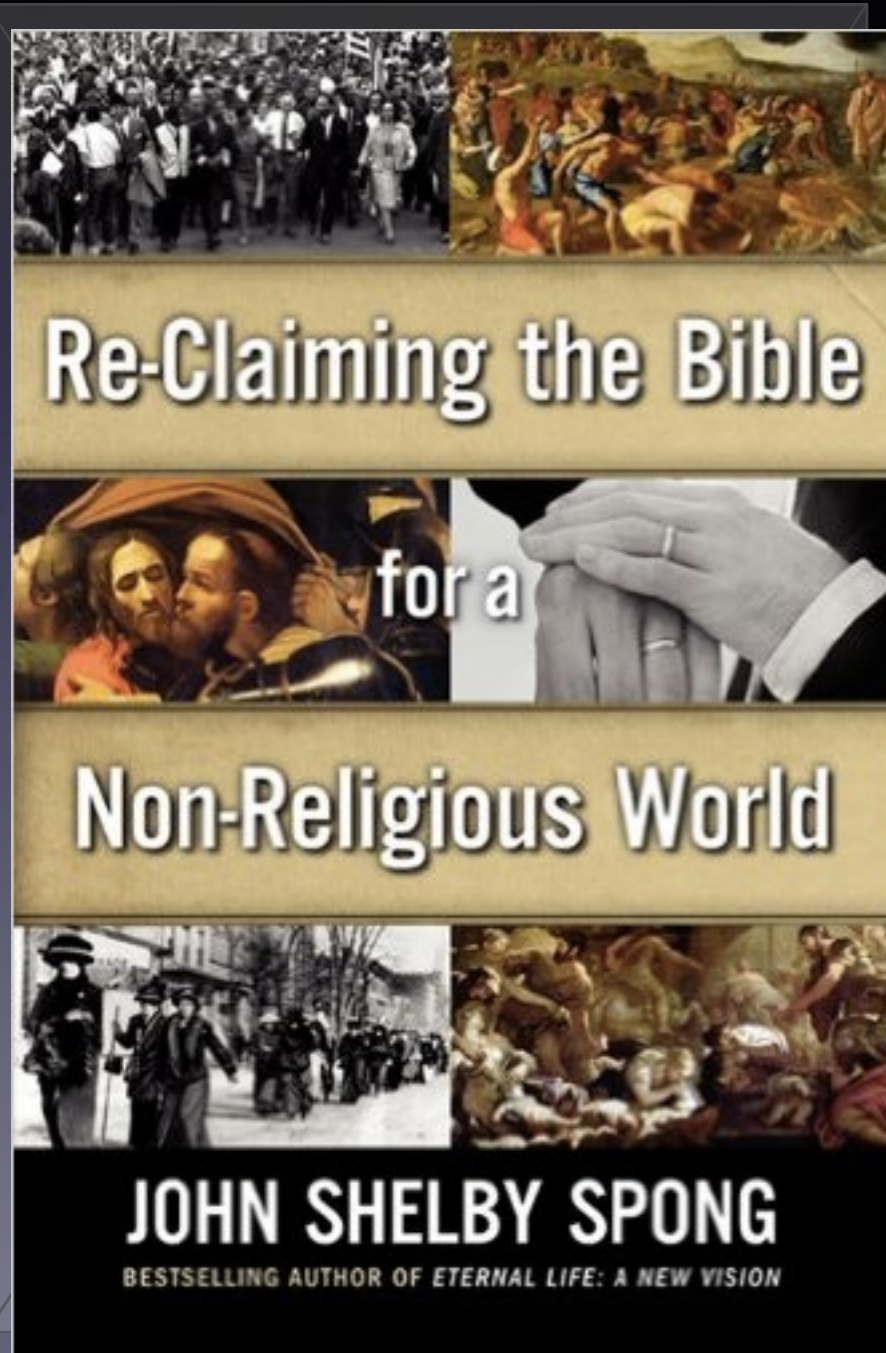


Reclaiming the Bible for a Non-Religious World

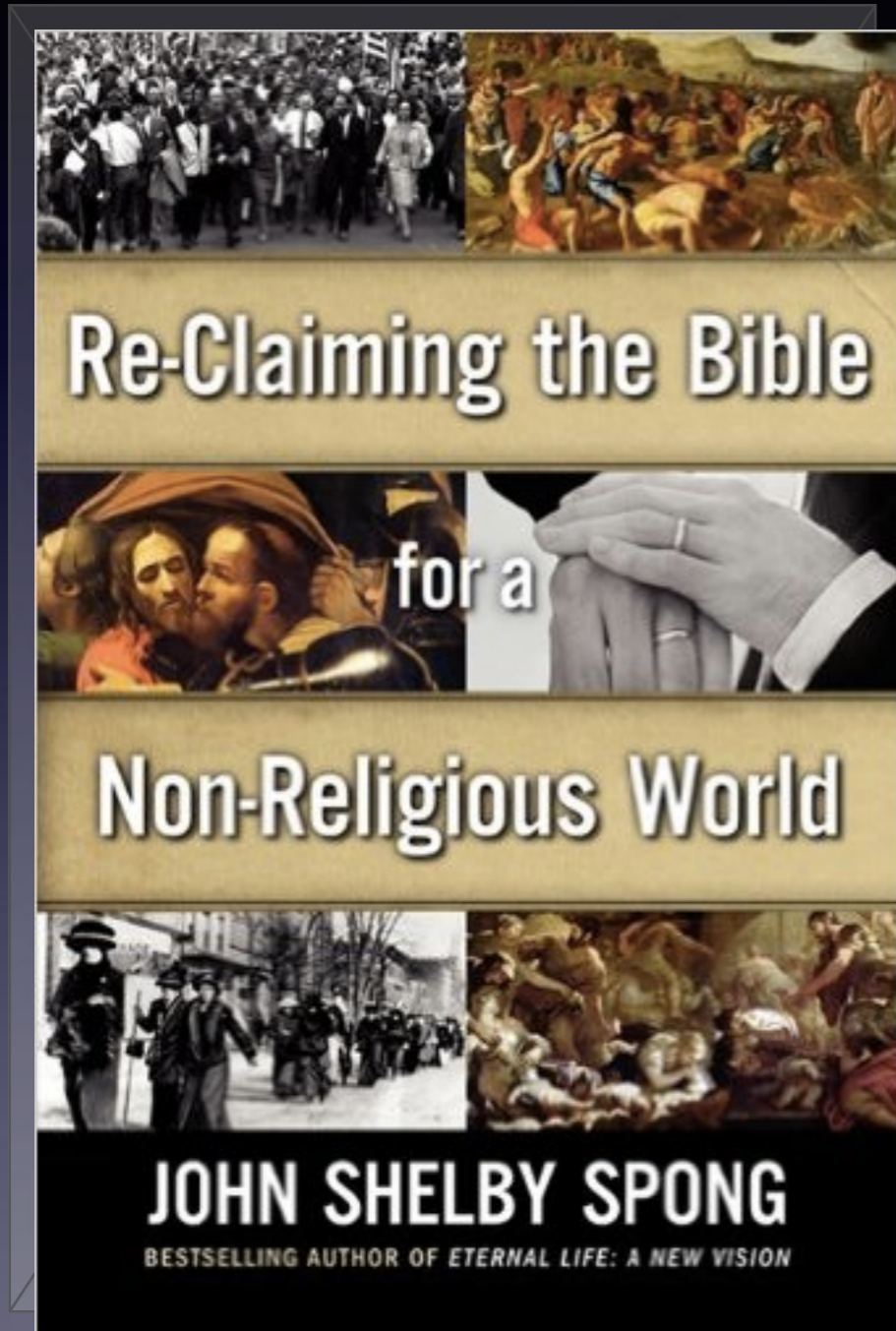
ACTS

Fall 2016

St David's United Church
Calgary



Reclaiming the Bible



Session # 6

- Opening
- Questions
- Overview
- Break
- Videos
- Discussions
- Closing

Opening



The New Testament

Significant Christian Contributions

- universities
- hospitals and social service agencies
- art
- music



The New Testament

We need to reflect on the irony underlying both the great goodness and the tragic evils of the Christian tradition during the past 2,000 years



The New Testament

Significant Flaws of the Christian Tradition

- bias against the Jews (leading to the Holocaust)
- condoning of slavery
- oppression of women
- prejudice against gay people



THE HISTORICAL JESUS

An important truth - Jesus was a Jew.

- Most, if not all NT writers were Jews
- The love/hate relationship between Christians and Jews has continued for two millennia.



THE HISTORICAL JESUS

We cannot get an accurate dating of Jesus from the biblical record.

