the Christ we encounter in Scripture?

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Sequence

- Images
- Aspects
- Resources
- Approaches



Aspects

- Albert Schweitzer
- Raymond Brown
- Extremes
- Reductions
- Faith in Jesus

He comes to us as One unknown, without a name, as of old, by the lakeside. He came to those men who knew Him not. He speaks to us the same words: "Follow thou me," and sets us to the tasks which all things were created, in whom all things have their life and their substance. He is not the result of some man's choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, whose life is the new horizon and a decisive direction. He will reveal himself in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings which they believe that about a Galilean preacher who was crucified as a criminal? shall learn in their own experience Who He is.

Resources

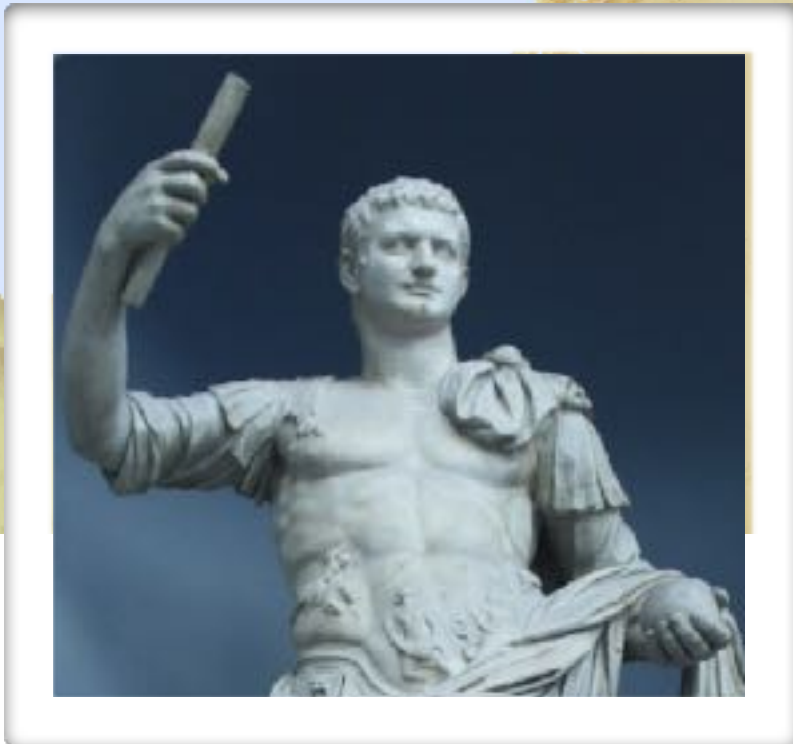
- The Synoptic Gospels
- The Fourth Gospel
- The (7 uncontested) Letters of St Paul
- Ephesians and Colossians
- The Letter to the Hebrews
- The Book of the Apocalypse

Resources

- All wrote from faith for faith
- All wrote to persuade
- All wrote in the light of the resurrection
- The “reception” of Jesus in early Christianity

