



## Four Portraits, One Jesus: A Survey of Jesus and the Gospels

By Mark L. Strauss

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**Four Portraits, One Jesus: A Survey of Jesus and the Gospels** By Mark L. Strauss

To Christians worldwide, the man Jesus of Nazareth is the centerpiece of history, the object of faith, hope, and worship. Even those who do not follow him admit the vast influence of his life. For anyone interested in knowing more about Jesus, study of the four biblical Gospels is essential. *Four Portraits, One Jesus* is a thorough yet accessible introduction to these documents and their subject, the life and person of Jesus. Like different artists rendering the same subject using different styles and points of view, the Gospels paint four highly distinctive portraits of the same remarkable Jesus. With clarity and insight, Mark Strauss illuminates these four books, first addressing their nature, origin, methods for study, and historical, religious, and cultural backgrounds. He then moves on to closer study of each narrative and its contribution to our understanding of Jesus, investigating things such as plot, characters, and theme. Finally, he pulls it all together with a detailed examination of what the Gospels teach about Jesus' ministry, message, death, and resurrection, with excursions into the quest for the historical Jesus and the historical reliability of the Gospels.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"This is the best textbook available for a course on Jesus and the Gospels. Rarely do both the instructor and the students rave about a textbook.." Palm Beach Atlantic University -- E. Randolph Richards

"Hands down, the best textbook I've found for my 'Life of Jesus' classes. It is superbly organized and very student- friendly with its many illuminating charts, sidebar discussions, chapter summaries of key points, study questions, and glossary of key terms. It's a very aesthetically-pleasing layout with numerous pictures that help the text to come alive. Fair, even-handed treatment of divergent scholarly views while offering solidly reasoned conclusions grounded in careful scholarship. My students routinely comment on how well-written, interesting and accessible his explanations are. An engaging resource for introducing a scholarly study of the Gospels that doesn't overwhelm the neophyte. Highly recommended!" George Fox University -- Jeannine Graham

"Mark Strauss's Four Portraits, One Jesus is certainly one of the best Gospel textbook resources I have found to date. The unique articles in the introduction section alone are worth the publication, and to these are added important historical information that is passed over in some surveys. The book itself is a pleasure to read both textually and visually---the quality of the written content only being enhanced by that of its printing and helpful graphics, charts, etc. Overall, it is an excellent resource for both professor and student---one that will actually be read!" Southern Evangelical Seminary -- Douglas M. Beaumont

"Mark Strauss's engagingly written Four Portraits, One Jesus is an outstanding textbook choice for introductory courses on the canonical Gospels. Countering the common myth held by students that the four Gospels are in effect 'all the same,' its simple yet effective organization treats the unique features and contributions of each Gospel while upholding their essential unity. From its attractive cover to stunning photographs to informative sidebars, the text reflects a top notch production effort on the part of Zondervan that makes Jesus and his first century world come alive. I used Four Portraits, One Jesus as a required resource for a graduate course I taught in Israel entitled, 'Jesus and the Holy Land.' Students raved about the book!" Urshan Graduate School of Theology -- Jeffrey Brickle

'This textbook for studying the Gospels and the historical Jesus presents various views evenhandedly and consistently comes to careful and balanced conclusions. It introduces both older and newer approaches and treats all the major topics.' -- Craig Keener, Professor

'Extraordinarily well written and thoughtfully organized. This book will be useful to anyone in need of a concise, clear, and knowledgeable guide through the four Gospels.' -- Frank Thielman, Professor

'Strauss guides the nonspecialist gently through the maze of academic jargon and esoteric debate. The treatment is fair and responsible, based on sound scholarship but not over burdened with footnotes.' -- R.T. France, Principal Emeritus

#### From the Back Cover

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thorough yet accessible introduction to these documents and their subject, the life and person of Jesus. Like different artists rendering the same subject using different styles and points of view, the Gospels paint four highly distinctive portraits of the same remarkable Jesus. With clarity and insight, Mark Strauss illuminates these four books, first addressing their nature, origin, methods for study, and historical, religious, and cultural backgrounds. He then moves on to closer study of each narrative and its contribution to our understanding of Jesus, investigating things such as plot, characters, and theme. Finally, he pulls it all together with a detailed examination of what the Gospels teach about Jesus' ministry, message, death, and resurrection, with excursions into the quest for the historical Jesus and the historical reliability of the Gospels.

#### About the Author

Mark Strauss (PhD, Aberdeen) is professor of New Testament at Bethel Seminary in San Diego. He has written *The Davidic Messiah in Luke-Acts*, *Distorting Scripture?: The Challenge of Bible Translation and Gender Accuracy*, *Luke* in the Zondervan Illustrated Bible Background Commentary series, and *Mark* in the Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament.

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