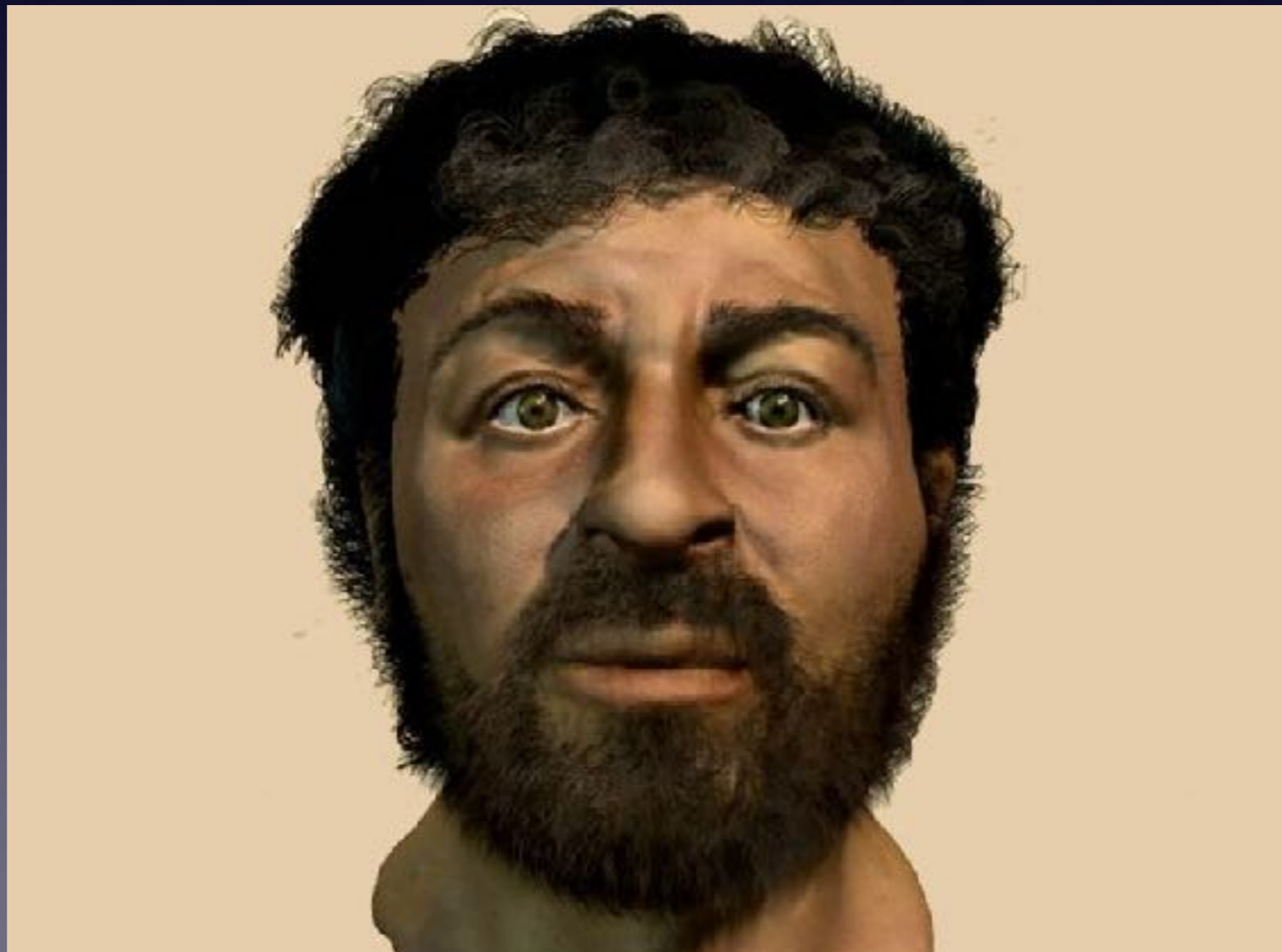
We must see Jesus in his historical context described by non-biblical sources as well as biblical sources.

The gospels are essentially “proclamation”, not “history”.

A literal rendering misses the original purposes of the gospel writers.

THE HISTORICAL JESUS

Jesus lived between 6 BCE and 32 CE (36 years)
and probably looked like this:



The New Testament

In light of Jesus' life & early Christian writings
Critical textual studies raise important questions about the dating of Jesus himself, and the New Testament books.



PAUL

Paul preaching in Athens - by William Collins, UK, 1816



PAUL

Paul is the first person to give us details about Jesus.

Paul was not aware of much about who Jesus was.

He seems unaware of his parables or his miracles

Paul was not interested in much of the Hebrew context for the life and meaning of Jesus.

