

**WHO WAS THE HISTORICAL JESUS?
WINTER 2012**

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Class Time: W 1:30–4:00 p.m.
Dates: January 11–February 1
Classroom: Library Viewing & Taping Room A

Course Description

Jesus of Nazareth is a pivotal figure in world history. But what do we really know about the man and the world in which he lived? What did Jesus really say and do? How would we describe his daily life? Why was this faithful Jew executed by the Romans? How do recent archaeological discoveries help us piece together his world? And are these “discoveries” legitimate? We will learn about the quests for Jesus, about sifting history from our sources, about archaeological sites and artifacts associated with him, and about the perspectives of different faiths that developed about Jesus after his death.

The four class sessions are arranged to answer twenty basic questions about the historical Jesus and developing beliefs about him. Your questions will be an important part of the class as well. You are welcome to browse the course Web site for this class, which will have copies of slide presentations and other resources:

<http://www-relg-studies.scu.edu/facstaff/murphy/courses/olli/jesus>

Schedule

JANUARY 11

SOURCES, METHODS, & QUESTS

Questions

1. What sources do we have for reconstructing Jesus' life?
2. How does an historian sift through all this evidence?
3. What has the quest for the historical Jesus found?
4. What are the major views today of who Jesus was?
5. Is the quest for a historical Jesus necessary for a person of faith?

Suggested Readings

Catherine M. Murphy, *The Historical Jesus for Dummies* (Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley, 2007), chapters 3-5.

Gregory W. Dawes, *The Historical Jesus Question: The Challenge of History to Religious Authority* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001).

-----, ed., *The Historical Jesus Quest: Landmarks in the Search for the Jesus of History* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2000; original 1999).

Amy-Jill Levine, Dale C. Allison, Jr., and John Dominic Crossan, eds., *The Historical Jesus in Context, Princeton Readings in Religions* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000).

Jonathan L. Reed, *Archaeology and the Galilean Jesus: A Re-examination of the Evidence* (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 2000).

Robert E. Van Voorst, *Jesus Outside the New Testament: An Introduction to the Ancient Evidence* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 2000).

Questions

1. What was life like in Roman Palestine during Jesus' time?
2. What do we know about Jesus' childhood?
3. What do we know about his family?
4. Was he married to Mary Magdalene?
5. What are these Gnostic gospels that are always in the news?

Suggested Readings

Catherine M. Murphy, *The Historical Jesus for Dummies* (Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley, 2007), chapters 6-9 (Mary Magdalene is discussed in chapter 10).

Infancy Stories

Raymond E. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in Matthew and Luke* (New York: Image, 1979).

Robert J. Miller, *Born Divine: The Births of Jesus and Other Sons of God* (Sonoma, California: Polebridge Press, 2003).

-----, ed., *The Complete Gospels: Annotated Scholars Version* (Sonoma, California: Polebridge Press, 1994; original 1992).

Charles H. Talbert, "Miraculous Conceptions and Births in Mediterranean Antiquity," in *The Historical Jesus in Context* (ed. Amy-Jill Levine, Dale C. Allison, Jr., and John Dominic Crossan; Princeton Readings in Religion; Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2006) 79-86.

Jesus' Female Companions

Kathleen E. Corley, *Women and the Historical Jesus: Feminist Myths of Christian Origins* (Sonoma, California: Polebridge, 2002).

Bart D. Ehrman, *Truth and Fiction in The Da Vinci Code* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

Gnostic Gospels

Elaine Pagels and Karen L. King. *The Gospel of Judas and the Shaping of Christianity*. New York: Viking, 2007.

James M. Robinson, ed., *The Nag Hammadi Library*, 3rd rev. ed. (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco 1990; original Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1978).

Questions

1. What was the relationship between Jesus and John the Baptist?
2. How popular was he?
3. What did he really say?
4. Did he really perform miracles?
5. What did Jesus mean by the “kingdom of God”?

Suggested Readings

Catherine M. Murphy, *The Historical Jesus for Dummies* (Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley, 2007), chapters 10-12.

An Important Resource

Kurt Aland, ed., *Synopsis of the Four Gospels*, 9th ed. (Stuttgart: Germal Bible Society, 1989).