Resources

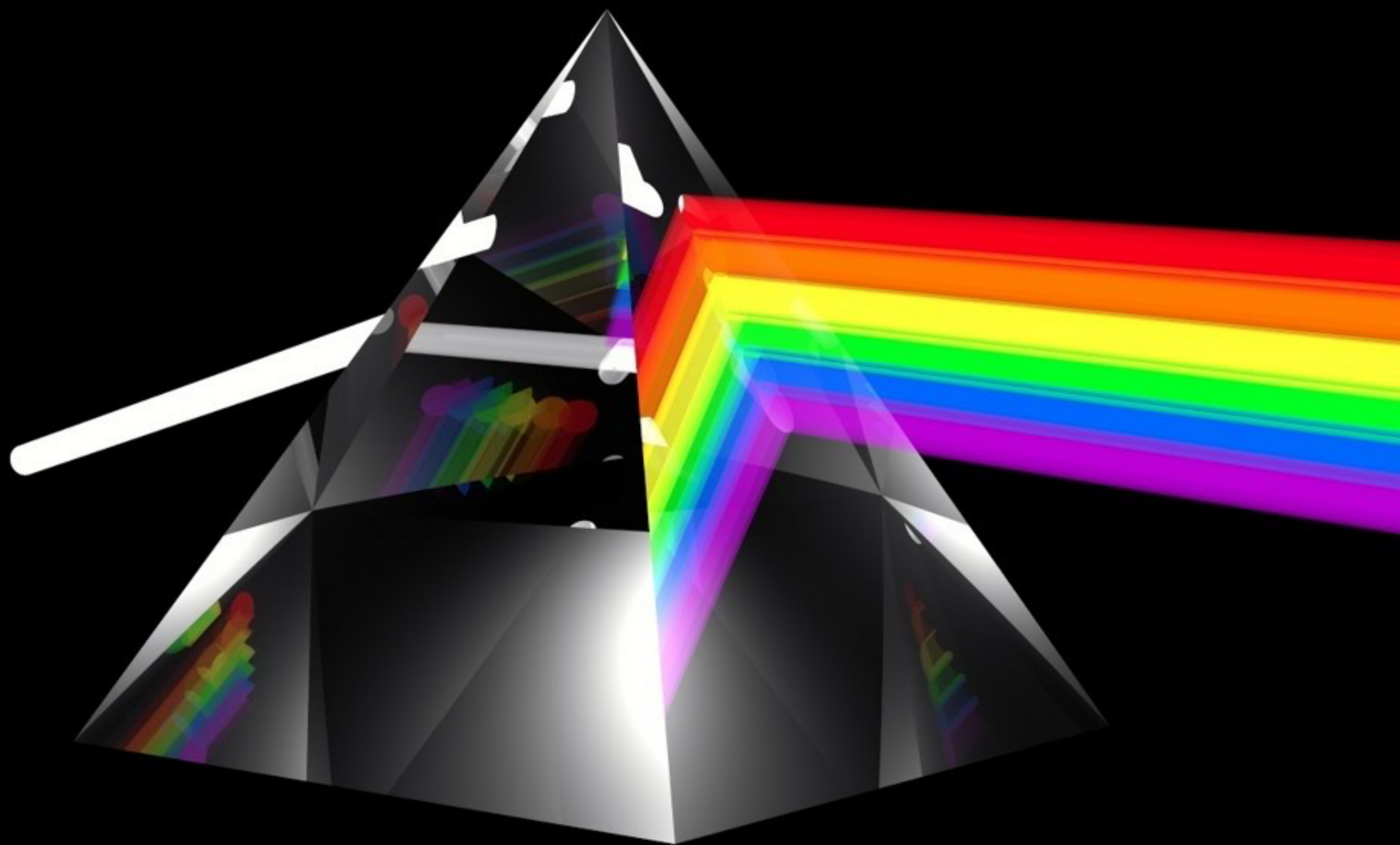
- Gospels—what are they?
- Biographies of a special kind
- The authors are not interested in pure history
- The authors select, edit, add, locate and create
- The Gospels do offer us some history



70 years				45 years				
Jesus 6 BC – AD 30		Paul 6 BC / AD 35, AD 64		Mark 70	Matthew 85-90	John 95-100	Luke 110-115	
Galilee, Judea		Syria, Asia Minor, Greece, Italy		Syria? Rome?		Syria	Syria, Asia Minor	Rome?
Augustus	Tiberius	Caligula Claudius	Nero	Vespasian	Titus	Domitian	Nerva, Trajan	Trajan
31-14	14-37	37-41 41-54	54-68	69-79	79-81	81-96	96-98, 98-117	98-117

Resources

- There is a time “gap”
- Change of culture and language
- Change of interests and concerns
- Religious DNA of each document is different



Approaches

- Digging
- DNA

Digging

- What is your experience of the document(s)?
- Did the writers use sources?
- Can we say what Jesus said and did?

DNA

- Bearing in mind the archaeology:
- What is being claimed about Jesus?
- Why did it matter?
- Does it still matter today?

DNA of each Gospel

- Mark: c. 69 / crisis / mixed / tragic messiah
- Matthew: c. 85 to 90 / Jewish Christian / rabbi
- John: c. 95 to 100 / mixed / Word made Flesh
- Luke: c. 110-115 / Gentiles / Prophet martyr