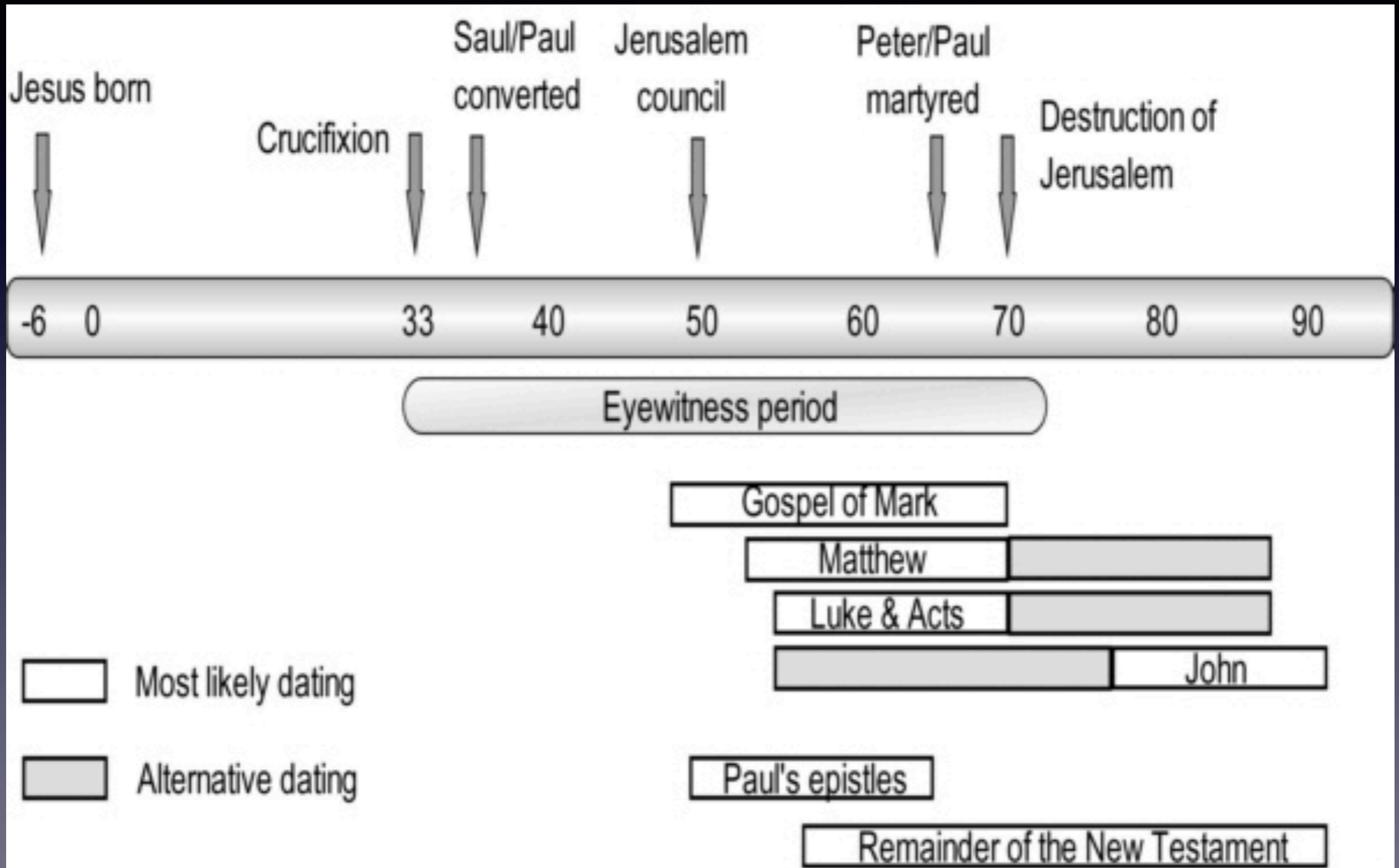
Paul wrote about the "Christ of faith", not the "Jesus of history",

Comparison of Gospels

The dating of Mark is earliest,
Mathew and Luke are next and
John is last

Note the evolutionary development of the Jesus
story over a period of 30 years from 70 to 100 CE

