

BIB203 NT1 Life of Christ

Unit 1a Introduction and Course Overview

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Hello. Welcome to Life of Christ NT1, BIB203. I am Dr. Victor Jacobs and I will be your instructor for the course. This particular segment is going to deal with the course overview as well as the introduction. Again, this is Life of Christ, New Testament 1 (NT1). We are going to be dealing with the story of the life of Christ. The basic strategy of the course is to gather together all of the elements of story from the four gospels and sort of put them together in some sort of symmetrical structure whereby we can look at a glance at the four gospels and tell the story of Jesus Christ. That means that I'm going to come at this with you from the perspective of each one of the gospels with their particular features, their characteristics, their emphases, their foci, their areas of focus, and then we're going to put them all together and put together a story of Jesus' life from start to finish.

In the age in which we live, we like to deal with stories from start to finish. With respect to the gospels, that is, in one respect, easy enough to do, but in other respects, not so easy, especially when we start getting into the features of each one of the gospels and we start dealing with the history of composition. Which gospel was written first and what did it emphasize? What was its focus? What are the differences with other gospels? What are the similarities? And so we're going to be working it this way and that with respect to each and every one of these narratives. What kind of narratives are these? Are they straightforward history or do they have a strong element of theology to them? Are they theological history or are they simply biography? So we're going to be dealing with all of those questions. But at the end of the day, we're going to take these separate narratives and we're going to journey together, and I'm going to try to put this together into some sort of a coherent form so that we can tell the story of Jesus. That's the basic overview of the course.

We're going to start off with Mark, and that will be followed with Matthew and then Luke. And those gospels will be looked at together and there will be more detail on that as we go. And then we will look at the gospel of John finally. There will also be reading in a textbook called *Jesus and the Gospels*. It's by Craig Blomberg and I believe that is his third edition. There's plenty of information there that will dovetail with what I'm going to discuss with you via video. And with respect to the gospels, we're going to focus on how each evangelist deals with the chronology of the story of Jesus and how that affects how we read the other gospels, so that we can come together and pull the story together regarding the life of Jesus Christ. So with all of that said, in the next segment, I'm going to be dealing with the interdependence of the gospels. I'm going to be dealing with what is called the synoptic problem. And we're going to look at the various forms of criticisms that have arisen since the 18th and the 19th centuries that facilitate our study of the gospels.