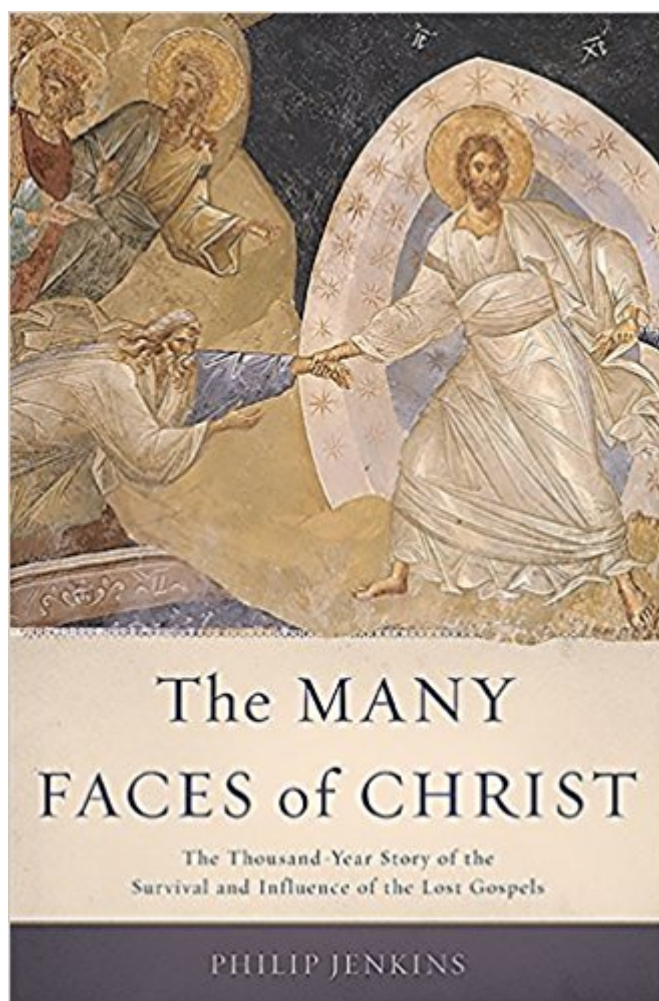


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# The Many Faces Of Christ: The Thousand-Year Story Of The Survival And Influence Of The Lost Gospels



## Synopsis

The standard account of early Christianity tells us that the first centuries after Jesus's death witnessed an efflorescence of Christian sects, each with its own gospel. We are taught that these alternative scriptures, which represented intoxicating, daring, and often bizarre ideas, were suppressed in the fourth and fifth centuries, when the Church canonized the gospels we know today: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The rest were lost, destroyed, or hidden. In *The Many Faces of Christ*, the renowned religious historian Philip Jenkins thoroughly refutes our most basic assumptions about the Lost Gospels. He reveals that dozens of alternative gospels not only survived the canonization process but in many cases remained influential texts within the official Church. Whole new gospels continued to be written and accepted. For a thousand years, these strange stories about the life and death of Jesus were freely admitted onto church premises, approved for liturgical reading, read by ordinary laypeople for instruction and pleasure, and cited as authoritative by scholars and theologians. The Lost Gospels spread far and wide, crossing geographic and religious borders. The ancient Gospel of Nicodemus penetrated into Southern and Central Asia, while both Muslims and Jews wrote and propagated gospels of their own. In Europe, meanwhile, it was not until the Reformation and Counter-Reformation that the Lost Gospels were effectively driven from churches. But still, many survived, and some continue to shape Christian practice and belief in our own day. Offering a revelatory new perspective on the formation of the biblical canon, the nature of the early Church, and the evolution of Christianity, *The Many Faces of Christ* restores these Lost Gospels to their central place in Christian history.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Books and Culture; Jenkins follows the path of his previous work by unearthing aspects of the church that many (especially in the West) have forgotten or ignored. If one desires to learn more from every age and locale where followers of Jesus (broadly construed) existed and wrote about the meaning of his life, this book is an excellent place to start. —Christian Century; The importance of The Many Faces of Christ is its support for the present diversity of belief and practice within Christianity. —Times Literary Supplement

Philip Jenkins is Distinguished Professor of History at Baylor University, where he is based in the Institute for Studies of Religion. The author of The Great and Holy War and Jesus Wars, he divides his time between Texas and Pennsylvania.

I have to admit I'm still only halfway through this book, and I've read other Jenkins's works because of his standing as a scholar, but this book is a revelation (if the author might pardon the pun). I have been telling people about it because it is so eye-opening and fascinating. He writes and explains with such ease as he merrily bursts bubbles of myth to reveal the depth and complexity of the development of Christian faith. None of the ridiculous mumbo-jumbo of Dan Brown; just the facts. And the facts are quite interesting enough. Can't wait to keep reading. He's not attempting to destroy the great mystery of Jesus Christ or orthodoxy, but calling us to consider we should still stand before that mystery, along with countless others before us and to come, with humility and a desire for the truth that the Great Teacher encouraged us to value because it liberates us. I am going to dare to say the best Jenkins work yet, of all the many.

This presentation and survey of non-Canonical texts is a must for anyone interested in the history of Christianity and of its Bible. Teachers and scholars will find the discussions intelligent, perceptive, and scholarly.

Scholarly yet eminently readable. If this is a subject in which you are interested, I consider this book to be an interesting slant on religious writings. I consider it a must-read.

Great reading and fast shipping!

Oh my what a pleasant surprise. The author has tabulated the contents so thoroughly. Such a book I regret was not written and published when I was in seminary in the beginning of the 1950's. I am also appreciative for the book arriving soon and in such excellent condition. AMEN THANK YOU

as expected

A good starting point for those who want to learn more about the history of Christianity from the perspective of "official" and alternative writing.

Good documented, echidistant, enlarge horizon. I like it very much to read. My attention was all the time sustained. Thanks.

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