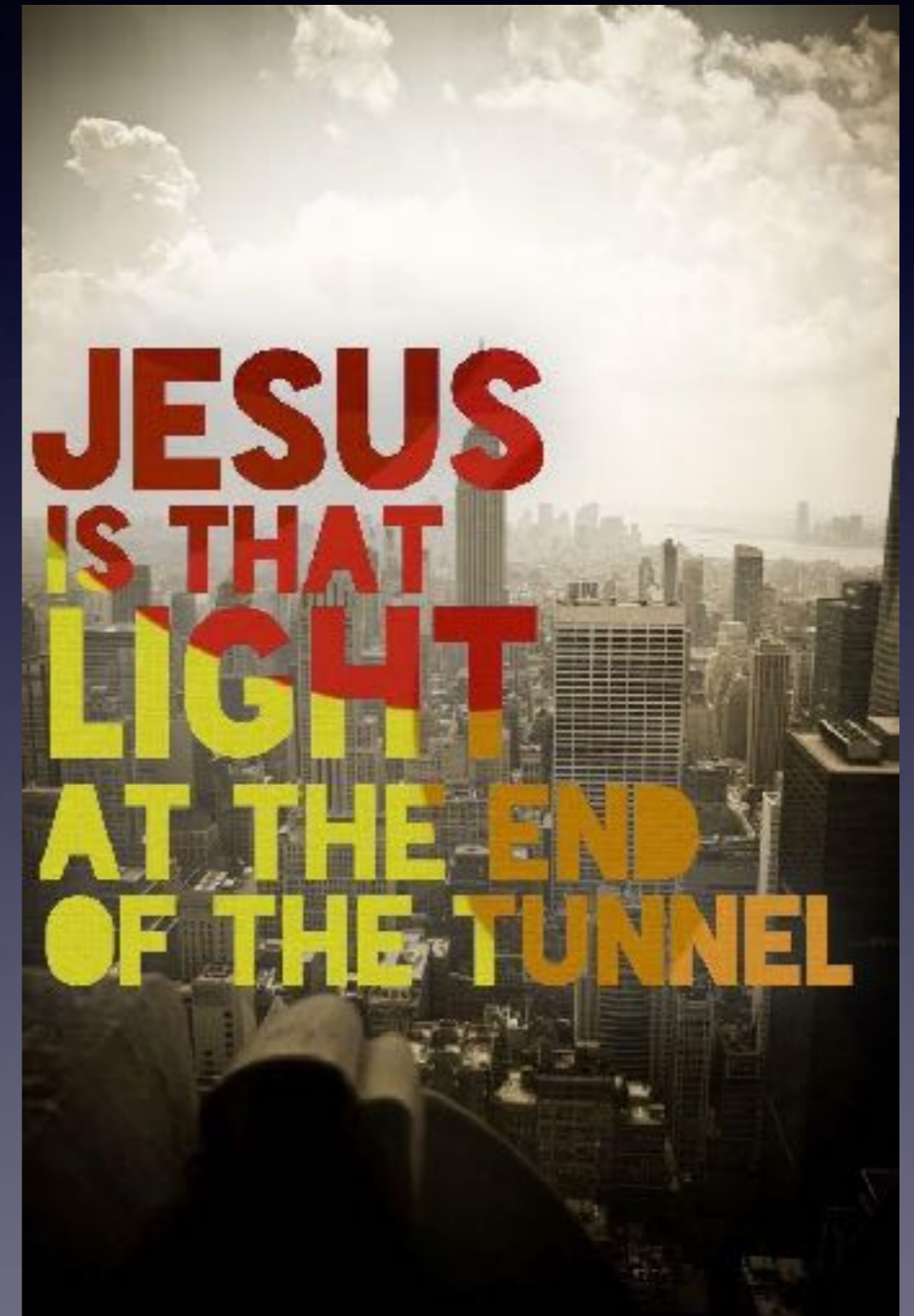
Comparison of Gospels



The Oral Period

We have little awareness of the earliest Jesus tradition.

Spong calls it a "tunnel of darkness".



The Oral Period

Since most of the early Christian community was Jewish, it is natural to focus on the synagogue

The synagogue was the locus of the early "incubation" of the Jesus story for Christians.

Synagogue
at Capernaum
400 CE
built on ruins
of original
Synagogue



The Oral Period

Spong says that the gospels are the product of the synagogue.

This is an important theme for Spong but it has its problems.

After Paul and then the destruction of Jewish/Christian culture in Israel (70 CE) the synagogue was no longer significant for the Christian church.