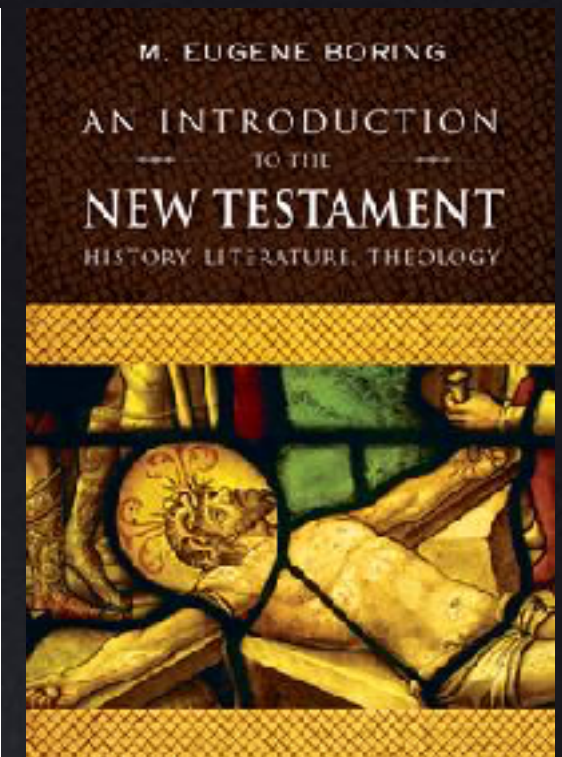
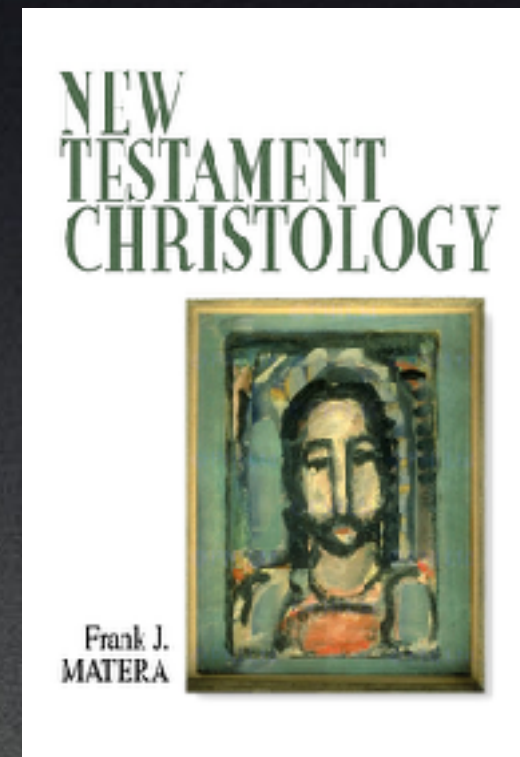
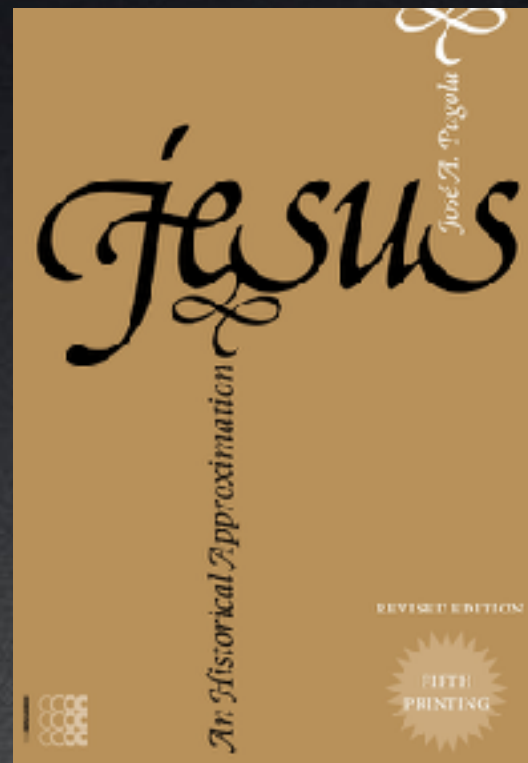
So, who was Jesus?

- Galilean Jewish peasant
- Follower of John the Baptist
- Prophet in his own right
- Called God “Abba”

So, who was Jesus?

- Proclaimed the Kingdom of God
- Accepted his role in the coming kingdom
- His faithfulness discloses God's faithfulness
- Crucified and raised from the dead

Reading



- José Pagola “Jesus. An Historical Approximation”
- Frank Matera “New Testament Christology”
- Eugene Boring “Introduction to the New Testament”

Does this matter?

- So good, it can't be true
- So good, it must be true
- If...
- God's love is shockingly, astonishingly involved in the human tragedy and God's faithfulness is the very word we need to hear.

Does this matter?

I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them;

I ask all of you to do this unfailingly each day.

No one should think that this invitation is not meant for him or her, since “no one is excluded from the joy brought by the Lord”.

The Lord does not disappoint those who take this risk; whenever we take a step towards Jesus, we come to realise that he is already there, waiting for us with open arms.

Does this matter?

Let the risen Jesus enter your life, welcome him as a friend, with trust: he is life!

If up till now you have kept him at a distance, step forward. He will receive you with open arms.

If you have been indifferent, take a risk: you won't be disappointed.

If following him seems difficult, don't be afraid, trust him, be confident that he is close to you, he is with you and he will give you the peace you are looking for and the strength to live as he would have you do.

Conversation