John the Baptist

Catherine M. Murphy, *John the Baptist: Prophet of Purity for a New Age, Interfaces* (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press/Michael Glazier, 2003).

Jesus' Sayings and Miracles

Robert W. Funk, Roy W. Hoover, and the Jesus Seminar, *The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus* (New York: Macmillan [a Polebridge Press Book], 1993).

Robert W. Funk and the Jesus Seminar, *The Acts of Jesus: The Search for the Authentic Deeds of Jesus* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco [a Polebridge Press Book], 1998).

John J. Pilch, *Healing in the New Testament: Insights from Medical and Mediterranean Anthropology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000).

Galilee in the Time of Jesus

Mark Chancey, *Greco-Roman Culture and the Galilee of Jesus*, SNTSMS 134 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

William Horbury, *Herodian Judaism and New Testament Study*, WUNT 193 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006).

Morten Hørning Jensen, *Herod Antipas in Galilee: The Literary and Archaeological Sources on the Reign of Herod Antipas and Its Socio-economic Impact on Galilee*, WUNT 2/215 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006).

Jonathan L. Reed, “Archaeological Contributions to the Study of Jesus and the Gospels,” in *The Historical Jesus in Context* (ed. Amy-Jill Levine, Dale C. Allison, Jr., and John Dominic Crossan; Princeton Readings in Religion; Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2006) 40-54.

THE DEATH & AFTERLIFE OF JESUS

Questions

1. Who were Jesus' enemies, and who killed him?
2. Why was Jesus killed?
3. Did he rise from the dead?
4. Are there any legitimate archaeological artifacts related to Jesus' life, death or resurrection?
5. How did later beliefs about him develop?

Suggested Readings

Catherine M. Murphy, *The Historical Jesus for Dummies* (Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley, 2007), chapters 13-15.

Messianic Belief in Jesus' Time

John J. Collins, *The Scepter and the Star: The Messiahs of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Ancient Literature*, Anchor Bible Reference Library (New York: Doubleday, 1995).

Death and Resurrection

Markus Bockmuehl, "Resurrection," in *The Cambridge Companion to Jesus* (ed. Markus Bockmuehl; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

Raymond E. Brown, *Death of the Messiah: From Gethsemane to the Grave*, Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday, 1994).

Paula Fredriksen, *Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews: A Jewish Life and the Emergence of Christianity* (New York: Vintage, 1999).

Joel B. Green, "Crucifixion," in *The Cambridge Companion to Jesus* (ed. Markus Bockmuehl; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001) 87-101.

Gerard S. Sloyan, "The Crucifixion of Jesus: How, Why, and by Whom?" in *Why Jesus Died* (ed. Marshall D. Johnson; Facets; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004; edited excerpt of *The Crucifixion of Jesus* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995]) 11-61, 135-40.

Developing Beliefs about Jesus

Larry W. Hurtado, *How on Earth Did Jesus Become a God? Historical Questions about Earliest Devotion to Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005).

Tarif Khalidi, ed. and trans., *The Muslim Jesus: Sayings and Stories in Islamic Literature* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2001).

Rowan Williams, "A History of Faith in Jesus," in *The Cambridge Companion to Jesus* (ed. Markus Bockmuehl; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001) 220-36.

Jesus in Art & Film

Lloyd Baugh, *Imaging the Divine: Jesus and Christ-Figures in Film* (Lanham, Maryland: Sheed & Ward, 1997).

Paul C. Burns, *Jesus in Twentieth Century Literature, Art, and Movies*, Studies in Religion (New York: Continuum, 2007).

Kathleen E. Corley and Robert L. Webb, eds., *Jesus and Mel Gibson's The Passion of the Christ: The Film, the Gospels and the Claims of History* (New York: Continuum, 2004).

Thomas F. Mathews, *The Clash of Gods: A Reinterpretation of Early Christian Art*, rev. ed. (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1999; original, 1993).

Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Illustrated Jesus through the Centuries* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1997).

Adele Reinhartz, *Jesus of Hollywood* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

W. Barnes Tatum, *Jesus at the Movies: A Guide to the First Hundred Years* (Sonoma, California: Polebridge, 2004).

Richard Walsh, *Reading the Gospels in the Dark: Portrayals of Jesus in Film* (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 2003).