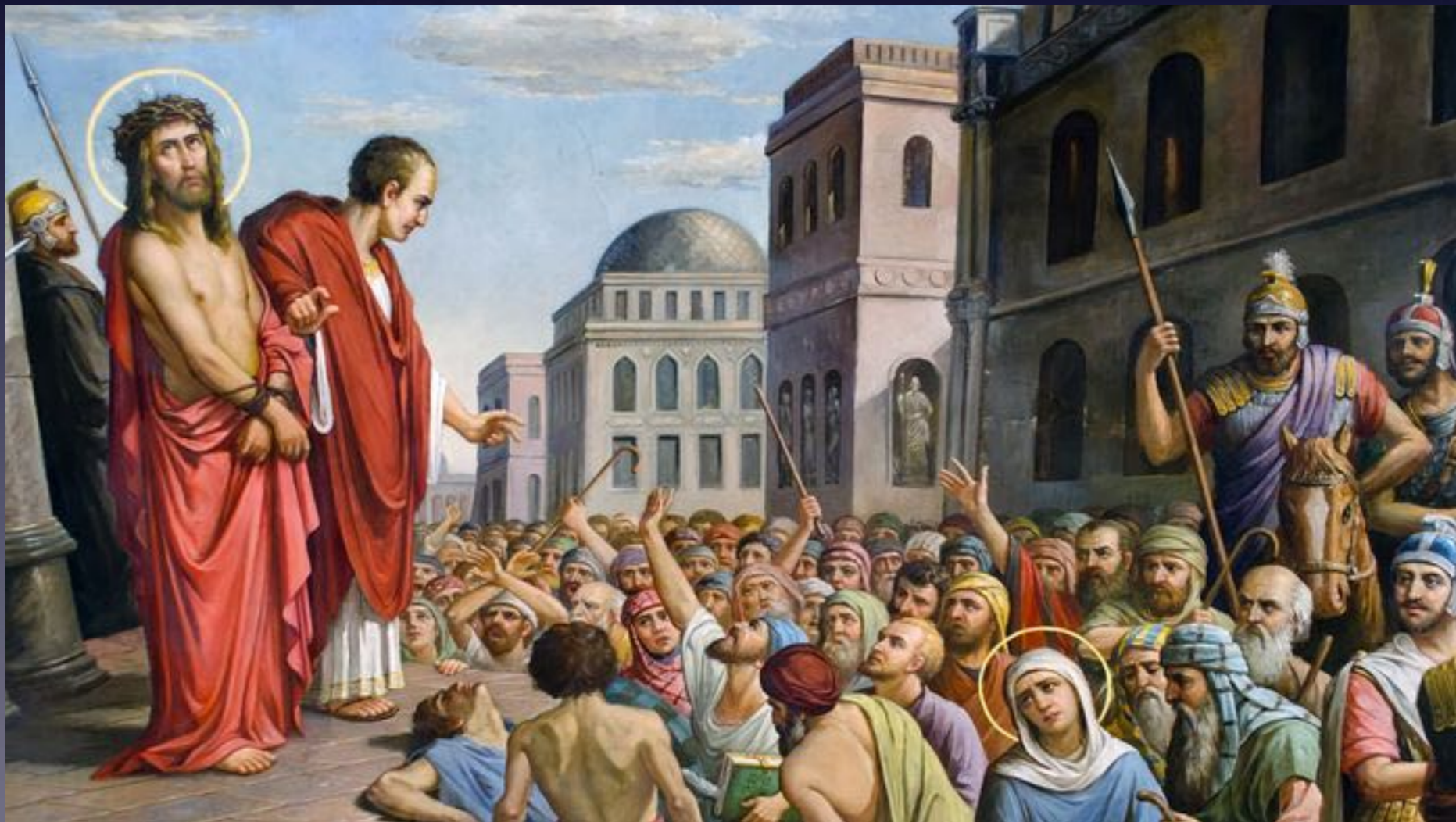
The Oral Period

House churches took the place of synagogues for a large sector of the Christianity as the faith evolved in the Mediterranean world.

