

Christological Texts: The Gospels

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- I. Introduction
 - A. Review: What is Christology?
 - B. New Testament Christology
 - C. Christology in the Books of Revelation, Hebrews, and Ephesians
 - 1. four canonical gospels
 - 2. three Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke)
 - a. oral tradition(s)
 - b. written 50-70
 - c. authorship
 - d. priority, use, and interdependence
 - e. L, M, Q
 - f. gospel parallels
 - 3. Fourth Gospel (according to John)
 - a. "disciple whom Jesus loved" (Jn. 13:23-25; 19:26-27; 20:1-10; 21:7; 21:20-25)
 - b. Johannine community
 - c. final written form in 90-100
 - d. "high Christology" (vs. "low Christology")
- II. Quests for the Historical Jesus
 - A. Historical Jesus
 - 1. behind the Biblical Christ
 - 2. behind the church's progressively elaborated, exaggerated iconic pictures of Jesus
 - 3. importance of what Jesus said and did
 - 4. assumptions
 - B. Jesus Seminar (1985-2006)
 - 1. Robert Funk, John Dominic Crossan, Marcus Borg, Burton Mack, Robert J. Miller
 - 2. voting system
 - 3. Jesus as itinerant, iconoclastic Hellenistic Jewish sage and faith healer
 - 4. media coverage
 - 5. critics: Richard Hays, N. T. Wright, Luke Timothy Johnson, Ben Witherington, Dale Allison, Craig Blomberg, William Lane Craig, Gregory Boyd
 - C. Real Jesus (Luke Timothy Johnson)
 - 1. many historical Jesuses
 - 2. historical Jesus not the Jesus of history
 - 3. Gospels as more than history; more than biography
 - 4. Gospels as access to the reality of Jesus
 - 5. Reality of Jesus revealed by faith-interpretations(s)
 - 6. Christological Jesus (more than Jesus of history and historical Jesus)

III. Gospel and Gospels

- A. εὐαγγέλιον (Greek; euangelion)
 1. “victory message”
 2. “royal announcement”
- B. κήρυγμα (Greek: kerygma)
 1. “sermons” in the Book of Acts
 2. content of “euangelion”
 3. divine event with cosmic significance
 4. single gospel
 5. “gospel of God” (Rom. 1:1)
 6. “gospel of Christ”
 - a. subjective genitive – the message proclaimed by Jesus (Mk. 1:14-15)
 - b. objective genitive – the message proclaimed about Jesus (Rom 15:19)
 7. “message of salvation” (Is. 40:9; 52:7; and 61:1)
 8. Jesus and the apostles as “evangelists”
- C. literary genre (content, form, and function)
 1. distinguished from Greek-Roman biography
 2. only in Jewish-Christian communities
 3. literature of fulfillment
 4. foundational irony

IV. Gospel of Mark

- A. Priority
- B. Prologue (1:1-13)
 1. title (v. 1)
 2. identification of Jesus
 3. quotation from Isaiah 40: 3 and Malachi 3:1 (v. 2)
 4. Elijah-like figure of John (vs. 4-8)
 5. Jesus’ baptism and confirmation (vs. 9-11)
 6. Jesus’ wilderness temptation (vs. 12-13)
 7. inauguration of conflict of powers (vs. 12-13)
- C. Jesus’ proclamation (vs. 14-15)
 1. gospel of God
 2. time of fulfillment
 3. Kingdom of God
 4. repentance and belief
- D. God’s apocalyptic agent
 1. conflict of rulers and powers, battling for the kingdom
 - 1:24-27
 - 1:32-34
 - 3:11-12
 - 3:20-27
 - 4:35-41
 - 5:1-20
 - 14:1-16:8

2. messianic secret (“book of secret epiphanies”)

The Markan Jesus is the hidden Christ.

a. revelatory motif

1:11

1:15

1:24

2:1ff; 10:46ff (miraculous healings)

3:11

4:1ff (teaching in parables)

5:7

8:29

9:2ff (transfiguration)

11:10

15:39

b. secrecy motif

1:25

1:34

1:44

3:12

4:10-12

5:43

8:30

9:9

10:48

3. misunderstanding

6:51-52

8:11-13

8:21

8:32-33

9:5-6

9:30-32

4. opposition and rejection

2:15-17

2:24f

3:6

6:1-6

11:18, 27-33

12:1-12

14:1

15:6-15

V. Gospel of Matthew

A. Inclusion of most of Mark’s gospel, supplemented with material from other written sources known as “M” and “Q”

B. Opening identification of Jesus: “the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham” (compare with “Christ, the Son of God” in Mark’s opening verse)

