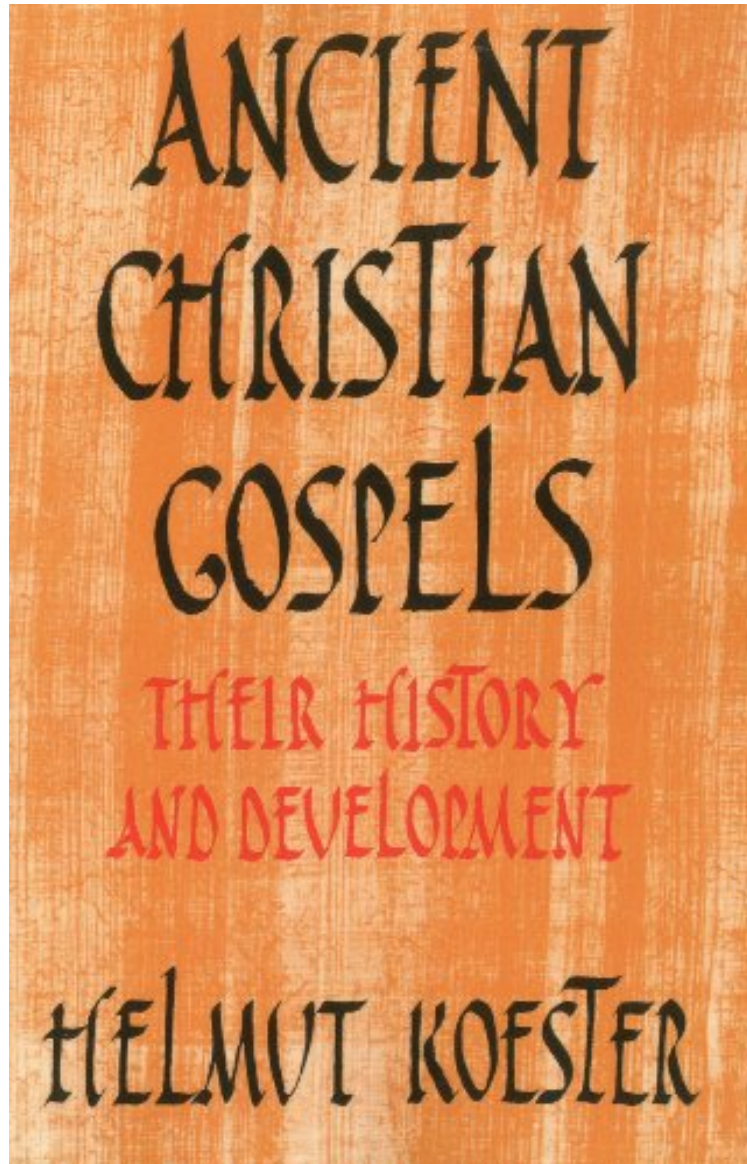


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Ancient Christian Gospels: Their History and Development

Helmut Koester

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Helmut Koester : Ancient Christian Gospels: Their History and Development before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ancient Christian Gospels: Their History and Development:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Good News about JesusBy Leona BThis is a scholarly, well-

researched study of ancient writings about Jesus and his sayings. It compares many quotes from other authors with the four Gospels in our Bible, and discusses the oral traditions that were current after Jesus' death. I would recommend it to a studious person who is interested in history and wants to understand why the stories may vary and offer a different viewpoint.³ of 4 people found the following review helpful. Reading outside the linesBy Victor GThis is an excellent volume with which to get an overall view of ancient works related to our Christian heritage. I like the fact that Koester is willing to use writings that are outside the Canon. Works like, The Gospel of Thomas, though not considered part of the Christian literary ethic certainly have a bearing on our total education. The Dead Sea Scrolls have a definite impact on our way of thinking and Koester presents them in an unbiased manner.³³ of 37 people found the following review helpful. A fascinating history of the development of the gospelsBy A CustomerI couldn't agree more with Midwest Book Review. I absolutely love this book and am fascinated by the content. It's not a book on spirituality, but if you're a history buff and want to understand how the Christian religion evolved, this is a crucial piece of the puzzle. The book covers both canonical and non-canonical literature and summarizes much of the scholarly discussion concerning the sources of the writings, the relationship to oral traditions, evidence of who used what as the basis for gospel development, etc. It gets down into the detail where I'd like to be but lack too much of the background required to get there.

In this magisterial volume, which is destined to become the standard text for studying the tradition and history of the early Christian Gospel literature, the author treats more than a dozen Gospel writings from the first two centuries. These Gospels include more than the standard canonical Gospels, covering also such writings as the Gospel of Thomas, the Apocryphon of James, and the Gospel of Mary and others. The book is divided into six major sections. The first examines the origins and meanings of the term Gospel. Then follows a section on early collections of saying including, of course, a study of Q. A third section traces the movement from the dialogue Gospels through narratives about Jesus to the Gospel of John. Mark, Matthew and Luke receive thorough consideration in the fourth section, followed by an exploration of the early extant harmonizations of the canonical Gospels (Justin martyr, Tatian, Epistula Apostolorum, etc.) The concluding section deals with various Gospel fragments known from papyri and from casual mentions in the church fathers. Throughout *Ancient Christian Gospels*, the author provides all technical information (attestation, manuscripts, etc.) needed by the scholar, but also translations of all data, general introductions and explanations in an effort to make the book accessible and useful for the general reader. Helmut Koester is John H. Morison Professor of New Testament and Winn Professor of Ecclesiastical History of Harvard University and author of the widely used two-volume *Introduction to the New Testament*.

"...scholarly yet completely accessible...provides all technical information required by the scholar...yet writes with a clarity that makes his material of immense interest to the non-specialist general reader...Highly recommended." *The Bookwatch*, *The Library Newsletter of the Midwest Book*, November 2000 (Bookwatch) From the Back Cover In this magisterial volume, destined to become the standard text for studying the tradition and history of early Christian gospel literature, the author studies the earliest discernible elements of gospel material through the canonical Gospels to the harmonization attempts of the second century that culminated in Tatian's Diatessaron. About the Author Helmut Koester is John H. Morison Professor of New Testament and Winn Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Harvard Divinity School, author of *Ancient Christian Gospels* (Trinity), and editor (with Holland L. Hendrix) of *Archaeological Resources for New Testament Studies* (Trinity).