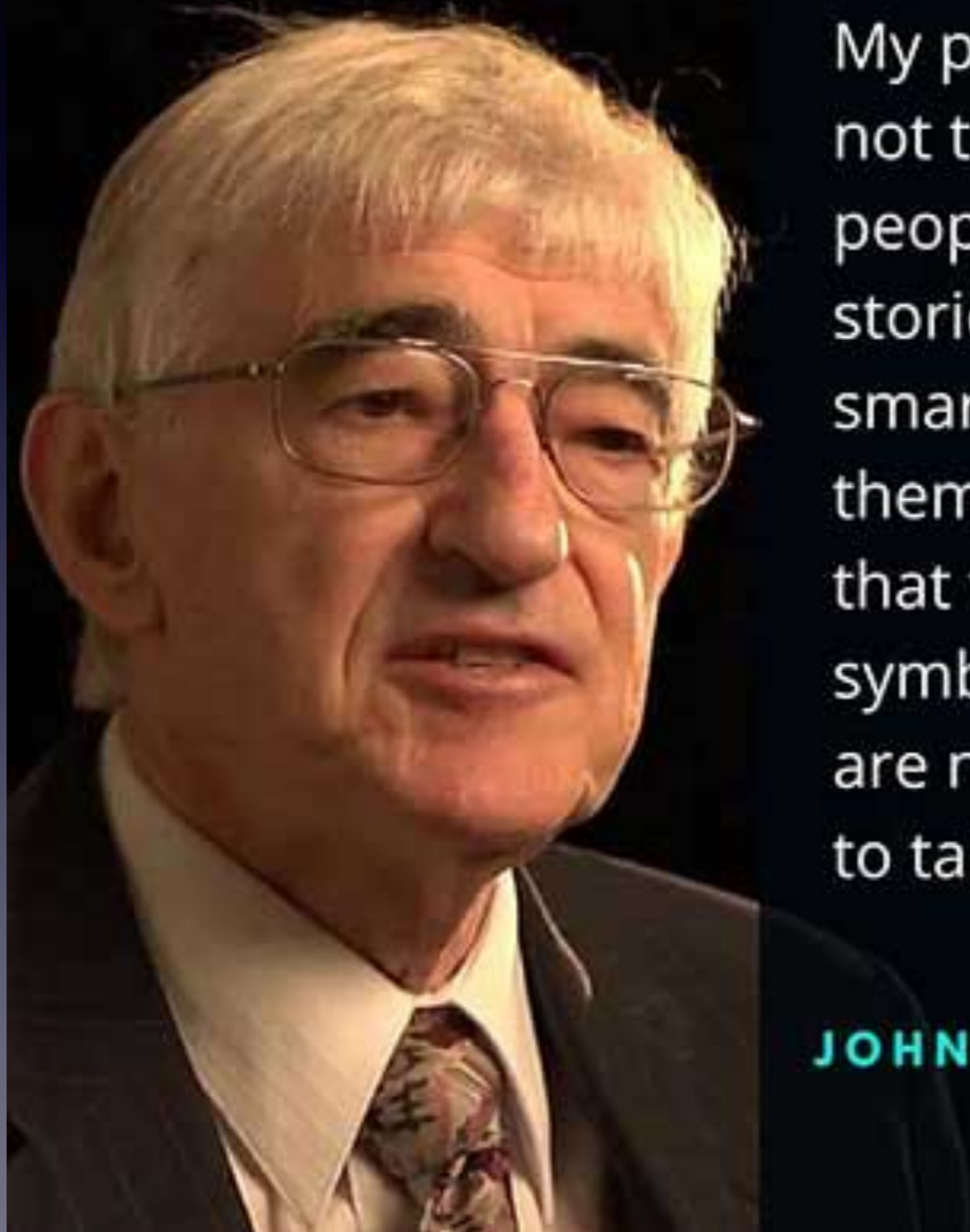


The Oral Period

Ultimately, Judaism rejected Christianity because it could not accept Jesus as the promised Messiah.



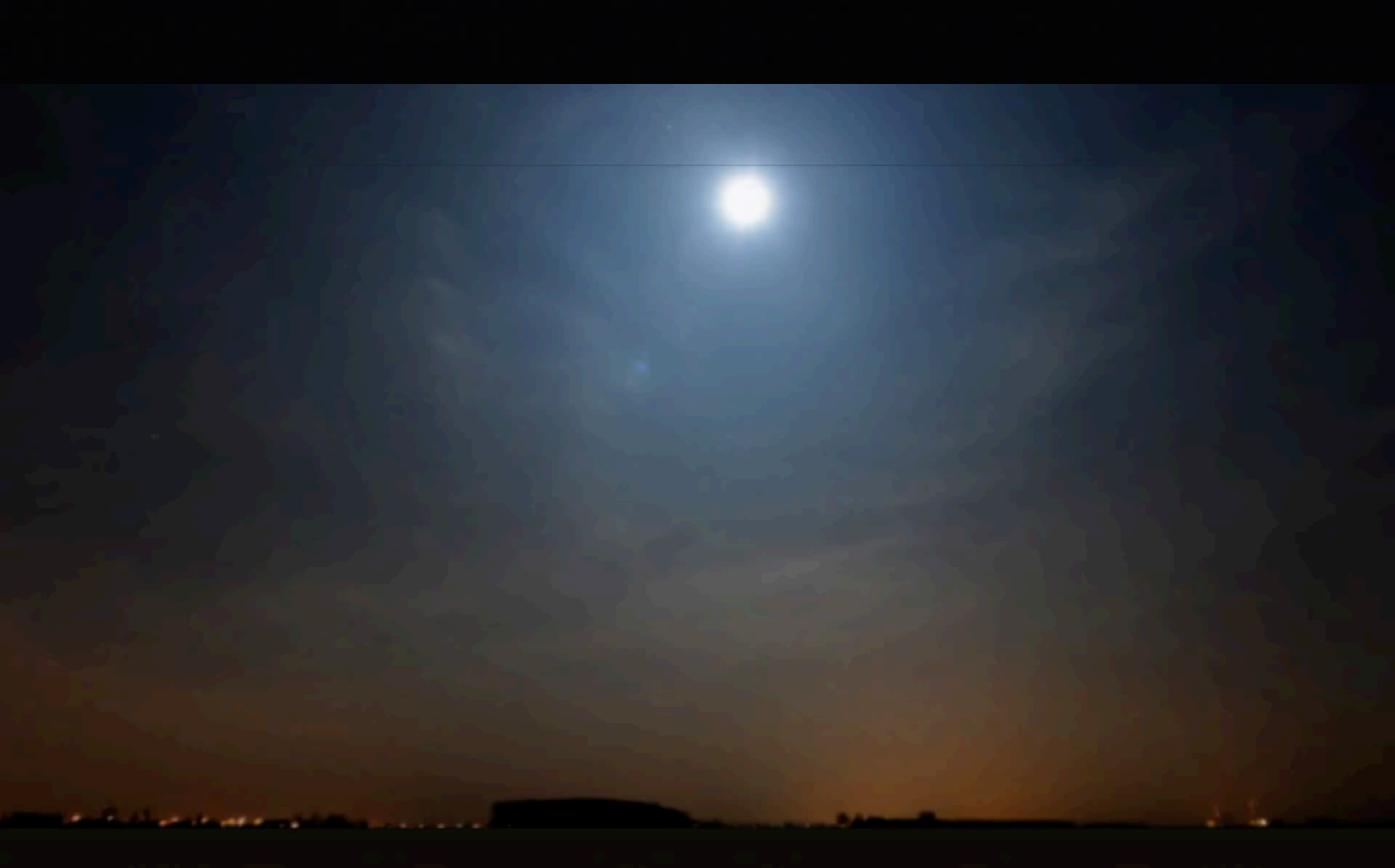
The Oral Period



My point, once again, is not that those ancient people told literal stories and we are now smart enough to take them symbolically, but that they told them symbolically and we are now dumb enough to take them literally.