1. son of David

2. son of Abraham

- C. Genealogy (1:1-17)
1. begins with Abraham and goes forward (Luke begins with Joseph and goes backward, all the way back to Adam – Lk. 3:23-38)
 2. “begetting”
 3. 3 x 14 pattern
 4. 5 women: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, wife of Uriah (Bathsheba), and Mary
 5. Jesus as the consummation and recapitulation of the history of Israel
- D. Fulfillment citations
1. 1:22-23 (Is. 7:14)
 2. 2:15b (Mic. 5:1 and 2 Sam. 5:2)
 3. 2:17-18 (Jer. 31:15)
 4. 2:23b (perhaps Is. 4:3 and Jdg. 16:17)
 5. 3:3 (Is. 40:3)
 6. 4:14-16 (Is. 9:1-2)
 7. 8:17 (Is. 53:4)
 8. 12:17-21 (Is. 42:1-4)
 9. 13:14-15 (Is. 6:9-10)
 10. 13:35 (Ps. 78:2, though reference is made to the prophet)
 11. 21:4-5 (Is. 62:11 and Zech. 9:9)
 12. 26:54-56 (no citation given)
 13. 27:9-10 (Zech. 11:12-13, perhaps with echoes of Jer. 32:6-15; 18:2-3, to whom the statement is attributed)
- E. True teacher of Israel (“He taught them, saying....” 5:2)
1. five teaching discourses that structure the work. Each ends with a set formula: “And when Jesus finished ...” (7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1)
 - a. sermon on the mount (chapters 5-7)
 - b. instruction on the teaching, healing mission of the disciples (10:1-11:1)
 - c. parables of the kingdom (13:1-53)
 - d. advice to a divided community (17:22-19:1)
 - e. end of the age and judgment (chapters 24-26:1)
 Narrative sections fill in between these discourses: chapters 3 and 4; 8 and 9; 11:2-12; 13:54-17:21; 19:2-23; 26:2-end.
 2. not a new law (or new teaching) from a new Moses
 3. embodiment of the wisdom (will) of God) (7:21-29)
 4. Pharisees as “hypocrites” (chapter 23)
 5. righteousness (3:15; 5:6; 5:10; 5:20; 6:33)
 6. “Go and teach all nations” (28:16-20)

VI. Gospel of Luke

- A. Inclusion of most of Mark’s gospel, supplemented with material from other written sources known as “L” and “Q”
- B. Two-volume work: Gospel and Acts

- C. Prologue (1:1-4)
 - 1. Theophilus (“God lover”)
 - 2. Luke
 - a. physician co-worker of Paul (Phlm 24; Col. 4:14; 2 Tim. 4:11)
 - b. no evidence in support of this theory
 - c. written later in the 1st c, or even 2nd c
 - d. Greek language
 - e. Gentile audience
 - f. movement of the Gospel *toward* Jerusalem; movement of Acts *away from* Jerusalem
 - g. conception and birth narratives (1:5-2:52)
- D. Jesus as the Man of the Spirit
 - 1. no opening identification of Jesus (as with Mark and Matthew)
 - 2. interest in beginnings
 - 3. Jesus’ childhood
 - 4. not interpreter of the Torah
 - 5. not an apocalyptic agent nor nationalistic political Messiah
 - 6. universality of Jesus
 - a. genealogy (3:23-38)
 - b. infancy accounts set in Roman history (1:5; 2:1-2)
 - c. emphasis on women
 - d. emphasis on the poor and sinful
 - 7. salvation history
 - 8. Spirit of God
 - a. Mary (1:35)
 - a. Elizabeth (1:41)
 - b. John (1:15, 17)
 - c. Zechariah (1:67)
 - d. Simeon (2:25-27)
 - e. Jesus’ baptism (3:21-22)
 - f. Jesus’ temptation (4:1ff)
 - g. Jesus’ Galilean ministry (4:14; cf. 10:21)
 - 9. Jesus’ rejection in Nazareth (4:16-30) (also, 7:1-23) (see 1 Kgs. 17:17-24 and 2 Kgs. 5:1-14)
 - 10. Son of God (1:32, 35; 3:38; 4:3, 9; 4:41; 8:28; 10:22; 22:70)
 - 11. Son of Man (cf. 5:24; 6:5; 7:34; 9:22; 11:30; 12:40; 18:8, 31; 19:10; 21:27; 22:48, 69; 24:7)