JOHN DOMINIC CROSSAN

liturgy.co.nz



Break

Video

Is Jesus Real?

- Non-biblical Evidence of His Existence.

Chris White

nowheretorun1984@gmail.com

<http://conspiracyclothes.com/nowheretorun/>

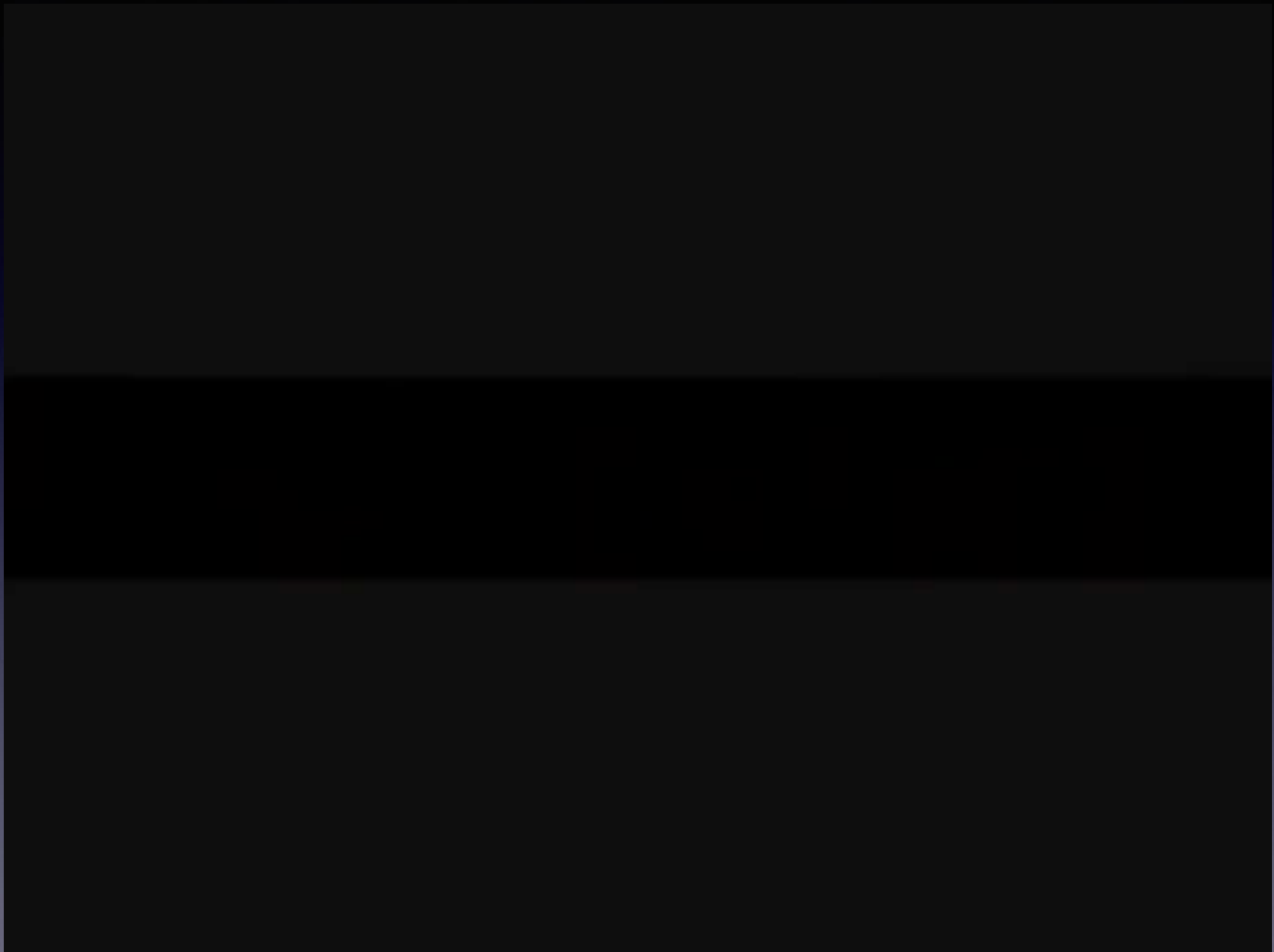
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4bLipiWh9-k> 7m52s

exerpt 13m13s

full 35m54s

10 Ancient
Voices

Tacitus
Josephus
Pliny
Celsus
Seutonius
Thallus
Africanus
Marenbar
Talmud
Aristides



Discussion Questions

Why is it important to examine the bible using both the historical and biblical chronology?

Why is the oral Period (30-50), aka “Dark Tunnel” Important to examine?

Next Readings

Session 7

PART IX - PAUL: THE FIRST NEW TESTAMENT WRITER

Chapters 31 - 41

Study Website

<http://rtb.stdavidscalgary.net>

Closing -

